

## **Hurricane Preparedness**

Time to review your plans and check your supplies in preparation for hurricane season. Hurricane season runs from 1 June through 30 November. This year, NOAA is forecasting between 13 to 19 named storms. Of that, 6 to 10 could become hurricanes and 3 to 6 could become major hurricanes (cat 3,4 or 5). This is considered an above average estimate this year. Please follow emergency managers advice by assembling an emergency kit, make a plan for your family, and staying informed about weather conditions.



The following are some recommendations I would like everyone to consider before, during, and after a hurricane to stay safe and minimize damage to you and your neighbor's property.

### **Before hurricane season:**

- Check the condition of the trees around your home. Look for overhanging branches or dead/dying limbs. Falling trees or branches will most likely be the reason you will sustain significant damage to your home and automobile.
- Tree branches that are touching your home will rip shingles and siding off your home during high winds.
- Repair any loose shingles and gutters that could be pulled off by high winds.
- Ensure fences are sturdy and repaired. High winds will knock them down.
- Do you have a boat, RV, or trailer? Research methods to secure them from high wind damage.

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

- Check and update your supply kit and review your family plan. Stay informed. Conditions can change rapidly.
- Remove and store all outside loose or hanging items around your home.
- Secure boats, RV's, and trailers.
- If you live by the lakes or a drainage ditch:
  - Clean out your ditches and stormwater drains to help minimize local flooding.
  - Pull boats completely out of the lakes and away from the shore line. Double tie it to a secure object like a tree.
  - 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.
  - 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 lakes.
- Decide if you will evacuate and know the plan. The link to the Virginia Hurricane Evacuation Guide is listed below. If you chose to evacuate, we recommend you leave early.
- Ensure you have a NOAA weather radio and a portable FM/AM radio with extra batteries to stay informed.

### **After a hurricane passes by:**

- Remain cautious of the dangers outside.

- Downed trees and damaged homes can pose significant dangers.
- Stay away from damaged pad mounted transformers, electrical lines, or exposed gas lines. Notify authorities immediately if you see this type damage.
- The most common cause of injuries and deaths after a hurricane are:
  - Improper operation of portable generators resulting in death by carbon monoxide poisoning or fire.
  - Improper use of a chain saw.
  - Falling off a ladders or roof while trying to repair homes.
- First Responders may be overwhelmed or delayed and may not be able to immediately respond to emergency calls. The best thing to do is not need help in the first place.
- Recovery could take days or weeks so stay safe and help one another as best you can.

### **Know Your Evacuation Zone**

Tabb Lakes in not in an officially designated evacuation zone, however, the zones are not very far from here. You can check your address against the current evacuation zones by going to the VDEM web site at <https://www.vaemergency.gov/hurricane-evacuation-zone-lookup/> and click on the “Go to Map”. Type in your address in the search box and it will show you a map where the zones are in relationship to your address.

Below are some good web sites to help you plan ahead for a hurricane.

<https://www.ready.gov/hurricanes>

<https://www.weather.gov/wrn/hurricane-preparedness>

VDOT Hurricane Evacuation Guide (Older version but still has useful information)

[https://www.hrpdcva.gov/uploads/docs/2013HurricaneGUIDE\\_web.pdf](https://www.hrpdcva.gov/uploads/docs/2013HurricaneGUIDE_web.pdf)

NOAA’s hurricane prediction for 2020 article at

<https://www.noaa.gov/media-release/busy-atlantic-hurricane-season-predicted-for-2020>

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