



NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE

Building a Weather-Ready Nation

Fall Weather Safety



Know Your Risk, Take Action, Be a Force of Nature

[weather.gov/safety](https://www.weather.gov/safety)

Fall Weather Hazards

- Drought
- Floods
- Fog
- Hurricanes
- Tsunamis
- Wildfire
- Wind
- Winter Weather



Drought

When water is scarce:

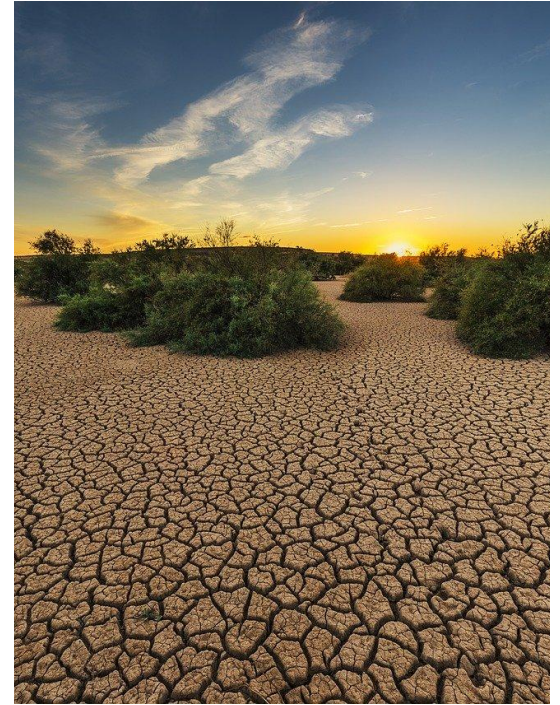
- Water your lawn less frequently, and only in the early morning/late evening
- Mulch around trees and plants to reduce evaporation
- Fix leaky sprinklers and adjust them so they only water your lawn (not the house or sidewalk)
- Don't wash your car unless absolutely necessary



Drought

When water is scarce:

- Turn off the water while brushing teeth and shaving
- Take shorter showers
- Fix leaky faucets and toilets
- Only wash full loads of laundry
- Use excess clean water for plants
- Install low flow showerheads



Floods

Before a Flood:

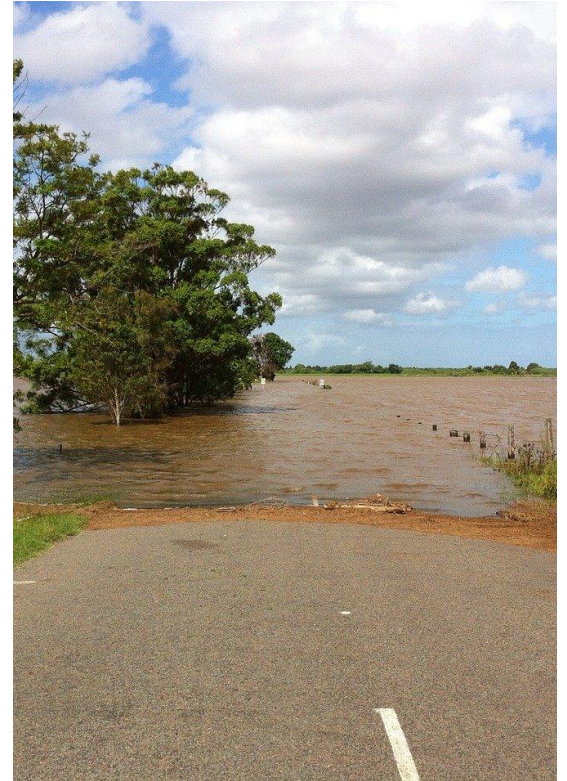
- Learn whether your home, school or place of work is at risk of flooding
- Find alternate routes to important locations
- Make a family communications plan
- Follow evacuation orders
- Keep an eye on the forecast by visiting [weather.gov](https://www.weather.gov)



Floods

During a Flood:

