



NJ Office of Emergency Management

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Hurricane Ready or Not!

As the 2009 Hurricane Season approaches, State Police Superintendent Colonel Rick Fuentes, Director of the New Jersey Office of Emergency Management (NJOEM) advises all New Jersey residents to plan and prepare for potential tropical summer storms.

The hurricane season usually runs from **June 1 through November 30**. As evidenced by the record-setting 2005 season and most notably Hurricane Katrina this time frame can vary. The peak time for hurricane and tropical storm activity in New Jersey runs from **mid-August through the end of October**. The combination of warm ocean water, humid air and consistent winds contributes to the formation of "**tropical cyclones**" – low-pressure systems of circulating winds, clouds and thunderstorms – over the Atlantic Ocean, Caribbean Sea and Gulf of Mexico.

As they gain strength, these cyclones are classified as **tropical depressions, tropical storms or hurricanes**. The **Saffir-Simpson Hurricane Scale** rates hurricane strengths, from Category 1 to Category 5. Most of these storms remain over the ocean without affecting the U.S. coastline. When they approach land, tropical storms and hurricanes can be **extremely deadly and destructive** – even as far north as New Jersey, and even when they do not make landfall.

"Hurricanes like all weather events are not always predictable. Programs such as Doppler Radar, Storm Tracker, Accu-Weather and Earth Watch will hit the nail on the head more times than most, but they still can't always read Mother Nature's mind. At times, the weather might be a mystery but your family's emergency plan should never be a guessing game," said Colonel Fuentes.

NJOEM suggests the following readiness steps in preparation for Hurricane Season:

- **"Get a Kit"** of emergency supplies – the items that will help you stay self-sufficient for up to three days (72 hours), if needed.
- **"Make a Plan"** for what you and your family will do during an emergency – this includes knowing how to evacuate and how to Shelter-in-Place.
- **"Stay Informed"** of possible threats – especially during Hurricane Season. Tune into your local media outlets for the latest breaking weather news. In the event of an emergency a battery powered radio is a great tool.

Additionally, NJOEM remains in constant communication with all New Jersey county offices of emergency management, the National Weather Service as well as state and federal partners. These relationships allow NJOEM to deliver timely information to the public as well as respond to any incidents in a timely manner.

"We are committed and dedicated to planning and preparing for all storms during hurricane season and beyond. From a minor shower to a tree bending, torrential wind ridden vortex, NJOEM is ready. For us, it doesn't start on June 1st and end on November 30th. Instead it is an ongoing process that is detailed, studied, operationally trained and enhanced regularly for the benefit of our state residents and visitors," stated Fuentes.

For more information regarding Hurricane Season and how to properly prepare your household or business, please visit: www.ready.nj.gov/plan/hurricane-before.html or call 211.

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