



# Evacuation Plan

The amount of time you have to evacuate will depend on the event. If the event is a weather condition, such as a hurricane that can be monitored, you might have a day or two to get ready. However, many disasters allow no time for people to gather even the most basic necessities, which is why planning ahead is essential.

## Develop a family evacuation plan before an actual storm threatens your area:

- **Be familiar with the low lying areas you may live around or have to pass through to evacuate.**
- **If ordered to evacuate, do not wait or delay your departure.**  
If possible, leave before local officials issue an evacuation order for your area. Even a slight delay in starting your evacuation will result in significantly longer travel times as congestion worsens.
- **Select an evacuation destination that is outside of the affected area.**  
In choosing your destination, keep in mind that the hotels and other sheltering options in most inland metropolitan areas are likely to be filled very quickly in a large hurricane evacuation event.
- **If you decide to evacuate, you must be prepared to wait in traffic.**  
The large number of people in this state who must evacuate during a disaster will probably cause massive delays and major congestion along most designated evacuation routes; the larger the disaster, the greater the probability of traffic jams and extended travel times.
- **If possible, make arrangements to stay with the friend or relative who resides close to your home and who will not have to evacuate.** Discuss with your intended host the details of your family evacuation plan well before the threat of an evacuation.
- **If a hotel or motel is your final intended destination during an evacuation, make reservations before you leave.** Most hotel and motels will fill quickly once evacuations begin. The longer you wait to make reservations, even if an official evacuation order has not been issued for your area or county, the less likely you are to find hotel/motel room vacancies, especially along interstate highways and in major metropolitan areas. If you have pets, make sure the hotels/motels are pet-friendly.
- **If you are unable to stay with friends or family and no hotels/motels are available, then as a last resort, go to a shelter.** Remember, shelters are not designed for comfort and do not usually accept pets. Bring your disaster-supply kit with you to the shelter and make arrangements for your pets.
- **Make sure that you fill up your car with gas before you leave.**  
Preferably a day before you evacuate or you may find yourself stuck in long lines.
- **Do not attempt re-entry into an affected area until officials say it is OK.**

The amount of time it takes to evacuate an area depends upon a variety of factors that include the size of the vulnerable population, high hazard areas and transportation routes. Evacuation is a difficult process for not only the evacuee who may spend hours waiting in traffic, but also for those emergency officials who must devote their skills to ensuring residents are moving as quickly and safely as possible.



# Evacuation Checklist

## Before an Evacuation:

- ☐ Decide where your family will meet in case you are separated. Pick a meeting place within your neighborhood and outside of your neighborhood.
- ☐ Gather your Disaster-Supply Kit.
- ☐ Keep your vehicle's gas tank at least half full as gas stations may be closed during an emergency.
- ☐ Have multiple evacuation routes planned in case a road is closed or impassable.
- ☐ Develop a list of hotels/motels where you can stay until it is safe to return.
- ☐ Have a shelter list on hand in case hotels/motels are closed.
- ☐ Have a plan for your pet(s). Reminder: Most shelters won't accept pets.
- ☐ If you do not have a vehicle, make a plan for how you will evacuate. Ask friends, family, or you local officials for help.

## During an Evacuation:

- ☐ Follow directions given by officials.
- ☐ Use one vehicle per family to help reduce traffic congestion.
- ☐ Take your Disaster-Supply Kit with you.
- ☐ Contact the out-of-state contact in your Family Emergency Communications Plan and tell that person that you are leaving and where you are going.
- ☐ Leave a note in a visible location stating when you evacuated and where you went.
- ☐ Lock all doors and windows to your home before you leave.
- ☐ If instructed to do so, shut off all utilities to your home.
- ☐ If time allows, unplug electrical equipment such as TV's, radios, and other small appliances (leave refrigerators and freezers running).

## After an Evacuation:

- ☐ Do not return to your home until officials say it's safe.
- ☐ Once you return home, take pictures and document any damage to your home or property.
- ☐ If your utilities were shut off, find out how to turn them on again safely.

- To view your community's evacuation map, [click here](#).
- For additional evacuation information, [click here for your local emergency manager](#).