

Safety, Before, During and... After The Storm

North Carolina has had more than its share of hurricanes and tropical storms in recent years. These natural phenomena can cause prolonged power outages. Here are some tips that can help you before, during and after a storm.

Before The Storm

- Make sure flashlights, battery powered lanterns and or other sources of light are readily available.
- Make sure flashlight and radio batteries are fresh.
- Make sure you have an adequate supply of medicine, first aid supplies and baby items.
- Homeowners with wells should draw an emergency water supply in case power to their electric water pumps is interrupted.
- Keep a supply of bottled water, non-perishable food items, batteries and firewood on hand.
- If you have an emergency heating source, learn how to use it properly to prevent fire and ensure proper ventilation.
- Consider moving yourself and your family—especially those with special needs—to an alternate location during an extended outage.

If you evacuate, shut off your electricity at the breaker box. When you return, check for electrical damage, such as frayed wires, downed power lines, sparks or the smell of hot or burned insulation. If you find such damage, don't turn your power on until service crews have made repairs. An electrician must repair damage inside your house. Jones-Onslow can only hook up power to your house. Jones-Onslow EMC personnel cannot repair your fuse or breaker box or make repairs on or inside your house.

During The Storm

- During the storm get inside a building. Stay away from windows. Flying debris can cause injury. Do not use the phone or run water during lightning storms. Do not stand in water or take a bath or shower. Currents from lightning can enter through plumbing and phone lines. Don't leave candles unattended and keep them away from furniture, draperies and other flammable materials.
- Don't open freezers and refrigerators any more than absolutely necessary.
- Listen to local radio stations for news about outages. Jones-Onslow makes a special effort to report the latest outage news to local radio stations and other media outlets.
- Turn off your heating and air conditioning systems. Unplug sensitive electronic appliances such as TVs, VCRs, microwave ovens and computers. This will protect your appliances against power fluctuations that can occur when power is restored. Be sure to wait five to ten minutes before turning

on appliances and heating systems after power is restored. Be sure to turn off your electric range during a power outage. This may prevent possible damage if you're away when the power is restored.

After The Storm

- If power lines and poles are down in your yard or in the street, always treat them as if they were energized and dangerous. Never touch them! Stay away. Call Jones-Onslow to report the location so repairs can be made as soon as possible.
- Post-storm debris can hide power lines that have fallen. Fallen trees that contain energized power lines can energize any item they come in contact with, such as a metal fence, a pond or standing water. Even the ground can be energized near fallen power lines. The real danger of fallen power lines is often hidden.
- If your electric service is out, check with your neighbors to see if they have power. If they do, you may have only a blown fuse or a tripped breaker. Never replace a fuse or reset a circuit breaker with wet hands or while standing on a wet (or even damp) surface.
- If you're without electricity and want to use a portable generator, make sure you use it in a well-ventilated area. Don't connect the generator to your home's electrical panel or fuse boxes. It may cause electricity to feed back into the power lines, which can endanger linemen and damage electric service facilities.
- If possible, avoid using candles. If you must use candles, remember that open windows and gusty winds can knock them over or blow flammable materials into them, so be careful about where you place them.
- If your power is out following a storm and you must cook food with sterno or charcoal, remember to do so outside in a well-ventilated area. Cooking indoors with sterno or charcoal will produce deadly carbon-monoxide fumes.
- Replenish your supplies of batteries, bottled water, non-perishable food items and firewood in preparation for future storms as soon as it's reasonably possible.

The next time disaster strikes, you may not have much time to act. *Prepare now for a sudden emergency.*

Learn how to protect yourself and cope with disaster by planning ahead. Discuss these ideas with your family, then prepare an emergency plan. Post the plan where everyone will see it—on the refrigerator or bulletin board.

For additional information about how to prepare for hazards in your community, contact your local emergency management office or your local chapter of the American Red Cross.

Go to the "Outage Hub" at joemc.com to view our Outage Map.

Remember, hurricanes are large powerful storms that can suddenly change direction. Check frequently on the storm's progress until all watches and warnings for your area from the National Weather Service are cancelled.

HURRICANE FACTS

The most dangerous part of a hurricane is the storm surge, a great dome of water 3-30 feet high. The peak surge comes sweeping across the coastline near where the eye of the hurricane makes landfall. The storm surge is responsible for 90% of all hurricane deaths.

When a major hurricane hits an area, it's usually the flooding, not the high winds, that kills.

Hurricanes form around an area of low pressure called an "eye". The lower the pressure, the tighter the circulation and the higher the winds.

Hurricane season is from June 1st to November 1st. The most active months are August, September, and October. September has had more major hurricanes than all other months combined

WORDS TO KNOW

TROPICAL DISTURBANCE: A moving area of thunderstorms in the Tropics that maintains its identity for 24 hours or more.

TROPICAL DEPRESSION: Rotary circulation at surface, highest constant wind speed 38 mph (33 knots).

TROPICAL STORM: Distinct rotary circulation, constant wind speed ranges 39-73 mph (34-63 knots).

TROPICAL STORM WATCH: Tropical storm conditions, including winds of 39-73 mph (34-63 knots), pose a possible threat to the area within 24-36 hours.

TROPICAL STORM WARNING: Tropical storm conditions are expected within 24 hours.

HURRICANE: Pronounced rotary circulation, constant wind speed of 74 mph (64 knots) or more.

HURRICANE WATCH: Hurricane conditions are possible for the area usually within 24-48 hours.

HURRICANE WARNING: Hurricane conditions are expected within 24 hours. Precautionary action should be taken immediately.

GALE WARNINGS: A gale warning may be issued when winds of 39-54 mph (34-47 knots) are expected.

FLASH FLOOD WATCH: A flash flood is possible in the area; stay alert.

FLOOD WARNING: A flash flood is imminent; take immediate action.

