

Tabb Lakes Homeowners

Preparing Your Family and Home for a Hurricane

Many homeowners in Tabb Lakes are either new to the east coast or have never experienced a powerful hurricane. To help those with no experience and to remind us all of some things we should do, the Tabb Lakes Emergency Response Committee prepared this list of some common sense things we can do to prepare our homes (and families) for a hurricane event.



This list is not complete. Our intent is to highlight some important things you should think about and do. For more detailed information, go to the following organizations web sites that provide more detailed information; Ready.gov, Virginia Dept of Emergency Management, Center for Disease Control and Prevention, York County Fire and Life Safety, Red Cross, or our Tabb Lakes Emergency Response Committee's web site.

Protect you and your family first. Get a kit; Make a plan; Stay informed. Go to the above organizations web sites or obtain info from the York County Fire Dept on how to develop an emergency kit, make a family plan, and how to stay informed. It is important that you have all the proper supplies on hand in the event that we lose power and are unable to leave the area for several days, or more. Research and understand the impacts of a hurricane and the evacuation process out of Hampton Roads. Tabb Lakes is NOT in an ocean storm surge area or evacuation zone so do not expect our location to be under any State directed mandatory evacuation order. You will have to decide for yourself if you want to evacuate and when.

Hurricane Season for the East Coast: 1 June to 30 November

Before hurricane season:

- Assemble an emergency kit for you and your family. Ensure you have enough supplies for a minimum of 7 days without power, including water and medicine.
- Minimize potential damage to your home from trees and tall shrubs. Falling trees or large branches will most likely be the reason you will sustain significant damage to your house and automobiles. High winds will knock down trees or cause branches to rub violently against house shingles and siding and rip them off.
 - Walk around your home and imagine the impact of 60+ MPH sustained winds and higher gusts.
 - Look at the trees and shrubs close to your house. Are branches overhanging your roof or brushing up near your home siding? Trim and cut to keep away from your house.
 - Do your trees have dead or overhanging branches that need to be removed? These will break and fall during high winds. Thin out tree branches to allow wind to flow through.
 - Do you have any diseased trees near your home that are dying? Have them removed.
 - Repair any loose shingles and gutters that could be pulled off by high winds.
- Look for loose or hanging items on the home or in the yard that you will have to remove prior to a storm. High winds can cause items to be projectiles.
 - Examples are garbage/recycle bins, bird feeders, yard ornaments, flags, hanging plants, yard furniture, trampolines, grills and covers, window screens, bird houses, portable basket ball hoops, wind chimes, etc. Anything that is not tied down and secure can become a flying object.
- Check on the condition of your garage doors. Are door hinges tight? Are the tracks bolted securely to the house? Are oversized garage doors reinforced? Strong winds can cave in garage doors.
- Ensure fences are sturdy and repaired. Loose boards will become flying objects.
- Do you have a boat or trailer that has to be secured? Research techniques to secure them.
- Do your research and planning now. Look up and print information on preparing for and responding to emergencies. Keep info handy.
- Take readiness courses such as Red Cross first aid/CPR, CERT training, etc., to help you support yourself and your family during times when first responders may not be able to reach you in a timely manner.

Before a hurricane hits our area (complete prior to the arrival of tropical storm winds):

- Check and update your kit and review your family plan. Stay informed. Conditions can change rapidly.
- Walk around your home. Remove and store all outside loose or hanging items (see examples above).
- Check garage doors for sturdiness.
- Secure boats and trailers.
- Secure shed doors.
- If you live by the lakes or drainage ditches:
 - Help reduce the chance of neighborhood flooding. Loose objects will float into our lakes outflow pipes and block them.
 - Pull all boats fully out and away from the water and double tie to a secure object.
 - Move all loose and floating objects away from the lake. Examples are firewood, lawn furniture, picnic tables/chairs, umbrellas, etc...
 - Remove footbridges across drainage ditches/waterways and tie to a secure object away from drainage system.
 - Plan for lakes to rise quickly. Our lakes have risen over 54" in previous storms pulling unsecure boats, footbridges, firewood and other objects into the water.
- Decide if you will evacuate and know the plan. If you chose to, we recommend you leave early.
- Ensure you have a NOAA weather radio and a portable FM/AM radio (with extra batteries). FM 99.1 will broadcast any York County emergency information.

After a hurricane passes by:

- Stay informed and monitor FM 99.1 or other local radio stations/local news. Prepare for an extended period of time with no electricity.
- Remain cautious of dangers outside.
 - Fallen trees and damaged homes can pose significant dangers. Leaning or downed trees can shift and injure you.
 - Stay away from damaged pad mounted transformers and exposed electrical/gas lines. Notify authorities immediately if you see this type damage.
 - Do not drive around sightseeing.
- The most common cause of injuries and deaths after a hurricane are:
 - Improper operation of generators causing death by carbon monoxide poisoning or fire.
 - Learn how to properly use a portable generator.
 - Improper use of chain saws.
 - Do not go up on ladders or roofs to cut away trees.
 - Falling off of ladders/roofs while trying to repair damage to homes.
- Stay calm and safe. Remember that phone lines may be down for a while. Emergency 911 may not be available. The best thing to do is not need emergency help in the first place.
- Recovery could take days or weeks so stay flexible and help one another as best you can. Learn what you can do to help as a member of the Tabb Lakes Emergency Response Committee. For more information go to our web site at www.tabblakes.org under the TLERT heading.

Notes on boarding up windows.

It would normally not be necessary in our Tabb Lakes Community. The more immediate danger to your home will be trees and branches falling on your home. Expect shingles, gutters, and possibly siding to be ripped off from high winds, and possibly your garage doors to buckle if they are not adequately secured. The best thing to do is make sure your home is in good repair and insure there are no trees and branches that could damage your home because of high winds.