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EVACUTION STEPS FOR A HURRICANE
MEMA Offers Tips To Help Prepare You and Your Family

- "If evacuation is necessary for an approaching hurricane, or any type of natural or man-made emergency, the key is that you and your family respond quickly and responsibly," states Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency Director Don Boyce. "Because hurricanes are being closely tracked and usually followed closely by the Media for as long as a week before reaching New England, everyone is afforded enough warning and should not be taken off guard if you are directed to take precautionary steps, including an evacuation."

Being Alerted

State or local Public Safety officials may alert you by one or several methods. Learn what methods are utilized in your community. They could include:

- Outdoor sirens or horns.
- The Emergency Alert System (EAS) - information provided on the radio and television.
- National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Weather Alert Radio.
- 'All Call', 'Reverse 911', 'Code Red', etc. - one of a number of automated telephoning systems for sending recorded messages.
- News Media.
- Residential Route Alerting, which dispatches Public Safety vehicles through neighborhoods announcing messages with Public Address systems or literally 'knocking on doors'.
- U.S. Coast Guard Marine Broadcast.
- A message on Teletypewriters (TTY).

Planning for Evacuation

- Ask your local Emergency Management Office about community evacuation plans.
- Learn proposed evacuation routes and locations of potential public shelters.
- If you do not have personal transportation, make arrangements with friends or your local government.
- Develop a Family Communications Plan.

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- Make a plan with family members for a destination if you have to leave your community. (In your planning, consider different scales of evacuation, i.e.: neighborhood, community, county, etc.)

- Assemble a Disaster Supply Kit.
- Keep your car fueled if evacuation seems likely. Gas stations may be closed during an emergency, run out of fuel, or be unable to pump gas during power outages.
- Pre-drill plywood to be able to board up windows.
- Know how to safely shut off your home's electricity, gas and water supplies at main switches and valves.

What to do if asked/told to evacuate

- Gather all persons in the house together.
- Elevate valuable items to higher points within your home.
- Move all loose outdoor items indoors. (lawn furniture, hanging plants, trashcans, awnings, toys).
- Household members outside the area may be advised not to return during an evacuation. They may be directed to a reception center or mass care shelter where you can join them.
- Do not call your local fire or police departments for information. Emergency workers will need their lines for emergency use. If you need special help, call your local Emergency Management Office.
- Stay tuned to your Emergency Alert System (EAS) radio station.
- Turn off lights and unnecessary appliances.
- Close and lock windows and doors.
- Check with neighbors to see if they need assistance. Offer to share transportation.
- Let others know where you are going.
- If you need a ride, try to get one with neighbors or contact your local Emergency Management Office.

How to travel

- Keep the car radio tuned to an Emergency Alert System (EAS) station.
- Be aware of and follow designated evacuation routes.

What to take with you

Essential items. You may be away from home for a few hours to a few days.

- Clothing for several days.
- Toilet articles (Soap, toothbrush, toothpaste, shampoo, etc.)
- Prescription medicines, medical equipment and important medical records.
- Special dietary foods.
- Baby supplies.
- Blankets, pillows, and towels (particularly if you plan on staying at a public mass care shelter).
- Identification and important papers.
- Checkbook, credit card and cash.

About your pets

- Only seeing-eye dogs and other service animals will be allowed inside most reception centers and mass care shelters, although SMART (The State of Massachusetts Animal Response Team) may be able to assist with animal sheltering accommodations.

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- Make plans ahead of time to take your pet to stay at relatives, friends or a kennel outside the affected area.
- Know pet-friendly hotels and motels in the area.
- Prepare an emergency kit for your pets. Include collars & leashes, a three-day supply of food, bowls, litter boxes, photographs, and a week's supply of medications that your pet may be taking.
- Make sure your pets wear collars with current license and rabies tags, and identification tags that include information on where you will be staying during the emergency.
- Use a pet carrier for each of your pets to make transportation easier.

The Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency (MEMA) is the state agency responsible for coordinating federal, state, local, voluntary and private resources during emergencies and disasters in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. MEMA provides leadership to: develop plans for effective response to all hazards, disasters or threats; train emergency personnel to protect the public; provide information to the citizenry; and assist individuals, families, businesses and communities to mitigate against, prepare for, and respond to and recover from emergencies, both natural and man made.

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