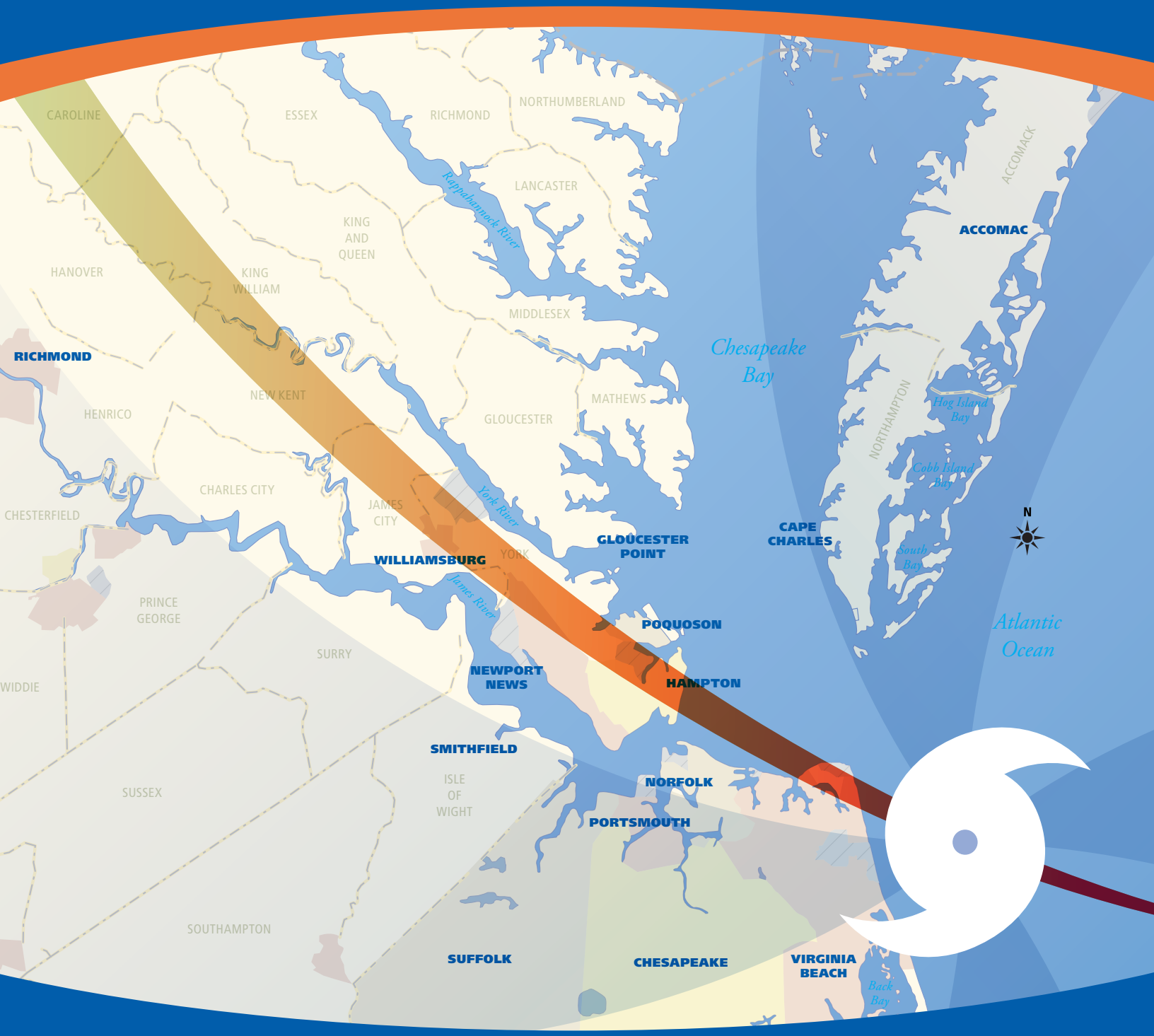
VIRGINIA HURRICANE
EVACUATION GUIDE



Ready Virginia

Ready. Hampton Roads

VDOT Virginia Department of Transportation

How to Use This Guide

Use this Virginia Hurricane Evacuation Guide to help you keep yourself and your family safe before, during and after a hurricane or tropical storm.