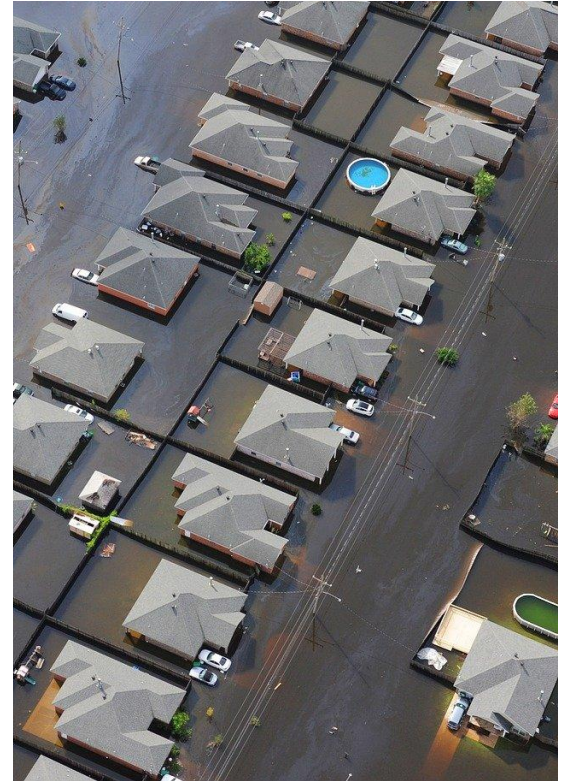
- Never drive or walk into floodwaters
- If told to evacuate, do so immediately
- Get to higher ground
- Get information from local TV/radio or your mobile phone



Floods

After a Flood:

- Avoid damaged areas and floodwaters
- Heed road closed and other cautionary signs
- Wait for the “all clear” before entering a flood-damaged structure
- Contact your loved ones via text or social media to keep phone lines clear



NWS Flood Products

FLOOD WATCH

A Flood Watch is issued when **flooding is possible.**

Stay tuned to trusted news sources and be ready to seek higher ground.

Be Prepared.



weather.gov

FLOOD WARNING

A Flood Warning is issued when **flooding is happening or about to happen.**

Move to higher ground immediately!
Never drive or walk through floodwaters.

Take Action!



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Fog

Driving in Fog:

- Slow down when you encounter fog
- Use your low beam headlights
- Do not change lanes or pass other vehicles unless absolutely necessary
- If you must pull off on the side of the road, turn off your lights and use your parking brake to avoid being hit by cars who may not realize you've pulled over



Hurricanes

Preparing your family:

- Know if you live in a hurricane storm surge evacuation area
- Know your home's vulnerability to flooding, wind, and storm surge
- Understand NWS warnings and watches
- Put together an emergency supply kit (don't forget pet supplies)
- Create a family emergency plan



Hurricanes

Preparing your home:

- Remove all lawn furniture and items that will blow around
- Board up your windows with plywood or approved shutters
- Fill your car's gas tank
- Get cash
- Reinforce your garage door
- Secure your boat



Hurricanes

Before evacuating:

- Have a plan that includes where you will go and what to pack
- If you have a pet, identify shelters where they are accepted
- Listen to evacuation orders, be prepared, and evacuate early
- If you have time, turn off the gas, electricity, and water, and unplug your appliances



Hurricanes

When evacuating:

- Take only what you need — be sure to remember your medications and identification
- Follow roads emergency workers are recommending, even if there is traffic (other routes might be blocked)
- Drive carefully
- Contact your family



NWS Hurricane Products

HURRICANE WATCH

A Hurricane Watch is issued when **hurricane force winds are possible.**

Prepare your home by boarding up windows and moving loose items indoors. Have an emergency supply kit ready.

Hurricane Possible.

HURRICANE WARNING

A Hurricane Warning is issued when **hurricane force winds are expected.**

Seek shelter in a sturdy structure or evacuate if ordered.

Hurricane Expected!



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NWS Storm Surge Products

STORM SURGE WATCH

A Storm Surge Watch is issued when **storm surge is possible.**

Promptly follow evacuation and other instructions from local officials.

Surge Possible.



[weather.gov](https://www.weather.gov)

STORM SURGE WARNING

A Storm Surge Warning is issued when **storm surge is expected.**

Promptly follow evacuation and other instructions from local officials.

Surge Expected!



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Tsunamis

Prepare for a tsunami:

- Have multiple ways to receive warnings
- Make an emergency plan, including family communication and evacuation plans
- Map out routes to safe places on high ground or inland, practice walking them
- Know your risk in harbor and your fastest route to deep water
- Put together portable disaster supply kits

Visiting the coast? Ask about local tsunami safety.

