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## Are You Prepared for Hurricane Season and Other Storm Emergencies?

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(StatePoint) Hurricane season is in full swing, running from June through November. Unfortunately, no one can stop a tropical storm or hurricane from happening and both types of weather events are increasingly impacting larger portions of the U.S. However, there are steps you can take that will help you weather a storm and better ensure the safety of your family.

The experts at Freddie Mac recommend doing the following.

- Know where to go in the event of a local area evacuation. Your area's emergency management agency can provide this information.
- Gather and protect important household documentation, including birth certificates, passports, marriage licenses, mortgage statements, deeds, insurance policies and medical files.
- Protect your valuables and family mementos by storing them in a safety deposit box, fire- and water-proof safe or moving them to higher ground where they are less likely to incur damage.
- Download an app for your smartphone that allows your friends and family to know if you are safe. The American Red Cross has a free **hurricane app** as do many for-profit organizations. Other apps that are available include weather tracking apps, and apps that can help victims of storms find each other to pool resources and offer one another assistance. Be sure to keep your phone fully charged as long as your home has power and consider having an external battery pack on hand as well.
- Assemble an emergency supply kit that includes water, flashlights, non-perishable food, first-aid supplies, batteries, a radio and medication.
- Create a family emergency plan and make sure everyone knows what to do and when.
- Prepare your home for heavy rainfall and strong winds by cleaning up lawn debris, loose furniture and lawn items that will not be able to sustain strong winds. Secure loose rain gutters and ensure all gutters are clear from debris to keep water flowing and prevent further damage.
- Consider building a **safe room**, if you are a homeowner, that meets Federal Emergency Management Agency criteria to provide at-home protection during extreme weather.

More hurricane tips and information can be found at [freddiemac.com/blog](https://freddiemac.com/blog).

The devastation of last year's hurricane season was an important reminder that being prepared for a worst-case scenario is crucial. Before the next storm heads your way, be sure your family and home are protected.

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