This guide will help you with the following:

How to Know Whether to Evacuate . . . . . This Page

How to Prepare Your Home When a Storm is Coming . . . 3

How to Plan for Those with Functional and Medical Needs 4

How to Provide Shelter for Pets 4

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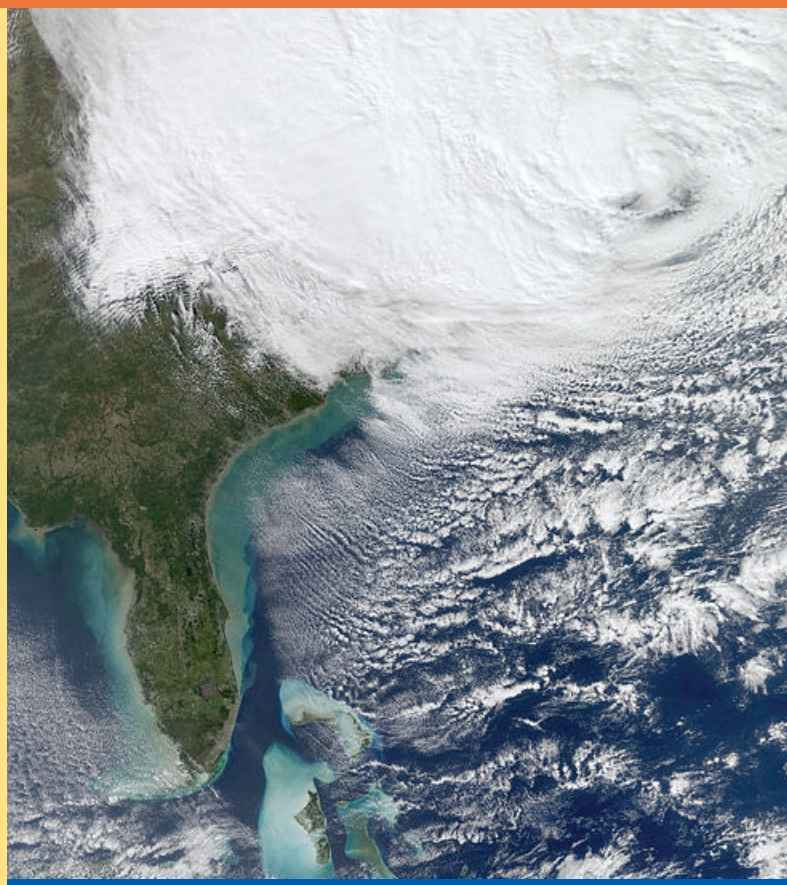


Superstorm Sandy hitting the Mid-Atlantic:
The National Weather Service

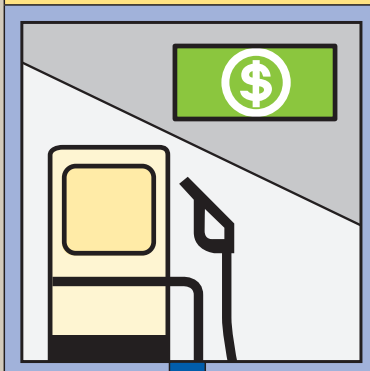
How to Know Whether to Evacuate

To know whether to evacuate, be aware of your "storm surge risk" and stay informed on current conditions by listening to local media for the announcement of an official evacuation order. "Storm surge" is an abnormal and dangerous rise of water pushed to the shore by strong winds from a hurricane or tropical storm. It is also the main reason that evacuations are ordered.

All residents and visitors of coastal Virginia should know their storm surge risk. To find out your storm surge risk, check the surge map page on www.ReadyVirginia.gov or contact your local emergency manager.

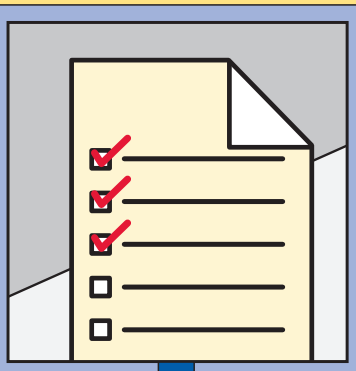
Those who may require assistance when they need to evacuate should check the "How to Plan for Those with Functional and Medical Needs" section on page 4.

