



# **DISASTER PREPAREDNESS PLAN**

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## **ISLE OF PALMS DISASTER PREPAREDNESS PLAN**

### ORGANIZATION

Because of its very low elevation and large number of trees, Isle of Palms is particularly vulnerable to the danger from torrential rains, which precede tropical storm winds by more than 24 hours. These rains may cause trees to fall and block roadways. **Combined with high tides, storm surge may make exiting from the island impossible.** Because of this vulnerability, the Charleston County Emergency Management may recommend evacuation of the island more than 24 hours before the arrival of tropical storm winds.

Of particular concern is the Sullivan's Island Causeway to Mt. Pleasant. This roadway has an elevation only a few feet above sea level and could quickly become submerged.

### RESPONSIBILITY FOR EVACUATION

Individual residents and guests should evacuate when evacuation is recommended. Recommendations will always be on the safe side even if it turns out that evacuation was not necessary. Hurricanes behave erratically, and strength, speed, and direction can change from hour to hour.

The **Governor** or the **Mayor** may order evacuation. For a category 3 storm or larger, Charleston County Emergency Management may evacuate the island. High winds and storm surge may be present.

Emergency personnel cannot keep up with absentee owners or rental houseguests. Owners should leave a copy of this plan in their units for their personal or houseguests' use.

Rental agencies should develop their own policies and plans with respect to notification of guests when storm alerts are announced. Rental agencies can get storm updates by calling the Municipal Emergency Operations Center (MEOC) at 843-886-6522 or City Hall at 843-886-6428.

## TROPICAL TERMS

### **Hurricane**

Once a tropical storm's constant wind speed reaches 74 mph or greater, it is classified as a hurricane.

### **Hurricane Watch**

An announcement that a hurricane or hurricane conditions pose a threat to a coastal area. This generally occurs within 36 hours of expected landfall.

### **Hurricane Warning**

A warning issued that a hurricane is expected to make landfall in a specified coastal within 24 hours. When a hurricane warning is issued, immediately take all precautions. If the hurricane path is unusual or erratic, the warning may be issued only a few hours before the beginning of hurricane conditions.

### **Small Craft Advisory**

When winds of 29-38 mph or hazardous wave conditions threaten a coastal area, small craft operators are advised to remain in port and to not venture into the open sea.

### **Storm Surge**

The combination of storm surge, battering waves and high tide, is often the hurricane's most dangerous killer. Nine out of ten hurricane fatalities are caused by the storm surge.

### SAFIR/Simpson Hurricane Scale

<b>Category</b>	<b>Winds</b>	<b>Storm Surge</b>	<b>Barometer</b>
1 Minimal	74-95 mph	4-5 feet	above 28.9"
2 Moderate	96-110 mph	6-8 feet	28.50"-28.91"
3 Extensive	111-130 mph	9-12 feet	27.91"-28.47"
4 Extreme	131-155 mph	13-18 feet	27.17"-27.88"
5 Catastrophic	over 155 mph	over 19 feet	below 27.17"

PERSONALIZING YOUR HURRICANE PLAN

**Citizens who leave early will be able to choose their preferred evacuation route. Citizens who do not leave until evacuation orders are given will be required to follow designated evacuation routes.**

**Charleston County designated evacuation route for Isle of Palms:** Take the Isle of Palms connector (SC 517) to go to US 17 where the right lane will turn north onto US 17. Next, proceed to take SC 41 to SC 402; then US 52 to SC 375; then to US 521 to SC 261; and then US 378 to Columbia.

Notes:

- Evacuees using the left lanes of the Isle of Palms connector will turn left to go to I-526 west and then on to I-26 west.
- Evacuees on I-526 west approaching I-26 from East Cooper will be directed to the normal lanes of I-26 westbound if in the right lane of I-526.
- Those in the left lane of I-526 will be directed into the reversed lanes of I-26.

1. As you plan to evacuate the area, list here the roads you have selected for evacuation.

\_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_ then

\_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_ then

\_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_ then

2. Determine where the family is going to go. The National Weather Service has recommended evacuation as far as 200 miles inland.

Motel, hotel, home of relative, home of friend, or public shelter

\_\_\_\_\_ Tel.# \_\_\_\_\_

3. Family members who are not ambulatory or have other challenges will need help in an evacuation. Call the Fire Department NOW at 843-886-4410 to register any family members for special needs assistance. Use the reverse side of this paper to write down what arrangements you have made and the names and phone numbers of the contacts.

