

# HURRICANES . . .



#### LOOK FORWARD TO SAFETY

Natural disasters are of many types, but one most familiar to Massachusetts is the hurricane. Since 1886 nearly 400 hurricanes of varying degrees of intensity have hit the Commonwealth.

Hurricanes are more prevalent during August, September and October, with the month of September being the time when the larger number have wreaked havoc in Massachusetts.

It is wise that each and every citizen in the Commonwealth know the safety precautionary measures to take. Individual preparedness is the key to survival.

In time of a major disaster, your local Emergency Management organization is the coordinating force to effect recovery.

#### **SAFETY PRECAUTIONS**

Safety precautions and safety measures as issued by the National Weather Service and Emergency Management will be helpful when <u>warnings</u> of an approaching hurricane are received.

- 1. Keep your radio or television turned on and listen for the latest warnings and advisories. If power fails, use your car radio or a portable transistor radio.
- 2. Pay no attention to rumors.
- 3. Get away from low-lying beaches or other locations which may be swept by high tides or storm waves. If passage to high ground is over a road likely to be under water, leave early! Don't run the risk of being marooned. The same applies to swellings in the vicinity of streams which may overflow.
- 4. If your house is out of danger from high tides or streams and is well built, then it is probably the safest place to weather the storm. Never remain in a mobile home.
- 5. Be alert for high-water in any areas where streams or rivers may flood after heavy rains. Hurricanes are almost always accompanied by torrential rains.
- Board up, put on storm shutters, tape or otherwise protect windows. Danger to small windows is chiefly from flying debris while larger windows may be broken by wind pressure if unprotected.
- 7. Get in extra food, especially items which can be eaten without cooking or with very little preparation. Remember that electric power may be off and you may be without refrigeration.
- 8. If emergency cooking facilities are necessary, be sure that they are in working order.

- Sterilize jugs, bottles, cooking utensils, and fill drinking water as municipal water service may be interrupted.
- Have flashlight and/or other emergency lights in working order and keep them immediately available.
- 11. Be sure to have gasoline in your car tank. If electric power is off, filling stations may be not be able to operate pumps for several days.
- 12. Check on everything that might blow away or be torn loose. Garbage cans, garden tools, toys, signs, porch furniture, awnings and other objects become weapons of destruction in hurricane winds. Store inside if at all possible.
- 13. Be sure that a window or door can be opened on the lee side of the house the side opposite the one facing the wind. This reduces dangerous inside pressure.
- 14. Stay indoors away from windows.
- 15. If the center or "eye of the storm passes directly over, there will be a lull in the wind lasting from a few minutes to half an hour or more. Stay in a safe place. Make emergency repairs during the lull if necessary, but remember the wind will return suddenly from the opposite direction, frequently with greater violence.

# **SAFETY MEASURES**

After passage of the hurricane, the following safety measures will prove valuable.

- 1. Seek medical aid at Red Cross disaster stations or hospitals for persons injured during the storm.
- 2. Don't touch loose or dangling wires. Report such damage to the light and power company, or to nearest police officer.
- 3. Report broken sewer or water mains to Water Department.
- 4. Guard against spoiled food in mechanical refrigerators, if power has been off any length of time.
- 5. Unless you are qualified to render valuable emergency assistance, stay away from disaster areas where you may hamper first aid or rescue work.

- 6. Drive automobiles cautiously. Streets filled with debris are dangerous so keep eyes on the road. Along the coast, soil may be washed from beneath the pavement, which may collapse under the weight of vehicles. The same applies to roads following stream beds.
- 7. Be alert to prevent fires. Lowered water pressure makes fire-fighting difficult after storms.
- 8. Take down shutters and save lumber. Store in handy place for future use.
- 9. Consult your local newspaper, radio and TV for the opening of State Disaster Assistance Centers to aid individuals who have suffered losses due to the hurricane.

### LIST OF LOCAL EMERGENCY TELEPHONE NUMBERS

Ambulance Service	 Police
Emergency Management	 Power Company
Fire	Public Works
Hospital	 Red Cross
Physician	 Salvation Army
Telephone Company	

# - REMEMBER -

**WATCH** means hurricane may threaten within 36 to 48 hours. **WARNING** means hurricane is expected to strike within 24 hours.

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MASSACHUSETTS EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY (MEMA)

The responsibility of this Agency is the coordination of all resources of the Commonwealth to avert or to combat the effects of disaster, natural or man-caused.

Through its efforts you can and will survive and recover from disasters, whether they be from hurricane, tornado, fire, flood or nuclear attack. This Agency is concerned with you as an individual and your ability to be prepared to survive.