

HURRICANE PREPAREDNESS AND RECOVERY PLANS

Hurricanes are powerful storm systems that must be taken seriously from the moment they develop. As Helene, a Category 4 hurricane, demonstrated, they can be devastating, causing widespread damage. While these powerful combinations of high winds and heavy rain are forces of nature that can't be stopped, the havoc they wreak can be reduced before and after they reach land. This can happen through careful preparation and implementation of a solid hurricane recovery plan.

THE IMPACT OF A HURRICANE

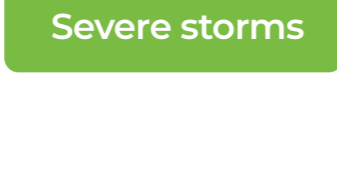
The damage from a hurricane when it makes landfall can be brutal. Its impact can also affect communities and their residents in many ways.

ECONOMIC IMPACT

From 2020 to 2022, the U.S. had 60 weather and climate disasters that exceeded **\$1 billion** in damage.

From 1980 to August 2023, the estimated damage from U.S.-based weather and climate disasters totaled **\$2.6 trillion**.

In addition to hurricane damage, damage was caused by:



THE HUMAN COST



An average of about **100 Americans** died each year from hurricanes from 2000 to 2021.

The highest number of fatalities occurred during the 2005 hurricane season.

INFAMOUS HURRICANES

Hurricane Katrina

- Made landfall on the northern Gulf Coast
- Levelled the greater New Orleans, Louisiana, area
- Inflicted damage in Alabama, Mississippi, and western Florida
- Caused an estimated **\$108 billion** in total damage (**\$200 billion** when adjusted for inflation)
- Was the costliest hurricane in U.S. history
- Caused **1,833** fatalities

Hurricane Ian

- Made landfall on the southeastern U.S. coastline
- Battered South Carolina and North Carolina
- Caused substantial damage to the Fort Myers, Florida, area
- Caused **\$50 billion to \$65 billion** in total damage
- Caused approximately **160 fatalities**

August 1992

Hurricane Andrew

- Made landfall on the southern coast of Florida and the Gulf Coast of the United States
- Caused significant damage to the Miami, Florida, area
- Caused substantial damage to south-central Louisiana
- Caused **\$27.3 billion** in total damage
- Caused **26** fatalities

August 2005

August 2021

Hurricane Ida

- Made landfall on the northern Gulf Coast, impacting the Southeast and the Eastern Seaboard
- Caused catastrophic damage to southeastern Louisiana
- Caused widespread damage in New York City, New York
- Caused **\$75 billion** in total damage
- Caused **87 fatalities**

September 2022

September 2024

Hurricane Helene

- Made landfall on the southeastern U.S. coastline
- Caused widespread flooding in Florida, North Carolina, South Carolina and Georgia
- Inflicted significant damage in western North Carolina
- Wind, rain-based flooding and storm surges in the mid-Atlantic states caused estimated losses of at least **\$11 billion**
- Caused approximately **\$47.5 billion** in property losses across **16 states**
- Caused private market insured losses estimated to be between **\$8 billion and \$14 billion**
- Caused more than **230 fatalities**
- Deadliest mainland hurricane since Katrina

HOW TO PREPARE FOR A HURRICANE

While hurricanes can be disastrous, communities and individuals can mitigate their destruction through strategic, proactive planning

HURRICANE PREPAREDNESS FOR COMMUNITIES

- Establish a planning committee.
- Define the committee's responsibilities.
 - Secure an appropriate budget.
 - Take location into consideration.
 - Consider community demographics.
 - Develop communication strategies with residents.



- Build a hurricane preparedness plan.
 - Plan the components:
 - Emergency contact numbers
 - Evacuation maps
 - Designated shelter locations
 - Locations for emergency supplies
- Reevaluate the plan.
 - Revisit the plan annually to see if any changes are necessary.

HURRICANE PREPAREDNESS FOR BUSINESSES

Develop evacuation plans that include the following:



Plan activation conditions



Chain of command



Delegated emergency functions



Evacuation procedures, such as establishing exit routes



Methods to account for workers, visitors and customers



Proper equipment



Periodic evacuation drills

HURRICANE PREPAREDNESS FOR INDIVIDUALS

In the event of a hurricane, prepare to have essential items on hand, such as:



BENEFITS OF HURRICANE PREPAREDNESS



HOW TO BUILD A HURRICANE RECOVERY PLAN

Hurricane preparedness can help mitigate damage, but it can't stop a hurricane from coming. Therefore, having a plan to properly recover from a hurricane is crucial.

WHAT IS A HURRICANE RECOVERY PLAN?

A plan that concentrates on restoring and rebuilding communities and businesses after a hurricane

Can also apply to other natural disasters



Key components of a recovery plan



CONCLUSION

A hurricane recovery plan is an essential part of any hurricane preparedness strategy. Having one established can help spell the difference between a slow road and a fast lane to recovery.

Sources

- <https://www.weather.gov/lch/andrew>
- <https://www.weather.gov/mob/katrina>
- <https://www.weather.gov/lch/2021ida>
- <https://www.weather.gov/lch/2021ida>
- <https://www.osha.gov/hurricane/preparedness>
- <https://www.edc.gov/disasters/hurricanes/andrew.html>
- <https://www.britannica.com/event/Hurricane-Ian-2022>
- <https://coast.noaa.gov/states/fast-facts/hurricane-costs.html>
- <https://www.myrsi.com/7-components-disaster-recovery-plan/>
- <https://invenioit.com/continuity/hurricane-disaster-recovery-plan/>
- <https://www.nyc.gov/site/cdbgdr/hurricane-ida/hurricane-ida.page>
- <https://abcnews.go.com/US/live-updates/hurricane-helene/?id=113931821>
- <https://www.tidalbasingroup.com/national-hurricane-preparedness-week-2023/>
- <https://hub.associaonline.com/blog/how-to-prepare-your-community-for-a-hurricane>
- <https://www.statista.com/statistics/203729/fatalities-caused-by-tropical-cyclones-in-the-us/>
- <https://www.cnn.com/2024/10/07/business/property-damage-hurricane-helene-47-billion/>



AUGUSTA UNIVERSITY ONLINE

augusta.edu/online/master-public-health.php