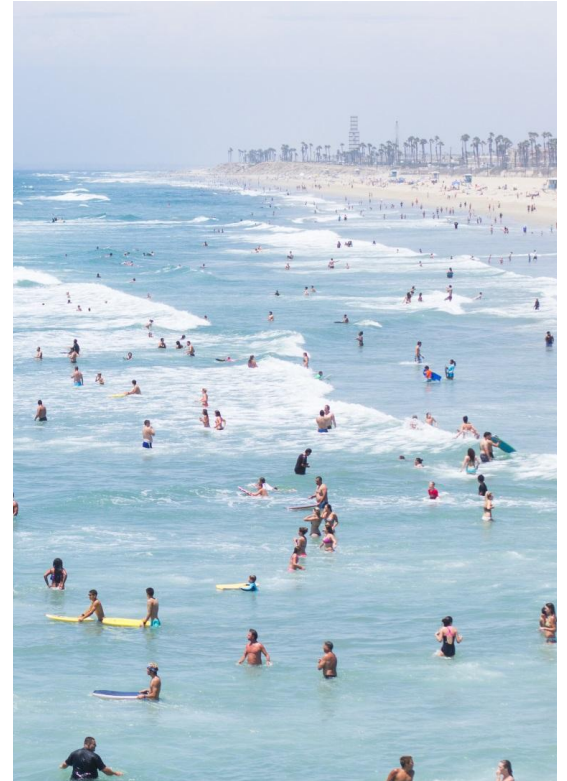


Tsunamis

If you experience any of these natural warning signs at the coast, a tsunami could be coming:

- Strong or long earthquake(s)
- Sudden rise or fall of the ocean
- A loud roar from the ocean

If you experience any of these, go to high ground or inland. Do not wait for official instructions.



Tsunamis

When a Tsunami Warning is issued:

- Stay out of the water
- Stay away from beaches and waterways
- Get information from local TV, radio, or online
- Go to high ground or inland if officials ask you to evacuate



NWS Tsunami Products

TSUNAMI WATCH

A Tsunami Watch is issued when **a tsunami is possible.**

Know your evacuation route.
Have a plan and be ready to act quickly if a Warning is issued.

Be Prepared.

TSUNAMI WARNING

A Tsunami Warning is issued when **a tsunami is happening or about to happen.**

Move to higher ground or further inland immediately!

Take Action!



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Wind

Straight line winds:

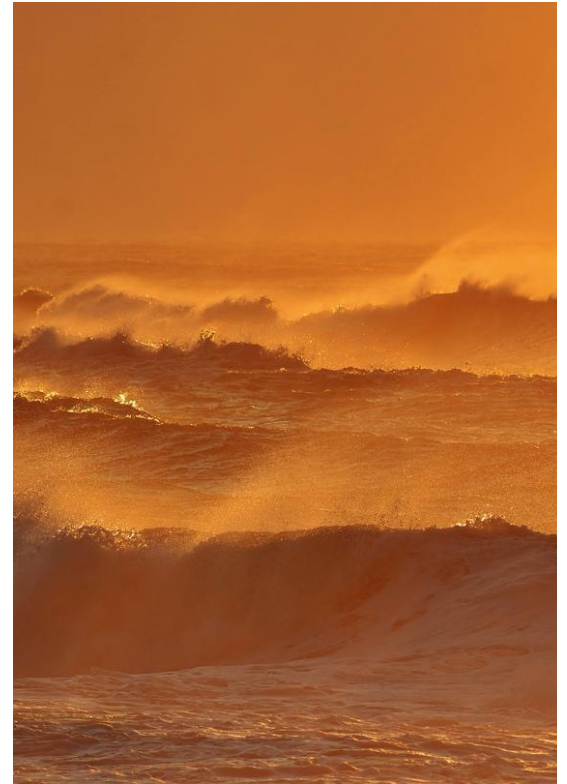
- Straight line winds are strong damaging winds that have no rotation
- These are typically associated with severe thunderstorms and squall lines
- Wind speeds can reach up to 125 mph and create large damage paths to that of a tornado



Wind

Wind from powerful storm systems:

- Created by a strong pressure gradient
- Can knock down trees and power lines, and blow over trailers and trucks
- Makes driving hazardous — keep two hands on the wheel and avoid large vehicles such as semi-trucks



Wind

Dust storms:

- Dust storms are created by wind blowing over a dry region
- Blowing dust can reduce visibility to nearly zero
- Dust storms can last mere minutes or up to an hour
- Seek shelter in the event of a dust storm
- If driving, pull over as soon as possible, turn off your lights, and keep your seatbelt buckled



Wind

If a High Wind Warning is issued:

At home:

- Seek shelter inside, away from windows.

