

# HURRICANE SAFETY & PREPAREDNESS

When a hurricane impacts your area, first responders are right there- ready and willing to save those needing the help. But while you're ready and willing, are you and your organization fully able to respond to those calls? The phrase, "you can't help others until you've helped yourself" is critical during your organization's hurricane preparation. By ensuring your organization is fully prepared to weather the storm, you'll be ready to help those who aren't.

- Have an Emergency Response Plan in place and review protocols such as what is expected of members during mandatory evacuations, procedures for suspended emergency response operations, and staffing the station while sheltering in place.
- Have back up plans in place for refueling apparatus for before and after the storm should fuel run out or power to the fueling station is lost. Ensure that all back up generators for your organization are fully operational and that back up fuel supplies are ready on-site.
- Secure copies of all organization records off site and out of harms way. Store any records remaining onsite on the highest level of your building (second floor).
- Ensure High Water Rescue Vehicles and Water Rescue Apparatus are maintained on a regular basis. Have a policy in place for each individual apparatus' fording depth (found in the owners manual) and ensure that all drivers are aware of that depth before using that vehicle for a rescue.

- Make sure all apparatus are fueled and ready to respond.
- All battery operated equipment should be fully charged and if possible, have back up batteries charged.
- Make sure that your building is properly secured. Board windows and block any non-essential doorway with sandbags to mitigate as much flood water as possible.
- Should weather conditions warrant, establish times that your operation will be suspending response activity and broadcast those times to the public as best as possible.
- Have enough supplies on hand for those members who will be sheltering in place or manning the station throughout the storm, as well as have surplus supplies stored and ready for post-storm recoveries.
- Remember to track all costs associated with preparation and response actions, including equipment usage and manpower records, that may be needed for potential disaster declaration activities.

- Throughout the storm, shelter-in-place and continue to notify the public and members of your organization response protocol, as well as any updates in weather conditions, travel advisories/bans, evacuations, etc.
- Should your organization respond to calls during the storm event, have members of the crew remain at the station throughout the event to monitor the incoming calls, as well as monitoring building conditions and maintaining your organizations state of readiness for responding crews.



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