

Tropical Storm—Winds over 39 miles per hour, but less than 74 miles/hour.

Tropical Depression—Winds less than 30 miles per hour.

Tropical Storm Watch—Issued when storm conditions are expected within 36 hours.

Tropical Storm Warning—Issued when storm conditions are expected within 24 hours.

Before a hurricane strikes, each facility must determine its flood probability, the possibility of evacuation based on flood predictions, and prepare evacuation procedures.

Prior to hurricane season, facility administration should conduct a review of hurricane preparedness. This will include in-service staff training and an updating of all hurricane related disaster planning.

Consult with your county Emergency Management Office to determine your flood zone and hurricane evacuation zone. Keep in mind that wind damage from a hurricane can create the need for facility evacuation even when there is no threat of flooding from the storm surge.

Saffir/Simpson Scale

The Saffir/Simpson Scale is used by the National Hurricane Center to give public officials a continuing assessment of the potential for wind and storm surge damage. Scale assessments are revised regularly as new observations are made. Storm surge heights may vary depending upon your location and coast configuration.

CATEGORY	PRESSURE (mb/inches)	WINDS (MPH)	STORM SURGE (ft)	DAMAGE
1	980 OR HIGHER (28.94 or higher)	74–95	4–5	Minimal
2	965–979 (28.50–28.91)	96–110	6–8	Moderate
3	945–964 (27.91–28.47)	111–130	9–12	Extensive
4	920–944 (27.17–27.88)	131–155	13–18	Extreme
5	920 or less (27.17 or less)	156+	18+	Catastrophic

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The main hazards of a hurricane include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. **Wind:** Winds cause a barrage of sand and debris. They sever communication lines. Broken power lines whipping around are extremely dangerous. Branches from trees are severed, and many trees themselves may fall. Mobile homes are often destroyed. Roofs are damaged and windows are usually broken. Poorly built structures may collapse. Boats are destroyed by being pushed against their moorings. Air traffic is disrupted, and small planes are flipped over and destroyed. Winds in excess of 40 mph begin to cause damage to traffic signals and trees.
2. **Storm Surge:** Storm surge, historically, is the hurricane's worst killer. Nine out of ten people who lost their lives in a hurricane were killed because of storm surges. Rising tidal sea levels of more than 10 feet above normal may occur as the storm moves toward land. The potential damage depends upon the hurricane category, its direction, and size. Storm surge causes salt water flooding, which cripples communications, causes sewers to back up, pollutes drinking water, shorts out power lines, washes out roads, and alters shorelines and ship channels.
3. **Torrential Rain:** Torrential rain will cause fresh water flooding. Massive health problems may be caused by insects, dead animals, and polluted waters from sewage backup.