How to Prepare Your Home When a Storm is Coming



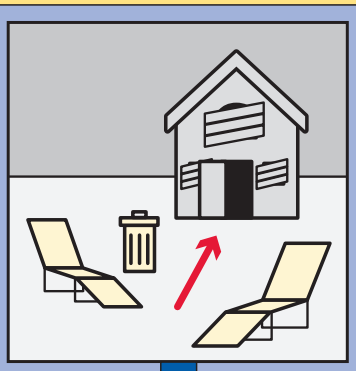
1

Get cash and gas:
Without power, gas stations and ATMs may not be working during and after a storm.



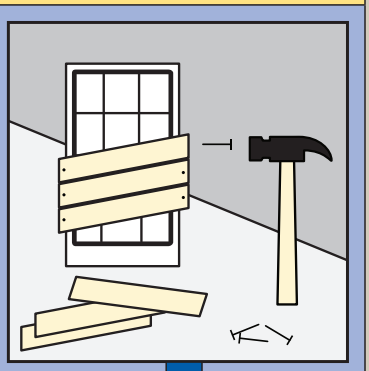
2

Stock up on supplies:
You may not be able to get to grocery stores for three days or more.



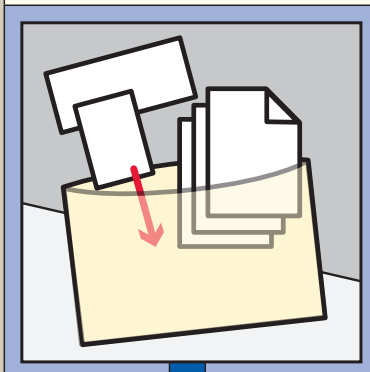
3

Bring things inside:
Trash cans, signs and outdoor furniture can blow away and damage homes or injure people.



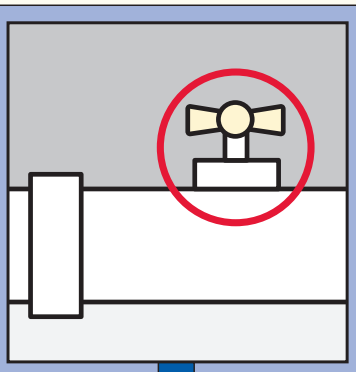
4

Cover windows with plywood or boards:
Trees, debris and other flying objects can shatter glass.



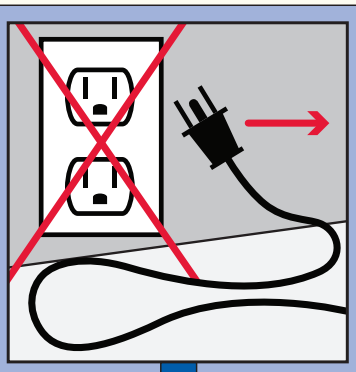
5

Bag important documents:
Passports, birth certificates and insurance policies could get lost or soaked.



6

Turn off gas:
Leaking gas lines can cause fire or explosions.



7

Unplug:
Electrical equipment can cause electrocution or be destroyed.

8

Use mobile devices and radio:
Listen to local forecasts and NOAA radio; download the "Ready Virginia" app.

Unsure about the meaning of Watches and Warnings?

Visit www.ReadyVirginia.gov for definitions.

Looking for a way to stay prepared for an emergency at your fingertips?

Download the Ready Virginia app on the App Store and on Google Play, or visit http://go.usa.gov/T7wG.

App Store

Google Play

How to Plan for Those with Functional and Medical Needs

Having a support network can help anyone survive a disaster, but having a network in place before a storm is vital for people with medical or functional needs. **If you think you will need help before, during and after a disaster, talk to family, friends and others who will be part of your personal support team.** Write down and share your emergency plan with them. Practice ways to communicate with your support network, and have a backup plan if cell phones, computers or landline phones don't work.

