

Battening Down the Hatches

Preparing the job site when the big one blows through

What's the first thing you'd do when a hurricane warning sounds in the middle of a job? A ToolBase TechNote entitled "Hurricane Preparedness for Builders," by the NAHB Research Center of Upper Marlboro, Md., offers a preparation plan (reprinted with permission at right), which itemizes tasks you might not have thought about beforehand.

In addition to the tasks on this checklist, the TechNote includes a number of other important considerations to be made both before and immediately after the storm. Some of the key preparations, which may not be so obvious at first, include:

- Review your insurance coverage; be aware if you have contents coverage, replacement value, and loss of business coverage.
- Keep important telephone numbers with you. Develop a "telephone tree" with important members of your company and also develop a contingency plan to operate out of another site, if needed.
- Establish a contact point out of the area, so your employees and subs can keep in touch. Don't depend just on your cell phone; use the phone of a friend, relative, or

other builder friend outside your area for contact. Make sure your customers and suppliers know where to reach you.

- Secure adequate cash to operate for several days.

With the right preparation, your site and your business will be better able to weather the storm.

For more information, visit the NAHB Research Center's ToolBase Services, www.toolbase.org.



Builder Hurricane Preparation Plan

Hurricane Conditions Predicted within Five Days

- ☐ Clean job site daily
- ☐ Inspect and secure tie-downs for all construction trailers
- ☐ Reschedule material deliveries that have little impact on your production
- ☐ Make sure your staff is aware of important phone numbers and your contingency plan
- ☐ Contact your subcontractors and outline your expectations for securing job sites, explain your contingency plan, and give them phone numbers where they can reach you
- ☐ Make sure your vehicles have flashlights, and drinking water
- ☐ Make sure your computers are surge-protected and the UPS functions properly
- ☐ Obtain printer cartridges, paper and computer disks or Read/Write CDs

Hurricane Watch is Issued

- ☐ Police the job site and reasonable area around the construction zones to assure all loose debris is removed
- ☐ Arrange to have dumpsters removed
- ☐ Halt material deliveries
- ☐ Stop production of any work that is highly vulnerable to damage
- ☐ Complete tasks such as concrete work if it may prevent damage to the job site
- ☐ Have your subs secure or remove unnecessary materials or equipment from job sites
- ☐ Prepare to cover windows and glass doors
- ☐ Plan for the next day as if a Hurricane Warning will be issued, make sure there is enough time to complete the tasks necessary for a Hurricane Warning

Hurricane Warning is Issued

- ☐ Make sure the dumpsters have been removed or are empty
- ☐ Remove scaffolding
- ☐ Secure or remove all building materials
- ☐ Turn off power at circuit breakers to any temporary electric service and to homes under construction
- ☐ Close and cover all windows with plywood
- ☐ Back-up all computer records
- ☐ Make sure your office is secured
- ☐ If authorities call for evacuation, leave immediately, tell your employees to leave

Hurricane Watch – 3 days out	Hurricane Warning – Within one day
A hurricane or hurricane conditions (winds of 74 mph or greater) may threaten your area within 36 hours	A warning that sustained winds of 74 mph or higher are expected in your area within 24 hours