



Hurricane recovery:

Communication issues

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Common post-hurricane hazards

- **Flooding**
- **Drowning**
- **Power outage issues**
- **Safe clean-up**
- **Safe food and water**
- **Infectious and chronic disease issues**

Bigger storms—and more of them?

Hurricane Harvey hit the east coast of Texas as a Category 4 hurricane

Hurricane Irma made landfall in the USVI as a Category 3 hurricane and passes north of Puerto Rico

Hurricane Irma made landfall in Florida as a Category 3 hurricane

Hurricane Maria passed over Puerto Rico and USVI as a Category 5 storm

Hurricane Jose downgraded to a tropical storm but brought heavy winds to the coast of New England



A patterned response

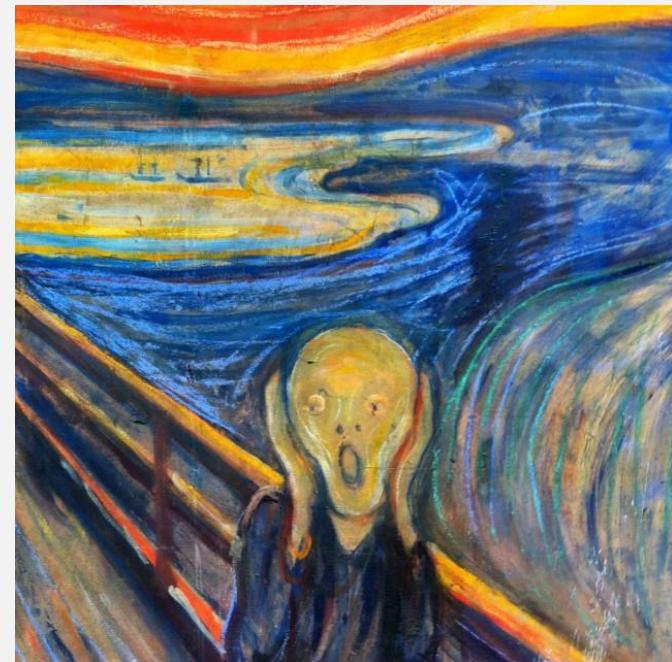
Phase-based messaging for a hurricane

| | |
|---------|--|
| Phase 1 | Readiness and preparation <ul style="list-style-type: none">Evacuation guidanceFlood safetyPower outage risks |
| Phase 2 | Returning home <ul style="list-style-type: none">Power outage risksCarbon Monoxide SafetySafe water and foodWorker safety |
| Phase 3 | Environmental hazards <ul style="list-style-type: none">Vector controlPreventing injuryCleaning and sanitationMedication storage guidance |
| Phase 4 | Short-term recovery <ul style="list-style-type: none">Coping with traumaMold remediationProtect from chemicals |
| Phase 5 | Long-term recovery and resilience <ul style="list-style-type: none">Coping with traumaMold |

How we communicate in an emergency

Joint Information Center:

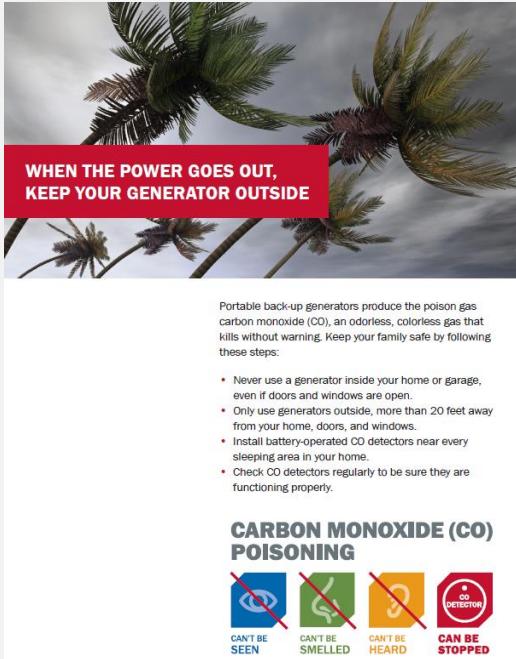
- Web
- Emergency Preparedness
Information Consultants Outreach
- Materials Distributed
- CDC-INFO
- Social Media
- Clinician Outreach



Immediate water dangers: flooding and drowning



Power outage issues (1): CO poisoning



- Carbon monoxide (CO) is an odorless, colorless gas that can cause sudden illness and death if inhaled.
- People use generators and other power sources if their electricity is out.
- Using alternative sources of fuel or electricity for heating or cooking can cause CO to build up in a home, garage, or camper and to poison the people and animals inside.

