**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Wednesday, May 27, 2020

Name, Title

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**PRESS RELEASE**

**USE CAUTION DURING HURRICANE WEATHER**

CITY/TOWN, N.H. – Residents and visitors are reminded to use caution during upcoming hurricane weather. Hurricanes cause heavy rains that can cause extensive flood damage in coastal and inland areas.

*\*describe hurricane event in detail, including classification, timeframe, and impacted areas.\**

*\*Here are some important safety tips and information to include:\**

**LOCAL PUBLIC SHELTER INFORMATION**:

Location(s), times of operation, contact information, policy on bringing pets, transportation, etc.

**Understand Hurricanes Dangers and Prepare**

* Listen to the radio or TV for information and updates.
* Follow NH HSEM on Twitter, Facebook, or Instagram for the latest updates and recommendations.
* Learn community hurricane evacuation routes and how to find higher ground. Determine where you would go and how you would get there if you needed to evacuate. If instructed to evacuate, do so following first responder instructions.
* Learn the elevation level of your property and whether the land is flood-prone. This will help you know how your property will be affected when storm surge or tidal flooding are forecasted.
* Ensure you have a supply of water for sanitary purposes such as cleaning and flushing toilets. Fill the bathtub and other large containers with water.
* Avoid using the phone, except for serious emergencies.
* Tie down or bring indoors any objects that might be blown around by hurricane winds (outdoor furniture, decorations, garbage cans, display racks, signs and any other loose objects that are normally left outside).
* If you own a boat, determine how and where to moor and secure it.
* Ensure that all vehicles are serviced and fueled in case you may need to evacuate. Determine where they can be stored during the storm if you do not evacuate.
* Be sure trees and shrubs around your home are well trimmed so they are more wind resistant.
* If you are advised to evacuate, lock the doors when you leave.
* Turn off utilities if instructed to do so. Otherwise, turn the refrigerator thermostat to its coldest setting and keep its doors closed.
* Keep rain gutters and downspouts clear of debris.
* Close and lock all windows. If possible, cover all of your home's windows. Permanent storm shutters offer the best protection for windows. A second option is to board up windows with 5/8" exterior grade or marine plywood, cut to fit and ready to install. Tape does not prevent windows from breaking.
* Install straps or additional clips to securely fasten your roof to the frame structure. This will reduce roof damage.
* Reinforce your garage doors; if wind enters a garage it can cause dangerous and expensive structural damage.
* If time or circumstance allows, secure first floor doorways with sandbags, duct tape or heavy plastic to protect interior from possible flooding.
* If in a high-rise building, when high winds are present, be prepared to take shelter on a lower floor because wind conditions increase with height. When flooding may be occurring, be prepared to take shelter on a floor safely above the flooding and wave effects.
* If you are under a hurricane or tropical storm warning, it means that it is expected to affect your area within 36 hours. It is important to be aware and knowledgeable on what's happening, listen to news reports, secure important items to higher ground and get ready to make the decision on whether you need to evacuate.
* Learn more about Family Emergency Plans, Emergency Contact Cards, and Emergency Kits at ReadyNH.gov.

**Be Safe During a Hurricane**

* If you are advised to evacuate, do so immediately. Evacuation is simple and safer before the hurricane arrives.
* Know that flash flooding can occur. If there is any possibility of a flash flood, move to higher ground right away. Do not wait for instructions to move.
  + Learn more about flooding preparedness at ReadyNH.gov.
* You should evacuate under the following conditions:
  + If you are directed by local authorities to do so. Be sure to follow their instructions.
  + If you live in a mobile home or temporary structure; such structures are particularly hazardous during hurricanes no matter how well fastened to the ground.
  + If you live in a high-rise building—hurricane winds are stronger at higher elevations.
  + If you live on the coast, on a floodplain, near a river, or on an inland waterway.
  + If you feel you are in danger.
* If you are unable to evacuate, go to your safe room. If you do not have one, follow these guidelines:
  + Stay indoors during the hurricane and away from windows and glass doors, even if they are covered.
  + Close all interior doors – secure and brace external doors. Closed doors will help prevent damaging hurricane winds from entering rooms.
  + Keep curtains and blinds closed. Do not be fooled if there is a lull; it could be the eye of the storm – winds will pick up again.
  + Take refuge in a small interior room, closet, or hallway on the lowest level.
  + Lie on the floor under a table or another sturdy object.
* If you have become separated from your family, use your family communications plan or contact the American Red Cross at 1-800-RED-CROSS/1-800-733-2767 or visit the American Red Cross “Safe and Well” website.
* The American Red Cross also maintains a database to help you find family. Contact the local American Red Cross chapter where you are staying for information. Do not contact the chapter in the disaster area.

**Be Safe After a Hurricane**

* Stay alert for extended rainfall and subsequent flooding even after the hurricane or tropical storm has ended.
* If you evacuated, return home only when officials say it is safe.
* Drive only if necessary and avoid flooded roads and washed-out bridges. Stay off the streets. If you must go out, watch for fallen objects, downed electrical wires, and weakened walls, bridges, roads, and sidewalks.
* Stay away from loose, dangling, or downed power lines and report them immediately to the power company.
* Inspect your home for damage. Take pictures of damage, both of the building and its contents, for insurance purposes. If you have any doubts about safety, have your residence inspected by a qualified building inspector or structural engineer before entering.
  + Use battery-powered flashlights in the dark and when examining buildings. Do NOT use candles.
* If you smell gas or hear a blowing or hissing noise, open a window and get everyone outside quickly. Turn off the gas, using the outside main valve if you can, and call the gas company. If you turn off the gas for any reason, it must be turned back on by a professional.
* Check for sewer and water pipe damage.  If you suspect sewage lines are damaged, avoid using the toilets and call a plumber. If water pipes are damaged, contact the water company and avoid using water from the tap.
* Watch your pets closely and keep them under your direct control.
* Use extreme caution when encountering debris.
* Wear protective clothing and be cautious when cleaning up to avoid injury.
* Use the telephone only for emergency calls.
* Never use a generator inside homes, garages, crawlspaces, sheds, or similar areas, even when using fans or opening doors and windows for ventilation. Deadly levels of carbon monoxide can quickly build up in these areas and can linger for hours, even after the generator has shut off.

*\*Contact Information to Include:\**

* Call 9-1-1 to report emergencies.
* Residents can call 2-1-1 for public shelter locations and information.
* Learn more about hurricane and flooding preparedness at ReadyNH.gov.

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