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4. Review your current insurance coverage with your agent at the beginning of hurricane season. When a storm is approaching, it may be too late to increase coverage.
5. Secure important papers you plan to take with you like birth certificates, insurance papers, etc. Place them in watertight bags.
6. Register now for re-entry passes. Passes are available throughout the year at the Isle of Palms Police Department at 30 J.C. Long Boulevard. The Police Department can be contacted about passes via email at [hurricane@iop.net](mailto:hurricane@iop.net) or telephone at 843-886-6522. Decals will NOT be issued within eighteen (18) hours of landfall. Residents must get new decals every five (5) years. Previous decals will be void. Do not attempt to return to the island until the Mayor or a designee declares it is safe to do so.

### PROCEDURE FOR STORM ALERTS

Each family or individual should maintain a personalized hurricane preparedness plan.

The Isle of Palms hurricane preparedness program foresees the following stages:

1. Storm alert, 2. Leaving early, 3. Evacuation.

### STORM ALERT - STAGE ONE

#### AREA ACTION

The National Weather Service office in Charleston will identify all storms that present a danger to the area and will alert the Charleston County Emergency Management Department, which alerts all municipalities and County agencies. Off-duty police and fire personnel will be recalled to duty. The County Emergency Operations Center will commence 24-hour operation.

#### LOCAL ACTION

As soon as the Mayor (or Council's designee) of Isle of Palms notifies the chair of the Emergency Preparedness Committee of a storm alert, the following actions will be set in motion:

- A. Municipal Emergency Operations Center (MEOC) will be established at the Public Safety Building, 30 J.C. Long Boulevard, 843-886-6522, and will be staffed on a continuous basis until the alert is over or until an evacuation is ordered. The Isle of Palms MEOC will coordinate with the Charleston County Emergency Operations Center throughout the emergency.

B. Emergency personnel will be called to the MEOC and brought up-to-date on storm progress, probable strength, and landfall.

C. The MEOC will alert island businesses and rental agencies. Island businesses are responsible for alerting their employees; rental agencies will be responsible for alerting their guests.

D. Once South Carolina Electric & Gas (SCE&G) is informed by the Isle of Palms MEOC that an evacuation is essentially complete, SCE&G may turn off all power to Isle of Palms at its substation. This is necessary to minimize the threat fire and electrical hazards.

### **PLANNING TO LEAVE**

#### **THINGS TO DO DURING STORM ALERT PERIOD**

At this point in time, begin to consider evacuation and make preliminary preparations.

<b>ACTION:</b>	<b>PERSON ASSIGNED</b>
1. Check official bulletins for storm's progress	_____
2. Fuel and service automobiles	_____
3. Notify neighbors and next of kin of your plans & where you may be reached	_____

<b>Persons to Notify</b>	<b>Phone Number</b>	<b>Done</b>
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

4. Move lightweight objects upstairs or put on beds or cabinet tops.

Item to be moved	Done	Item to be moved	Done
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

5. Prior to leaving, fill containers with at least three (3) days supply of drinking water and put them in a high. You will need one (1) gallon per person for each day upon return.

6. Prior to leaving, fill bathtub with water to use for flushing toilet upon return.

7. Prior to leaving, turn your freezer to maximum cold because SCE&G may turn off power at any time.

8. Prior to leaving, check and replenish supply of prescription medications. You should have a minimum of two (2) weeks' supply.

9. Prior to leaving, turn off LP Gas at tanks. Call the Fire Department 843-886-4410 in advance for instruction and assistance.

**ACTION:**

Inventory available supplies and prepare a list of things to buy to take with you upon evacuation.

Selected food items that are easy to prepare and do not require cooking or refrigeration. Food supplies should be sufficient to feed your family for one (1) week.