Power outage issues (2)

- **Fallen power lines**
 - Stay clear of fallen power lines. Call the electric company to report them.
 - Watch out for power lines overhead.
- **Flooded homes**
 - Turn off power to the home if you can stand in a dry place to do it.
 - Otherwise, have an electrician turn off power to the home.
 - Never turn power on or off, or use an electric tool or appliance, while standing in water.
- **Water-damaged power tools**
 - Never use an electrical device if it got wet.
 - If it's still plugged in, turn off the power at the main breaker—or the generator.
 - Wait for an electrician to check the device before using it.

Safe clean-up (1): mold

- Protect yourself and loved ones against hazards.
- Protect your mouth and nose.
- Protect your skin.
- Protect your eyes.



Safe clean-up (2): injuries, heat, chemicals

- When using a chainsaw, follow manufacturer's instructions, wear protective gear, and keep bystanders at a safe distance.
- Take heat stress seriously: drink plenty of water, take plenty of breaks in a cool or shady area, and avoid working during the hottest hours of the day.
- Clean up and repairs potentially expose individuals to asbestos and lead.



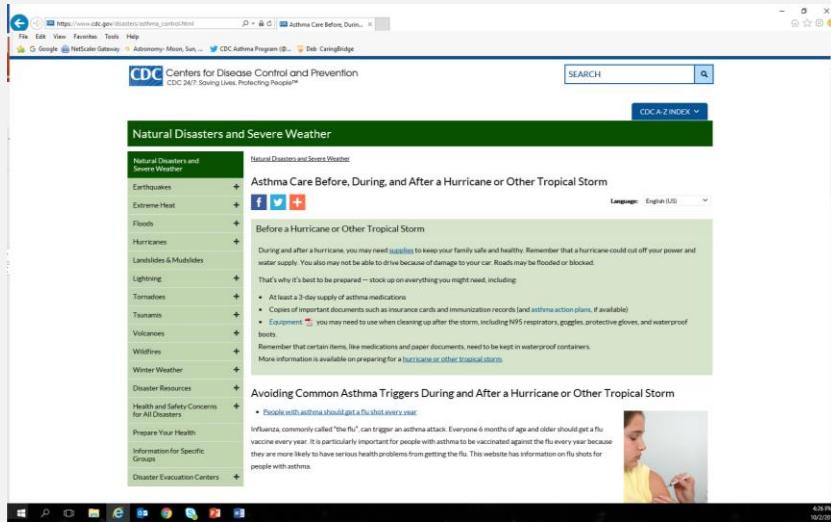
Safe food and water

- **Spoiled or contaminated food and water can make people sick.**
- **If they get sick, they may have limited access to medical care.**
- **Encourage people to do the following:**
 - Stockpile canned food ahead of time.
 - Throw out spoiled food.
 - Clean off canned food.
 - Use bottled water if possible, or boiled water if necessary, especially for infant formula. Only use treated water (disinfected or purified) if bottled and boiled water are not available.

Infectious diseases—a possibility

- Outbreaks of diarrheal and respiratory illnesses can occur when access to safe water and sewage systems are disrupted, personal hygiene is difficult to maintain, and people are living in crowded conditions, such as shelters.
- Post-hurricane conditions also may pose an increased risk for the spread of common infectious diseases like influenza.
- Clean up, disinfect, and practice good hygiene to avoid illness from bacteria, viruses, mold, and mildew.
- Floods can bring mosquitoes that carry disease. Use insect repellent with DEET or Picaridin. Wear long sleeves, pants, and socks when outside.
- Stay away from wild, stray, or dead animals after a storm. Report them to local officials.

Chronic diseases—be prepared



- Gather enough food, water, and medical supplies to last at least 72 hours.
- Prepare a 7- to 10-day supply of prescription medications.
- Collect and protect important documents and medical records.

Engaging partners: working with local businesses

Encourage local businesses to:

- Print relevant documents and distribute them with supplies.
- Print relevant posters and display them near supplies.
- Share content with employees and customers by email.
- Train employees on key points, such as generator safety, and ask them to share information at point of sale.
- Share links on company websites and social media.



Long-term recovery issues

- Mold and housing
- Restoration of electric power
- Contamination from agricultural or industrial sites
- Mental health issues



Thank you!

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For more information, contact NCEH

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The findings and conclusions in this report are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official position of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

