



Schools' Bulletin

**ATTENTION: BOARD CHAIRMEN, REGIONAL DIRECTOR, PRINCIPALS of
PUBLIC EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS**

SUBJECT : Tropical Storm and Hurricane Preparedness Tips

Tropical weather season is upon us. If your school or home is in a Tropical Storm or Hurricane prone area, you will need to activate your plan in the event that you are threatened this season.

The main key in any severe weather preparedness situation is to have supplies on hand and a plan in place ***ahead of time*** - that way you don't have to panic when the event is upon you... Here are some basic tips that must be put in place during an impending tropical weather situation:

- Cover all important documents/records and electronic gadgets
- Hoist ALL furniture and equipment
- Ensure drains and waterways are free from waste and garbage
- Guarantee that school building and premises are securely locked
- Activate Emergency Shelter Plans and Procedures
- In the event of a major hurricane strike, cellular and other communication sources could be severely damaged and/or highly stressed. Make plans to notify colleagues, friends and family of your well-being via text message or e-mail and leave voice communication channels open for emergency officials and those with a serious need.

PERSONAL TIPS

- Gather **important documents** like ID cards, passports, insurance policies, etc., into a zip lock bag and put it in your severe weather safety kit before the storm strikes. That way these important items will be easily accessible in the event of significant damage in your area
- Fill up the **gas** tank of your primary evacuation vehicle before the "rush" hits in your area

- Another critical aspect of being prepared for a tropical storm or hurricane is to prepare a **severe weather safety kit** in advance of the storm. Do this in advance of the season - then refreshing and/or restocking if a storm approaches
- If you don't usually **keep cash on hand**, take some out of the ATM or at the bank before the storm hits. Remember, if the power is out, the ATMs and other electronic means of sending or receiving money will be unavailable - possibly for days or even weeks after a particularly bad storm
- If you take **prescription or over the counter medication(s)** on a daily or regular basis, it would be a good idea to refill and/or restock them prior to the storm hitting
- **React calmly** to an impending threat, which will allow you to better protect yourself and your family.

Here is a review of **tropical weather watches and warnings**. The key here is that if your area is placed under a watch or warning, that's when you need to spring into action and fine tune (during a watch) and/or execute (during a warning) your preparedness and/or evacuation plans:

Tropical Storm Watch: Tropical storm force winds (sustained at 39-73 mph) are *possible* within the watch area within 48 hours.

Tropical Storm Warning: Tropical storm force winds are *expected* within the warning area within 36 hours.

Hurricane Watch: Hurricane force winds (sustained at 74 mph or higher) are *possible* within the watch area. Because preparedness activities become difficult once winds reach tropical storm force, a Hurricane Watch is usually issued 48 hours in advance of the expected onset of tropical storm force winds.

Hurricane Warning: Hurricane force winds are *expected* within the warning area. Because preparedness activities become difficult once winds reach tropical storm force, a Hurricane Warning is usually issued 36 hours in advance of the expected onset of tropical storm force winds.

Part of your preparedness efforts should include identifying and planning an [evacuation route](#) for you and your family in the event that a storm approaches and you are ordered to evacuate (or choose to do so on your own - which is even better).

If you are advised to evacuate your area by local officials (mandatory or voluntary), please do so. There is a good reason. Don't become a statistic.

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