



The Homeowner's Guide to HURRICANE SEASON

Neighborly is a local network of home service brands that will connect you to specific, vetted local experts. Our marketplace of service professionals work with rigorous quality standards to repair, maintain and enhance your home.

Neighborly's brands can help you get your home prepared for hurricane season before, during and after the storm. With pros living in your community, scheduling an appointment is quick and convenient.

FIX IT UP

Inspect for Tree Roots

Tree roots are some of the most common causes of catastrophic plumbing problems as roots can wrap around your piping and corrode your system, eventually leading to restricted water flow. If a hurricane comes through your area and knocks down a tree, it could lead to significant damage if not addressed. Have a plumber inspect the trees in your yard to ensure they won't be a threat to your home.

Install Generator and Surge Protection

In the case of complete power loss, a home backup generator will ensure that your home appliances keep running and you don't lose any of the basics like food, water and temperature control while you shelter in place. Beyond that, a power surge can occur when power is restored. A whole-house surge protector could prevent your electronics and appliances from being damaged in the process.

Secure Your Garage Door

About 80% of residential hurricane wind damage starts with wind entry through the garage door, according to the Federal Alliance for Safe Homes. Have a professional technician visit your house, inspect your garage door and let you know whether your door is hurricane ready.

Cover Your AC Unit

Watch for flying debris that may find itself lodged in your air conditioner. Check your HVAC unit's manufacturer and contact the company for a cover; these work in conjunction with the system, so it can keep working at full capacity when the cover is in use.

Protect Appliances

Make sure that any appliances located on lower levels are up on wood or concrete blocks to keep their motors above possible flood levels. Never walk into a flooded area that has appliances, because you can get shocked.

Secure Your Home

Adding roof clips, garage door braces, and anchoring fuel tanks will add extra security with heavy winds caused by a hurricane. Close windows, doors and hurricane shutters as you evacuate. If you do not have hurricane shutters, close and board up all windows and doors with plywood you have readily available for this purpose.

KEEP IT FRESH

Clean Up Before and After the Storm

Store patio cushions in the garage or a storage area before the storm. But first, cleanse them of dirt using a water nozzle set to "Jet" cycle and air dry the cushions prior to storing. Following the storm, clean your windows, window sills and window tracks of debris. Also, wash screens with a soapy sponge and water.

Trim Your Trees

Trim back any branches touching your house. Well-pruned trees will allow wind to pass through with minimal debris, thus protecting your home and roof. Ensure that your gutters are clear of debris so water can drain off properly.

Check Your Storm Protection

Following a disaster, many homeowners are stunned to discover their insurance doesn't cover everything they lost – and sometimes doesn't cover any of their losses. Take the time to fine-tune your coverage now – to avoid even more headaches should a disaster ever strike.

Install Storm Shutters and Window Film

Storm shutters can protect your windows from high winds and debris. Along the same line, have window film put on your windows to strengthen the glass, preventing it from shattering. If your glass does break due to flying debris or extreme weather, the film will bind dangerous shards together, much like a car windshield, keeping your home safe and secure.

Clear External Vents

Vents that lead outside connect to your heating and cooling systems, dryer and more. A damaged or missing vent cap could allow birds or rodents to wash in, clogging the vent and potentially releasing toxins into your home. Make sure exterior vents are clear ahead of a hurricane to avoid a potentially tough clean-up.

Prevent Mosquitoes

Empty out every container in the yard of water. Just a teaspoon (a capful from a bottle of water) will breed 300 mosquitoes every few days, so even the small amounts you might not notice (saucers under plant pots) will increase the mosquito population. Turn pots and containers upside down, remove kids' toys (it's amazing how much water they hold after a rain) and make sure you are not missing those small places that mosquitoes won't. Don't forget any tarps in the yard either.



MAKE IT SING

Paint Your Home's Exterior

Most hurricane damage is caused by wind and rain, and paint can serve as the first line of defense against hurricanes. Painting the exterior of your home and sealing any cracks or holes can prevent moisture from entering the home.

Repair or Replace Damaged Windows

Whether you're prepping for an impending storm or planning for hurricane season, it's a good idea to thoroughly check each window for signs of damage or deterioration. If you need window or door repair or replacement before or after a storm, have them professionally repaired or replaced.

Caulk Your Exterior

The exterior of your home is a shell that protects your home and its contents. This shell needs upkeep. Cracks in stucco, brick or block that are already present will 'suddenly' leak when the rain is coming in horizontally. These cracks should be dealt with now, they cannot be done the day before the storm in the rain.

Install a Pegboard

If your hallway closet is often loaded with tools, installing a pegboard would be the smart option. A pegboard keeps tools off the floor, making a clear path for entry and exit in case of an emergency. Keeping these tools secured on the wall and off the bottom of the closet makes it a safer space for kids and other family members.

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