Outside:

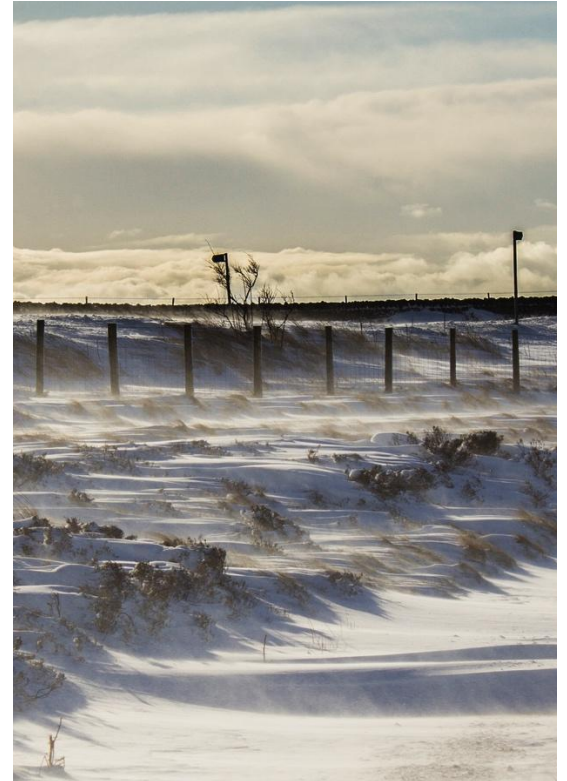
- Seek shelter immediately.
- If you cannot find shelter, avoid trees, power lines, and objects that could blow around. Stay away from the side of the road.



Wind

When driving:

- Slow down
- Keep two hands on the wheel
- Stay away from trucks, buses, and vehicles towing trailers
- Watch for flying debris, downed power lines, and branches



NWS High Wind Products

HIGH WIND WATCH

A High Wind Watch is issued when **sustained, strong winds are possible**.

Secure loose outdoor items and adjust plans if necessary so that you're not caught outside.

Be Prepared.



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HIGH WIND WARNING

A High Wind Warning is issued when **sustained, strong winds are happening or about to happen**.

Seek shelter in a sturdy structure. If driving, use caution — keep both hands on the wheel and slow down.

Take Action!



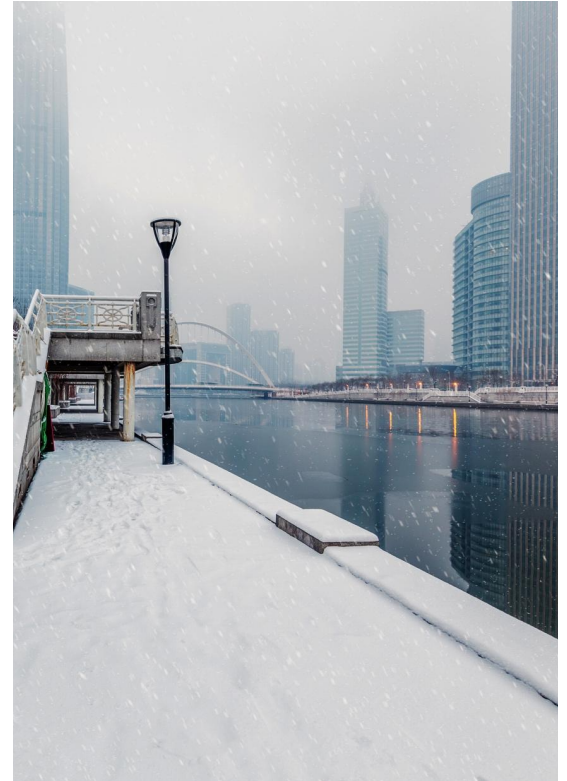
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Winter Weather

Freezing rain/sleet:

- Make sure your trees are trimmed and away from power lines
- Have an emergency kit in case the power goes out
- Avoid driving — if you must, drive slowly and give extra space to the cars in front of you
- The NWS will issue a Winter Weather Advisory or an Ice Storm Warning



Winter Weather

Be prepared for early season storms:

- Winterize your car with snow tires and a winter driving safety kit
- Restock your emergency kit with extra batteries, enough food, and more
- If you have a generator, make sure it is in working order and review basic safety — **NEVER** run a generator in an enclosed space such as a garage



NWS Winter Storm Products

WINTER STORM WATCH

A Winter Storm Watch is issued when **heavy snow, sleet, or freezing rain is possible.**

Be prepared to adjust travel plans in case a Warning is issued.

Be Prepared.

WINTER STORM WARNING

A Winter Storm Warning is issued when **heavy snow, sleet, or freezing rain is expected.**

Travel will become dangerous. Delay or adjust travel plans until conditions improve.

Take Action!