<u>ITEM</u>	<u>AMOUNT</u>	<u>ITEM</u>	<u>AMOUNT</u>
Peanut butter	_____	Bread	_____
Juice drinks	_____	Baby food	_____
Crackers	_____	Pet food/supplies	_____
Water	_____	_____	_____
Canned tuna fish	_____	_____	_____

**OTHER ESSENTIAL ITEMS**

Paper plates & cups	_____	Plastic trash bags	_____
Plastic utensils	_____	Duct or masking tape	_____
Diapers	_____	Paper towels/Napkins	_____
Cooler	_____	Manual can opener	_____
Hygiene products	_____	Toothbrush/paste	_____
Alternate cooking source (Matches, sterno)	_____	Towelettes (wet)	_____

**FIRST AID SUPPLIES**

Band-Aids	_____	Aspirin	_____
Prescription Medication	_____	Tape/Gauze	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

**STOCK BATTERIES FOR THE FOLLOWING:**

	Type	Quantity
Flashlights	_____	_____
Lanterns	_____	_____
Smoke detectors	_____	_____
Portable TVs	_____	_____
Portable Radios	_____	_____

Do not stay home without a battery operated smoke detector. If you do not have one, please notify the Fire Department NOW at 843-886-4410 for a smoke detector and installation at no charge.

**PERSONAL ITEMS**

Eye glasses _____	Camera _____
Rain suit _____	Insurance papers _____
Small valuables _____	Photographs/albums, etc _____
Clothing for several days _____	Credit Cards/Cash _____
Birth certificate/shot records/driver's license, etc. _____	

Before strong winds arrive, move loose, lightweight items inside.

Lawn furniture _____	Trash cans _____
Toys _____	Boats _____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Tie down heavy objects that cannot be moved. Board windows and wedge sliding glass doors before the strong winds arrive.

**BRING PETS INSIDE**

Prepare a supply of towels, blankets, throw rugs, and plastic, waterproof covering in case of leaks or water seepage.

STAY AWAY FROM WINDOWS WHILE INSIDE.

**STAGE TWO - LEAVE EARLY WHENEVER POSSIBLE**

As a barrier island, the Isle of Palms is at increased risk. Voluntary evacuations will no longer be called, so citizens and visitors should avoid the heightened anxiety of an evacuation by leaving as early as possible based on National Weather Service forecasts. The following actions will be taken to encourage people to leave early:

- A. Radio and TV will broadcast the recommendation.
- B. The Isle of Palms Fire Department will dispatch trucks throughout the island broadcasting the recommendation.
- C. The MEOC will notify island businesses and rental agencies.

**IF YOU NEED HELP**

For fire, police or medical emergencies, call 911.

For removal of a tree or other object blocking a road or driveway, call the MEOC at 843-886-6522.

**Take the Following Actions:**

1. Pets are often not allowed in public shelters. Make appropriate plans to take them with you. Environments that are not safe for people are not safe for pets. \_\_\_\_\_  
(Done)
2. Place bath towels and throw rugs around windows and doors to reduce water seepage.  
\_\_\_\_\_ (Done)
3. Place insecticides and herbicides in watertight containers in a high spot.  
\_\_\_\_\_ (Done)
4. Unplug small appliances and place them in plastic trash bags or other waterproof containers.

Toaster _____	Coffee maker _____
Computers _____	Radio/TV _____
Microwave _____	_____

5. Place waterproof plastic coverings over items that may be damaged from leaking roofs.

Piano _____	Lamps _____
Paintings _____	Furniture _____
_____	_____

6. **ONLY IF YOU KNOW HOW**, turn off:

Main Electric Breaker	_____
Gas	_____
Water	_____
Hot Water Heater	_____

Call the Fire Department NOW at 843-886-4410 for instructions if you do not know how.

7. Lock all windows and doors.

### **USE DESIGNATED EVACUATION ROUTES**

### **WATCH FOR DANGLING ELECTRIC WIRES and FLOODED LOW SPOTS**

### **DRIVE SAFELY**

### **STAGE THREE - EVACUATION**

If and when evacuation is ordered, the following actions will be taken:

- A. Police will block island access at the Breach Inlet Bridge and IOP Connector to all except emergency and official vehicles. Emergency and official vehicles do not include private vehicles.

By the time a mandatory evacuation order is issued, authorities may already be blocking island-bound traffic from the Mt. Pleasant causeways.