Be familiar with the emergency plan for your office, school or any other location where you spend a lot of time. Make sure managers at these places know your needs.

The Ready Hampton Roads Functional/Medical Needs Planning Registry is a regional emergency preparedness tool for persons with medical or functional needs. The Ready Hampton Roads Registry is a planning tool used by local emergency managers to plan for the needs of its residents during disasters. This registry does not imply or guarantee direct services of any kind but will help your emergency manager identify the community's needs in advance of an event. Registering for the Ready Hampton Roads Registry is an important step in preparing for disasters but does not replace having a personal emergency plan.

If you live in the Hampton Roads region, go to www.ReadyHamptonRoads.org, click on Functional/Medical Needs Registry, and fill out the electronic registration form. To request a form by mail or in an alternate format, or to get more information about the Ready Hampton Roads Functional/Medical Needs Planning Registry, call 757-420-8300 (voice) or 757-390-2578 (TTY) or email em@hrpdcva.gov.

How to Provide Shelter for Pets

Make a plan now. Not all emergency shelters, hotels or motels accept pets. Talk to your veterinarian or local humane society or visit the Virginia State Animal Response Team website at www.virginiasart.org in advance to learn more about emergency planning for your pets. Don't forget to include supplies for pets in your emergency supply kit.

You may need to plan on staying with family, friends, or at a pet-friendly hotel if any rooms are available. It is recommended that you bring copies of your pets' immunization records with you when traveling.

How to Safely Evacuate

Leave early. An evacuation will increase traffic on evacuation routes, and your trip will take longer than usual. Be prepared for delays. The sooner you leave, the sooner you will get to your destination and out of harm's way. You will also spend less time in traffic.

Check Road Closures and Conditions

Road closures and traffic conditions are available by calling 511 or by visiting www.511Virginia.org, where you can also download the free 511 mobile app. The Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) also provides this information through Twitter (@VaDOT for statewide, @VaDOTHR for Hampton Roads, and @VaDOTRVA for Richmond) and Facebook updates (www.facebook.com/virginiaDOT). Local radio and television broadcasts have this information, as well as local media websites and social media accounts.

If emergency officials order an evacuation, bridges and tunnels should remain open until the evacuation is terminated. It is important for residents to be prepared and ready to evacuate immediately if instructed to do so.

NOTE: VDOT does not manage the Chesapeake Bay Bridge-Tunnel, which connects Virginia Beach to the Eastern Shore of Virginia. The Chesapeake Bay Bridge-Tunnel is not an evacuation route. For closure information, visit www.cbbt.com.

Use Caution Around Bridges, Tunnels and Ferries

Based on weather conditions, many bridges and tunnels may be closed to restrict their use. If a facility is not barricaded, gated or otherwise physically closed to vehicular traffic, this does not mean the bridge or tunnel is safe for passage. Motorists should consider their personal safety before using these facilities during severe weather.

Evacuation Routes

If officials order an evacuation for your area, use one of these designated routes to leave the Hampton Roads region. Get familiar with these routes and plan to **leave early to avoid major traffic delays.**

