



COASTAL STORMS RESPONSE GUIDE



Coastal storms, which include nor'easters, tropical storms and hurricanes, can cause severe flooding, strong winds, heavy rain and storm surges. Strong winds and high waters can create hazards such as falling trees, downed power lines, flying debris and loss of heat, water and power.



Know who is at risk.

People most vulnerable to injury or death from coastal storms include:

- ▶ People who live in evacuation zones. Visit <http://www.nyc.gov/hurricane> to find your zone and see if an evacuation order is in effect.
- ▶ People 65 years or older
- ▶ People who are socially isolated, have limited mobility or are unable to leave the house

Protect yourself and reach out to anyone you know who may be at risk.

GENERAL GUIDELINES

- ▶ Get health information from credible sources (nyc.gov, cdc.gov and 311).
- ▶ Sign up for Notify NYC for information about emergency events.
- ▶ If you or anyone you know feels overwhelmed or needs help coping, visit lifenet.nyc for free help in your language.
- ▶ In an emergency, always call 911.



Follow directions and protect yourself and family.

- ▶ Bring in any outdoor objects that could cause damage or hurt someone if picked up by the wind.
- ▶ Do not surf or perform any other water sports until officials say conditions are safe.
- ▶ If you are told to evacuate:
 - ▶ Grab your “Go Bag” with your important documents, identification, medication, bottled water, nonperishable food, a first aid kit and a battery-operated flashlight and radio. Go to <http://www.nyc.gov> and search “Go Bag” for more information.
 - ▶ Stay with friends or family who live outside the evacuation zones. If you have no other shelter, go to an evacuation center. Call 311 to find your nearest evacuation center and for information about transportation options.
 - ▶ Note that legal pets and service animals are allowed in all NYC coastal storm shelters. Be sure to bring your pet’s dog license, food, leash, cage and medication.

- If you stay at home:
 - Stay out of basements and move to a higher floor if you live in a location that is at risk for flooding.
 - Stay away from windows that may break during strong winds.



Stay alert after the storm.

- Avoid deep and standing water, downed power lines, unstable trees and branches and wet or slippery surfaces. Call the power company to report fallen power lines and 311 to report unsafe conditions.
- Get help to lift heavy items and avoid dark staircases if possible.
- Secure ladders and use them only on level ground.
- Check on vulnerable friends, relatives and neighbors if it is safe to do so.
- Prevent mold growth.
 - Clean and dry wet objects.
 - Remove wet, porous materials such as upholstered furniture.
 - Fix any leaks or report them to your building owner.
 - Use dehumidifiers if available. If the power is out, open windows for ventilation.
 - Visit <http://www.nyc.gov/health> and search “mold” for more information on preventing mold growth.



Keep food safe if there is a power outage.

- Keep foods that need little to no cooking and do not need refrigeration.
- Keep refrigerator and freezer doors closed as much as possible to prevent food from spoiling.
 - Move milk, cheese, meats and other perishables into the freezer compartment. If the freezer is only partially full, keep all items close together and stacked on top of each other.
 - If doors remain closed, food in the refrigerator will stay cold for four hours, and food in a full freezer will stay cold for two days (one day for a half-full freezer).
 - Throw away any refrigerated food that has an unusual odor, color or texture or that may have been touched by sewage water. **If in doubt, throw it out.**



Prevent carbon monoxide poisoning.

- Make sure you have a working carbon monoxide detector and smoke alarm in your home. If your building owner does not provide a carbon monoxide detector and smoke alarm, call 311.
 - For more information on how to test your carbon monoxide detector, visit <http://www.nyc.gov/health> and search “Prevent Carbon Monoxide Poisoning.”
- Never use gas stoves or ovens to heat your home. Kerosene heaters and propane space heaters are illegal in New York City.
- If you smell gas or your carbon monoxide detector goes off, open the windows, then go outside and call 911.
 - Do not re-enter until your home is declared safe.
 - Do not use candles, matches or other open flames to check for leaking gas lines.
- Use generators outdoors and away from doors, windows and vents. Always follow the manufacturer’s instructions.