

Hurricane Safety Tips

After the Storm

Hurricanes have been known to cause severe damage to property, as well as disrupt lives and cause serious injury. After a hurricane, there may be power outages, flooding, downed electrical wires, and debris, all of which can be a hazard to your health and safety.

Power Outages and Carbon Monoxide

Gasoline-powered generators release carbon monoxide (CO) which can be deadly. If your power goes out and you are using a gasoline-powered generator for energy, be sure that the generator is installed safely and far enough from your home. Never use your generator indoors or in an enclosed area, like a garage.

Electrical Wires

Strong winds from a hurricane can knock down electrical wires. Some of these wires may be energized. If you see a downed wire, **DO NOT TOUCH IT** as it could shock you and even kill you. It is urgent to report down wires to the police or fire department.

Flooding

Severe rain during a hurricane could cause flooding which may cause structural damage, mold, and loosen asbestos or lead pieces. Broken glass, splintered wood, exposed nails, and water-damaged electrical devices can cause cuts, electric shock and other injuries.

After a flood you should...

- Check your home for loose power lines, gas leaks, foundation cracks or other damage.
- Turn off your electricity before entering your home to avoid electrical shock.
- Enter your home carefully. If your door is hard to open, it could be because your ceiling is sagging. Open the door and wait for debris to fall before entering.
- Check your ceiling for signs of sagging.
- Shovel out any mud and remove water quickly with a mop, squeegee, water-rated pump or wet vacuum.
- Take pictures of your home, its contents and any damage for your insurance claim.
- Roads may be flooded and bridges washed out so avoid driving in flooded areas.

Mold

Water damage will cause mold to grow in your home. Porous items that have stayed wet in a home for more than 48 hours should be removed and thrown away. People with asthma and those sensitive to mold should consider having somebody else do the clean-up.

Food

Food may spoil if there is a loss of electricity. Check for and throw away any spoiled food.

Animals

Snakes, rodents, raccoons and other wild animals may have been driven out as well. When working around your home, be aware of animals as they may bite or carry disease.

Insects

Standing water after the storm can be the perfect place for disease-causing insects, like mosquitoes, to lay eggs. Empty out containers with standing water. Use bug-repellent which has 10-35% DEET to protect yourself from bug bites.

Drinking Water

After a storm, water from public water supplies and private wells may not be safe to drink. Water that is dark, has an odor, or has floating pieces should NOT be used. Listen to the news or your water company to know if your water is safe.

For more information visit www.ct.gov/hurricane or dial 2-1-1.

Until next month, be safe!

Submitted by Captain Tony Orsini, Terryville Fire Department Health & Safety Officer

Sources of information:

Connecticut Department of Emergency Management and Homeland Security

Connecticut Department of Public Health