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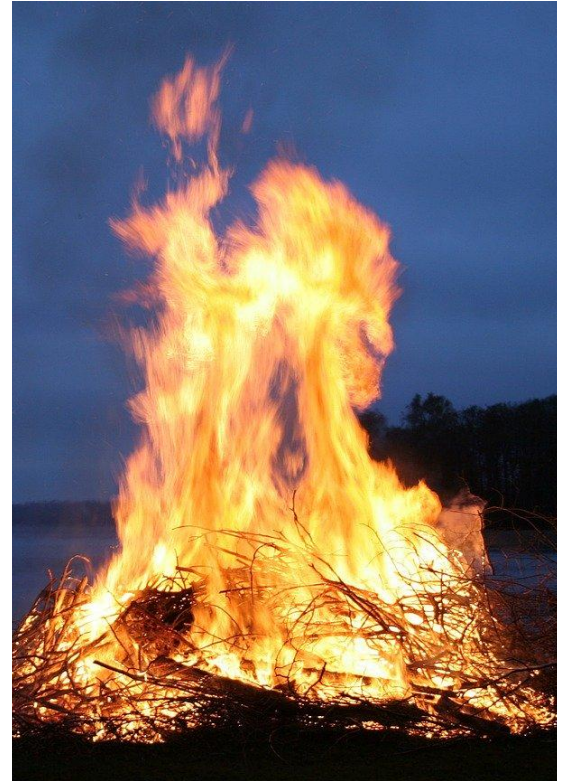
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Wildfires

Preventing wildfires:

- Wildfires are most often started by lightning or humans
- When camping, stay with your fire when lit, and make sure it is fully extinguished before leaving
- Be smart and safe when burning debris — keep the fire small and don't burn on windy days
- Properly extinguish and dispose of all smoking materials



Wildfires

Before a wildfire:

- Plan a primary evacuation route, and identify a secondary route in case the first is blocked
- Select building materials and plants that are fire resistant
- Create a family emergency plan and make a list of items you'll need to pack for evacuation



Wildfires

If told to evacuate:

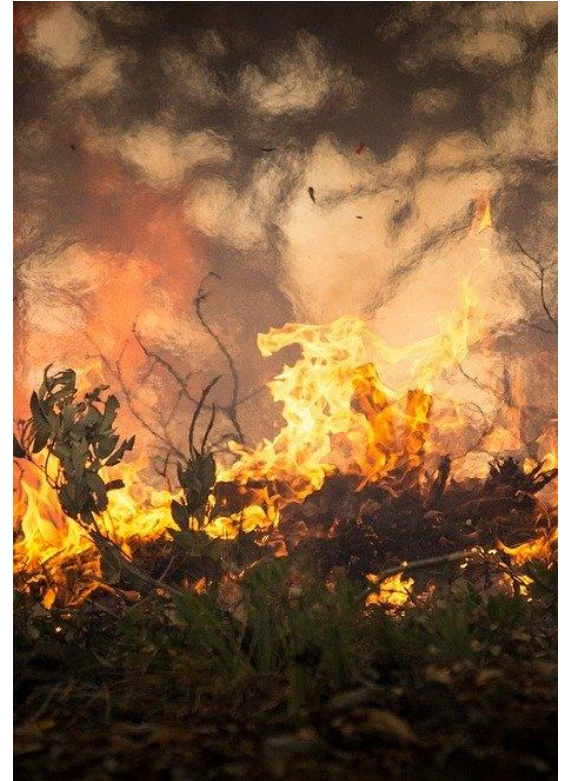
- Follow instructions from local officials
- Don't deviate from the identified evacuation route (other roads may be blocked)
- If you have time to gather belongings, do so quickly — if not, leave immediately
- Contact your family and let them know that you're okay



Wildfires

If you encounter a wildfire:

- Drive or walk away from the smoke and flames immediately
- Do not stop to watch or take pictures
- Call 911



NWS Fire Weather Products

FIRE WEATHER WATCH

A Fire Weather Watch is issued when **critical fire weather conditions are possible**.

“Critical fire conditions” means warm temperatures, low humidity, and strong, gusty winds.

Be Prepared.

RED FLAG WARNING

A Red Flag Warning is issued when **critical fire weather conditions are happening or are about to happen**.

Avoid burning, be careful around open flames, safely dispose of cigarettes. Fires can spark and grow very quickly.

Take Action!



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Fall Weather Safety Resources

weather.gov/safety/drought
weather.gov/safety/flood
weather.gov/safety/fog
weather.gov/safety/hurricane
weather.gov/safety/tsunami
weather.gov/safety/wildfire
weather.gov/safety/wind
weather.gov/safety/winter