Peninsula	• Interstate 64 • Interstate 664 North • U.S. Route 17 North • U.S. Route 60 West • Route 143 During severe weather, the Jamestown-Scotland Ferry is removed from service and should not be considered part of a reliable evacuation plan.
Southside *(South of I-264)*	• Interstates 64 & 264 • Interstate 664 North *Monitor Merrimac Memorial Bridge-Tunnel* • U.S. Route 17 North • U.S. Route 58 West • U.S. Route 460 West • Route 10 West
Eastern Shore	All Eastern Shore residents will use U.S. Route 13 North toward Salisbury, Maryland.
Evacuating Norfolk and Virginia Beach *(North of I-264)*	**Lane Reversal** Interstate 64 is the only route with a lane reversal plan, but it is not the only way out of the area. In the event of a hurricane or other disaster, the governor can order a lane reversal of the eastbound lanes on I-64 to help evacuate Hampton Roads. During a lane reversal, traffic will travel west on I-64 from Norfolk to Richmond beginning just east of the Hampton Roads Bridge-Tunnel in Norfolk (Exit 273), and continue to the I-295 interchange in Richmond (Exit 200). **For more information on the I-64 lane reversal and emergency hurricane gates, please visit the online guide at www.virginiadot.org**. **Reversing I-64** • All traffic entering I-64 at 4th View Street (Exit 273) will travel in the reversed eastbound lanes to travel westbound. • Motorists traveling westbound on I-64 before 4th View Street will be directed onto the reversed eastbound lanes. • All traffic entering I-64 west of the Hampton Roads Bridge-Tunnel will travel in the normal westbound lanes. **There are only two possible exits from the reversed lanes between Norfolk and I-295 in Richmond:** • Exit 234 in Williamsburg (Route 199) for gas, food, lodging and hospital • Exit 205 in Bottoms Bridge for gas and food Without exiting, motorists on the reversed lanes can also access a temporary comfort station on I-64 near Jefferson Avenue (near Exit 255) and the rest areas in New Kent County (between exits 214 and 211). Motorists exiting the reversed lanes at Exit 234 or Exit 205 cannot re-enter the reversed lanes. If motorists exit the reversed lanes, they can re-enter I-64 using only the normal westbound ramps. Motorists traveling in the I-64 westbound lanes can exit and enter the interstate as usual, though some entrance and exit ramps could be closed for traffic control.

The Chesapeake Bay Bridge-Tunnel is not an evacuation route. For closure information, visit www.cbbt.com.

Stay Informed

Depending on the storm, only those residents at risk for storm surge flooding or those who live in mobile homes may need to evacuate. Stay informed by listening to local media for the most up-to-date information from emergency officials. Local media will carry instructions from local, state and federal government partners for the following:

- Orders to evacuate and evacuation route details
- Locations of emergency shelters and where to find assistance
- Weather warnings and watches

As part of your emergency kit, include a hand-crank or battery-powered radio with extra batteries. NOAA weather radios also provide severe weather warnings issued directly from the National Weather Service. For traffic information, call 511 or use the 511 app on your smartphone.

How to Find Shelter or How to "Shelter in Place"

Emergency officials will provide public information about open shelters through the local media. Shelters can fill quickly, and shelter information may change frequently. Shelter information will be available by calling 211.

If you shelter where you are, or "shelter in place," be sure to follow the steps on page 3 on "How to Prepare Your Home When a Storm is Coming," and to shut off gas and water if emergency officials tell you to do so. You will need a professional to turn water and gas on after the storm.

During severe weather, public shelters should be a last resort.

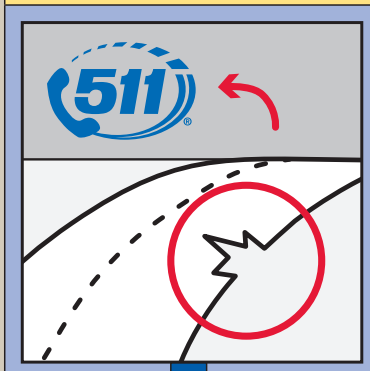
Public shelters provide basic necessities such as food, water and a small amount of space for your family to stay. However, most shelters do not provide cots, bedding or items for infants or those with functional and medical needs. Relief organizations may provide some of these items after a storm, but you should be prepared to use your own supplies until help arrives.

Consider local options.

If you have family or friends who live outside of storm surge areas, make plans ahead of time to stay with them. If you can stay in a hotel or motel outside of storm-surge areas, then you may not need to travel long distances. As a storm approaches, rooms may fill up fast, so make plans early.

Photo courtesy of the American Red Cross

How to Return Safely After Evacuation

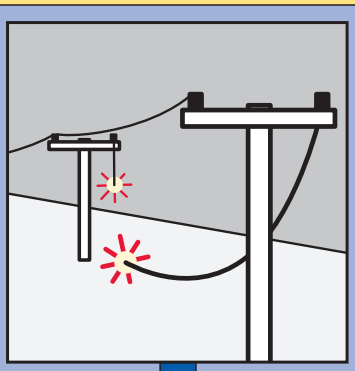


1

Before returning, check road conditions by calling 511, check www.511virginia.org, or follow VDOT social media updates. Once authorities say it is safe to return home, confirm passable road conditions by calling 511, checking www.511virginia.org, or following local media.

