



COUNTY OF PRINCE WILLIAM

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DEPARTMENT OF
FIRE & RESCUE

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PRESS RELEASE

**For Immediate Release
August 24, 2011**

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Are You Prepared for Hurricane Irene

The National Weather Service predicts Hurricane Irene will start impacting the east coast as early as Friday bringing torrential rains and damaging high winds. In preparation for this extreme weather, Prince William County Department of Fire and Rescue (www.pwcgov.org/fire) would like to remind citizens that planning ahead is the key in increasing one's chances of survival during an emergency. By following a few simple and low-cost steps you can prepare and protect your family, business, neighborhood and community when emergencies and disasters arise.

Before the storm hits:

- Check emergency equipment and supplies.
- Have non-perishable food and drinking water on hand for family and pets.
- Clear loose or clogged rain gutters and downspouts.
- Trim trees and shrubbery to remove dead limbs.
- Fuel your vehicles.
- Secure outside furniture and store items like trash cans that might be blown by heavy winds.
- Move important items to a higher level if your home is prone to flooding.

During the storm:

- Monitor your NOAA weather radio or local media outlets for storm updates.
- Follow instructions from local officials.
 - Register on the County's emergency notification system – PWCAN – to receive emergency information from County officials. Registration is easy and it's free. Go to www.pwcgov.org/pwcan to register.
- Leave immediately if instructed to do so.
- Stay away from windows.

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After the storm:

- Continue to listen to your NOAA weather radio or local media outlets for updates.
- Check home for damages.
- Watch for downed power lines.
- If you come to a flooded road, turn around and look for another route.

Additional Life-Saving Tips

Be in-the-know

Getting reliable information during an emergency situation is vital. The National Weather Service broadcasts warnings and post-event information 24 hours a day for all types of hazards – including natural (severe weather), environmental (chemical release or oil spill) and public safety (amber alert or 911 outage).

Make a family emergency plan. This may be the single most important thing you can do for your family!

When a disaster occurs, your family may not be at home or together. Make sure everyone knows how to get in touch and where to go. You can develop your *family emergency plan* at www.readynova.org.

Choose an out-of-town emergency contact.

It's very important that you choose an out-of-town relative or friend for your family to call because families may not be together when an emergency happens, and often it's easier to make a long distance call than a local call during emergencies. The out-of-town contact can relay messages to other family members.

Make an Emergency Supply Kit!

Below is a list of essential items for your emergency supply kit:

- NOAA weather radio
- You need at least three days of supplies for each family member.
- Food that won't spoil, such as canned goods and packaged foods.
- Water, one gallon per person per day.
- A hand-crank or battery-powered radio and extra batteries.
- A family emergency plan.

Other items useful in an emergency supply kit:

- Flashlights with extra batteries
- First aid kit
- List of prescriptions and doctors
- Special items for young children and disabled or older family members
- Food and water for your pets

To learn more on how to protect you and your loved ones during an emergency, visit www.pwcgov.org/emergency, www.ReadyVirginia.gov and www.ready.gov.