- B. If the environment is safe and personnel are available, the Fire and Police Departments will go door-to-door to advise citizens of the evacuation.
- C. Radio, television, and the City's website at [www.iop.net](http://www.iop.net) will carry the evacuation order.
- D. Residents and guests who wait for an evacuation order may not be able to evacuate to a location of their choice but will be directed to the nearest available public storm shelter. **MAKE PLANS NOW AND LEAVE EARLY FOR THE MOST OPTIONS.**
- E. The MEOC will remain at the Public Safety Building at 30 J.C. Long Boulevard as long as it is deemed prudent. In the event of an evacuation, the MEOC will relocate to the Charleston County Satellite Complex on Iron Bridge Road in Mt. Pleasant (across the street from BiLo, on the other side of the Connector) or to the Homewood Suites.
- F. The Island Fire and Police Department personnel will remain on the island until they must evacuate for the safety.

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Once the Fire and Police Departments evacuate, there will be NO FIRE, POLICE OR EMERGENCY MEDICAL ASSISTANCE AVAILABLE ON THE ISLAND. At this point, evacuation accesses will be blocked.

## **AFTER THE STORM**

There are two (2) storage facilities for deadly CHLORINE GAS that is used for water purification on the island. There are at least four (4) other locations where the gas is used and smaller amounts are on hand. There are also thousands of bottles of butane and propane gas used for home heating and outdoor grills, etc.

Since no one can predict the devastating forces of a hurricane, earthquake, or other natural disaster, the Fire Department, Police Department and public officials will be allowed immediate access to the island TO CONDUCT A SAFETY INSPECTION OF THE ABOVE STORAGE FACILITIES AND TO EVALUATE SAFETY CONDITIONS.

Visual inspections of the building exteriors will be executed and findings will be reported to the MEOC.

**All residents will be granted full access to the island immediately upon determination that no abnormally dangerous conditions exist from either the chlorine or explosive gases.**

If return to the island is delayed for any reason, a video and photography recording team will be promptly dispatched around the island to photograph streets and areas as the roadways are cleared and access is available. These videotapes and photographs will be forwarded to the island information center in Mt. Pleasant where they will be available for viewing by island residents on a continuous basis. Location of this information center will be announced at the time it is established.

The Fire Department, security forces, SCE&G, street cleaning personnel, and disaster survey personnel have first priority on the island. Please cooperate with these people. Please stay out of their way. Help us institute a quick and orderly return to the island.

The Isle of Palms Water Commission monitors supplied water on a continuous basis and is prepared to re-chlorinate as necessary. In cases where pipes are broken, water may be shut off or may not be drinkable. **DO NOT** drink City water until it is determined it is safe to do so. If, after returning home, you have any questions about the condition of the water supply, call the Isle of Palms Water Commission at 843-886-6148 for information. Water supplies may be limited and pressure low.

Electric power may be badly affected by a storm, so be prepared to function for several days with intermittent or no power. STAY AWAY from downed power lines as power could be turned on to them at any time and without warning.

Do not connect personal generators into a circuit; this may prove to be very dangerous. As electrical power comes on, please be cautious because power may fluctuate widely, and these surges can damage air conditioners and other appliances – reinforcing the necessity to turn off main breaker before leaving your residence.

Power will first be restored to the City buildings and important support complexes, and second to residences. If your meter has been damaged, it will be necessary for the property owner to have an electrician repair it before you can be reconnected for power.

When you return, watch for animals, snakes, and insects, like bees or wasps, which may have taken refuge in your garage, storage area or home. Even domesticated pets may be disoriented and harm you.

Use caution in your clean-up efforts. Your debris should be placed on the front of your property so it will not obstruct the roadways, street or fire hydrants. Your debris may not be removed for some time, and you will be informed of any disposal policies and procedures as they develop. It may be delivered to a burn site, but debris is NOT to be burned on private property.

Use water sparingly as sewage and water systems may not be functioning properly or at full capacity.

A curfew may be initiated by the Mayor, as deemed necessary, to maintain safety and security of property and residents.

**To help speed the City's cleanup effort:**

1. Avoid island travel to keep roads open for cleanup crews.
2. Drive defensively – vehicles involved in island cleanup have the right of way.
3. Keep storm drains, roads, and electrical poles clear of logs and debris.
4. Inspect for water and gas leaks. **Call 911 if a gas leak is found.** For a water leak, call 843-886-6148.
5. Stay away from downed power lines; assume they are live.
6. Coordinate through our volunteer groups to expedite services and ensure fair prices.
7. Discourage non-residents from unnecessary visits to the island until resources and road capacity are restored.
8. Above all--**PLEASE BE PATIENT.**