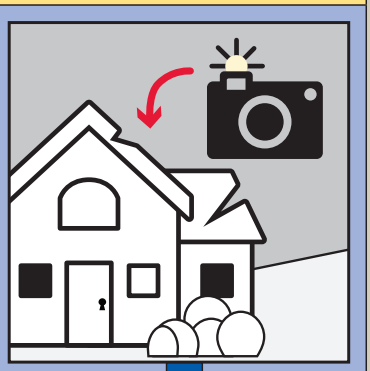
2

If you see someone who needs to be rescued, call 911 for help from official emergency responders. People have lost their lives trying to rescue others in flooded areas.



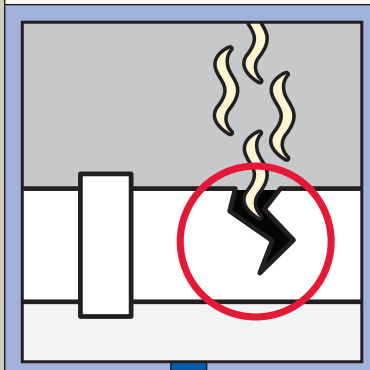
3

If you see downed power lines, stay away and report them to the electric company or police and fire departments.



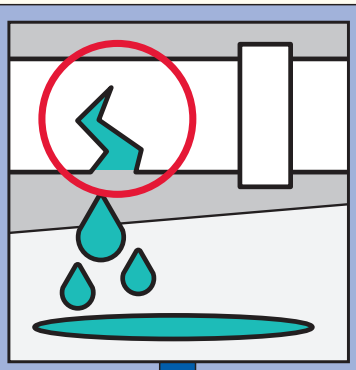
4

For insurance purposes, inspect your home, taking pictures of any damage to the structure and your belongings.



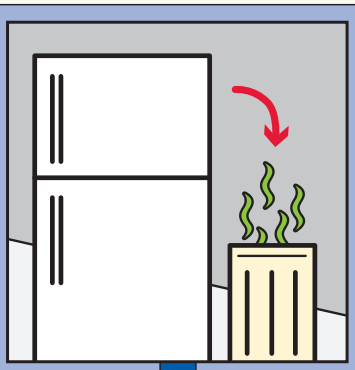
5

Check for gas leaks. If you smell gas or hear a blowing or hissing noise, stay out of the building and call the gas company.



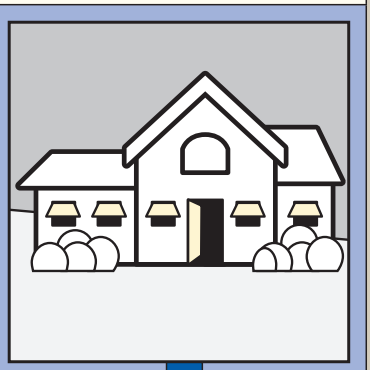
6

Check for sewer and water pipe damage. If sewer lines are damaged, avoid using the toilet. If water pipes are damaged, do not use water from a pipe. Check local media to determine the safety of drinking water.



7

Check refrigerated food for spoilage – "If in doubt, throw it out."



8

Open doors and windows to ventilate and dry the building.

How to Get Flood Insurance

There is usually a 30-day waiting period before flood insurance takes effect, so be sure to speak to your insurance agent about purchasing a policy to cover damages to structure and contents of your property.

- Contents coverage helps renters and homeowners protect their personal belongings and business inventory.
- Structure and contents coverage helps home and business owners repair or rebuild homes and business facilities.
- You can receive flood insurance payments for flood-related losses even if a national, state or local disaster is not declared.
- Buying flood insurance is the best way to protect your home, your business and your family's financial security from the costs associated with flooding. Information about the National Flood Insurance Program is available at www.FloodSmart.gov or by calling 1-800-427-2419.

What to Have in Your Emergency Supply Kit

Below is a list of items to collect before a storm threatens. Have enough supplies to last at least three days, but remember that if you need to evacuate, you may not be able to return home for more than a week. Each person should have supplies in an easy-to-carry bag, such as a backpack or gym bag. Virginia has a hurricane preparedness sales tax holiday in May to encourage residents to assemble their emergency supplies.

