

[Home](#) > [News](#) > **FEMA: Less than a Month Until 2014 Atlantic Hurricane Season Begins**

## News

[Blog](#)[Comunicados de Prensa](#)[Data](#)[Events](#)[Fact Sheets](#)[Multimedia](#)[Press Releases](#)[Publications](#)[Speeches](#)[Testimony](#)[Media Contacts](#)[Social Media](#)

# FEMA: Less than a Month Until 2014 Atlantic Hurricane Season Begins

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### ***Residents Encouraged to Take Steps Now to be Prepared for Emergencies***

WASHINGTON – With less than one month until the start of the 2014 Atlantic hurricane season on June 1, now is the time to prepare. The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) urges Americans to prepare their families and businesses for hurricanes and tropical storms by writing a communications plan, making a kit of essential items and being prepared for any potential financial impacts of such events, including reviewing their insurance policies with an insurance agent.

Individuals and families are encouraged to have a family communications plan and make a kit with essential items such as bottled water, non-perishable food and a can opener, spare batteries, and specialty items like medical prescriptions, spare eyeglasses and pet food. They can learn how to prepare for hurricane season at [ready.gov/hurricanes](http://ready.gov/hurricanes), or they can get ready on the go by visiting [m.fema.gov](http://m.fema.gov) or by downloading the FEMA App for Android, Apple or Blackberry devices.

Business owners and managers should visit [ready.gov/business](http://ready.gov/business) for specific resources on response and continuity plans.

All property owners and renters are encouraged to review insurance coverage, including flood insurance, with an insurance agent to ensure their homes, businesses and possessions are adequately protected from all types of disasters.

Floods are the most common and costly natural disaster in the United States, and flooding can happen far from major bodies of water. As hurricanes and tropical storms move inland, the high winds and storm surge are often accompanied by torrential rains that increase the likelihood of flooding. For example, residents as far inland as West Virginia saw the impacts of Hurricane Sandy two years ago, including flooding.

Flood insurance policies should be viewed as protection against a continuing threat – not something to purchase only if flooding appears imminent. In fact, flood insurance policies typically have a 30-day waiting period from the date of purchase before going into effect, and floods can happen at any time of the year.

Flood insurance is available nationwide through approximately 85 insurance companies in more than 22,000 communities. Homeowners, renters, condo owners and commercial owners/renters can all purchase flood insurance. Costs vary depending on the level of coverage, the type of coverage and the property's flood risk. More information about flood risk and flood insurance options is available by visiting [www.floodsmart.gov](http://www.floodsmart.gov) or calling 1-800-427-2419.

FEMA will also join NOAA's National Hurricane Center to promote storm readiness this month during Hurricane Preparedness Week, May 25-31.

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FEMA's mission is to support our citizens and first responders to ensure that as a nation we work together to build, sustain, and improve our capability to prepare for, protect against, respond to, recover from, and mitigate all hazards.

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TOPICS

- [Border Security](#)
- [Citizenship and Immigration Services](#)
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- [Economic Security](#)
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- [International Engagement](#)
- [Law Enforcement Partnerships](#)
- [Preventing Terrorism](#)
- [Transportation Security](#)

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- [Blue Campaign](#)
- [Citizen Corps](#)
- [If You See Something Say Something](#)
- [Ready.gov](#)

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- [For the Public](#)
- [For Businesses](#)
- [For Travelers](#)
- [At DHS](#)
- [By Alphabet](#)

NEWS

- [Blog](#)
- [Comunicado de Prensa](#)
- [Data](#)
- [Events](#)
- [Fact Sheets](#)
- [Media Contacts](#)
- [Multimedia](#)
- [Press Releases](#)
- [Publications](#)
- [Social Media](#)
- [Speeches](#)
- [Testimony](#)

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- [The Secretary](#)
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- [Careers](#)
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- [History](#)
- [Laws & Regulations](#)
- [Mission](#)
- [Organization](#)

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