Visit www.ReadyVirginia.gov for more tips on building your emergency supply kit.

For an emergency supply checklist on your mobile device, download the free Ready Virginia app on the App Store and on Google Play.

App Store **Google Play**

Pocket / Wallet Guide Checklist

Emergency Kit Checklist

Before anything else, be sure to have:

- ❑ **Non-perishable food and water for three or more days (one gallon of water per person, per day)**
- ❑ **Battery-operated and/or hand-crank radio, extra batteries**
- ❑ **Emergency plan for your family or support network**
- ❑ Flashlights and extra batteries

FOLD HERE

- ❑ First-aid kit
- ❑ Spare contact lenses or glasses
- ❑ List of prescriptions, allergies and prescribing doctor(s) and at least one week's supply of medicines
- ❑ Toilet paper, soap, plastic garbage bags, personal hygiene items
- ❑ Change of clothing, shoes, bedding and pillows

FOLD HERE

- ❑ Copies of important documents, such as insurance policies, identification and bank account records, in a portable waterproof container
- ❑ Necessary items for infants, elderly or disabled family members

PET SUPPLIES

- ❑ Medications, immunization records and a first-aid kit for pet

FOLD HERE

- ❑ Sturdy leashes, muzzles and harnesses
- ❑ Bedding, carriers or cages to transport pets safely
- ❑ Current photos of your pets
- ❑ Food, drinking water, bowls, cat litter/pan and can opener
- ❑ Information on feeding schedules, medical conditions, behavior problems, and name and number of your veterinarian

Where to Find Additional Help and Information

Traffic Information
Call 511
www.511Virginia.org

Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT)
1-800-367-7623 (FOR-ROAD)
www.VirginiaDOT.org/hurricanes
www.facebook.com/VirginiaDOT
@VaDOT for statewide
@VaDOTHR for Hampton Roads
@VaDOTRVA for Richmond

Virginia Department of Emergency Management (VDEM)
1-866-782-3470
www.vaemergency.gov
www.ReadyVirginia.gov
In Spanish at www.ListoVirginia.gov
www.facebook.com/vamergency
@VDEM

American Red Cross
1-800-733-2767
www.redcross.org
www.facebook.com/redcross for national
www.facebook.com/redcrossSEVA for Coastal Virginia Region
@RedCross for national
@RCCoastalVA for Coastal Virginia Region

Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)
www.fema.gov

FEMA Hurricane Hazards Fact Sheet
www.fema.gov/hazard/hurricane

FEMA Kids Page
www.ready.gov/kids

FEMA National Flood Insurance Program
1-888-CALL-FLOOD
1-800-638-6620
www.floodsmart.gov

Your Emergency Contact Information

Ready Virginia is a statewide public education effort to prepare Virginians for all hazards. Ready Hampton Roads is a regional initiative to increase the emergency preparedness of Hampton Roads residents.

The best source of emergency preparedness information for your community is your local emergency manager. Links to local emergency management office websites are available at http://go.usa.gov/TF6m

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Emergency Contacts

Emergency Contact Name:
_____
Phone #:
_____
Emergency Contact Name:
_____
Phone #:
_____

Neighborhood Meeting Place:
_____
_____

Out-of-Town Meeting Place:
_____
_____

Emergency Resources

Traffic Information
Call 511
www.511Virginia.org

Shelter Information
Call 211

Virginia Department of Emergency Management
www.vaemergency.gov
Toll-free line 1-866-782-3470
facebook.com/vaemergency
@VDEM

American Red Cross
1-800-733-2767
www.redcross.org

FEMA
www.fema.gov

Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT)
www.VirginiaDOT.org/hurricanes
www.facebook.com/VirginiaDOT
@VaDOT for statewide
@VaDOTHR for Hampton Roads
@VaDOTRVA for Richmond
1-800-367-7623 (FOR-ROAD)

For more tips on preparing your family, business and animals for an emergency, visit www.ReadyVirginia.gov.

For information in Spanish, visit www.ListoVirginia.gov.