



READ IMMEDIATELY

TAKE WITH YOU WHEN EVACUATING

Windmill Harbour

www.windmillharbour.org

**Hurricane Preparation,
Evacuation and Disaster
Recovery Guide**

Emergency Management Committee



Are You Ready?



UPDATED MAY 2026

HURRICANE PREPAREDNESS INFORMATION

Every Windmill Harbour resident should understand and be prepared for an evacuation during the hurricane season. The purpose of this brochure is to assist you before, during and after an evacuation. Please keep this information with you during an evacuation. For more information and printable brochures, please visit the **storm center** at <https://www.bcs0.net/emergency-management-division>.

Know the Difference...

- **Hurricane Watch:** Hurricane is possible within 48 hours.
- **Hurricane Warning:** Hurricane is expected within 36 hours.
- **Evacuation:** The Governor has ordered an evacuation; it is mandatory. A voluntary evacuation is not issued.

Until the Governor Rescinds Mandatory Evacuation...

- Re-entry onto Hilton Head Island is prohibited.
- Re-entry into Windmill Harbour is prohibited.
- All hospitals and medical services will cease and evacuate.
- All police and fire rescue services will cease and evacuate.
- 9-1-1 phone lines may continue to operate, however EMS personnel will most likely not be able to respond to calls within the evacuated areas.

Storm Categories

Category 1:	74-95 MPH winds 4-5 ft. storm surge
Category 2:	96-110 MPH winds 6-8 ft. storm surge
Category 3:	111-130 MPH winds 9-12 ft. storm surge
Category 4:	131-155 MPH winds 3-18 ft. storm surge
Category 5:	over 155 MPH winds over 18 ft. storm surge

Weather Websites:

<http://www.weatherunderground.com>

<http://www.disastersrus.org> <http://www.nhc.noaa.gov>

What To Do Now...

- ❑ Prepare your Evacuation Plan. Develop a list of alternative places to stay with their phone numbers (motel, etc.) prior to evacuation.
- ❑ Be certain you have adequate insurance on your home and its contents. This should include flood insurance from the Federal Government through your home insurance carrier. Flood insurance has a 30-day implementation delay. Review your policy so that you are aware of your deductible. Many wind & hail policies have a significantly different deductibles than other types of homeowner policies.
- ❑ Photograph or videotape your home and its contents for insurance purposes.
- ❑ Make copies of family and personal records.
- ❑ Prepare a hurricane “go kit” of essential items to take with you in the event of an evacuation.
- ❑ Learn your Evacuation Routes. Obtain and keep an evacuation map in your “go kit.”
- ❑ Trim dead wood from trees around your house.
- ❑ Check for loose rain gutters and down spouts.
- ❑ Sign up for the Beaufort County Emergency Mgmt App
- ❑ Update your contact information on Windmill Harbour account

When a Hurricane Watch is Issued...

- ❑ Stay tuned to a local radio or television station for the latest National Weather Service advisories and for special instructions from local and state governments.
- ❑ Check your battery-powered equipment. Your battery-operated radio could be your only source of information, and flashlights will be needed if utility services are interrupted. Buy extra batteries.
- ❑ Store drinking water in clean bathtubs or in jugs and bottles. The water system may become contaminated or damaged by the storm.
- ❑ Obtain extra prescription medications and medical supplies.
- ❑ During this time, you **MAY** install ARB-approved hurricane shutters and board up windows and doors. Windows are broken mainly from wind-driven debris. Wind pressure may break large windows, garage doors and double entry doors. Taping windows does **NOT** keep the glass from breaking; it merely confines the broken glass.
- ❑ Keep your car’s gas tank full. Service stations may become inoperable once the storm strikes.
- ❑ Prepare evacuation supplies. Learn the local evacuation routes.

- ❑ Secure or move outdoor objects, such as porch furniture, grill, garbage cans, and hanging plants that might become debris. Garden tools, toys, signs, and a number of other harmless items become deadly missiles in hurricane winds.
- ❑ Moor your boat securely well in advance of the storm, or move it early to a designated safe area. **Do NOT stay on your boat.**
- ❑ **BE AWARE** that some areas may flood long before the storm arrives. Evacuation is complicated by the fact that the Hilton Head Island area is densely populated and may require evacuation orders to be issued earlier than one day before the storm's arrival. Don't get caught by the hurricane in your car on an open coastal road.
- ❑ **If the SC Governor orders evacuation of your area, DO SO IMMEDIATELY.** Keep your car radio on and listen for further instructions, such as the location of emergency shelters.
- ❑ Because tornadoes are often spawned by hurricanes, be alert for tornado watches and warnings. In case of a tornado warning, seek shelter immediately in an interior bathroom or small hall, preferably at ground level.
- ❑ Listen for weather updates and local information on these stations:
 89.9 FM WJWJ 98.3 FM WGCN 98.7 FM WYKZ
 106.9 FM WGZR 107.9 FM WLOW
- ❑ Make a family communications plan as to how you are going to stay in touch with your family and loved ones if disaster strikes when you are not together or get separated.
 - Choose an out-of-town contact that household members may reach to check on each other. This contact should have everyone's numbers and live far enough away that it would be unlikely that they would be affected by the same event.
 - Make sure all household members have this contact information, plus numbers for each other. This includes home, work, page, cell phone numbers and e-mail addresses.
 - Consider using social media such as Facebook and twitter in communicating with family and friends during disasters
 - Identify two neighbors and agree to watch out for each other.
 - Remember, during a disaster telephones may not work, or may become jammed with many calls.

What to Pack...

Prepare to be gone at least 72 hours.

- ☐ Cash and credit cards
- ☐ ID and driver's license
- ☐ Insurance policies, name of agent and telephone number
- ☐ Inventory of household contents
- ☐ Copies of family and personal records
- ☐ Road maps and alternative routes to destination
- ☐ Cell phone and battery charger
- ☐ Change of clothing for at least two days
- ☐ Protective clothing and sturdy shoes
- ☐ Prescription medicines and supplies
- ☐ First-aid kit
- ☐ Bottled water and canned beverages
- ☐ Non-perishable food
- ☐ Can opener
- ☐ Flashlight and extra batteries
- ☐ Portable radio and extra batteries
- ☐ Blankets
- ☐ Relatives' and friends' telephone numbers and local telephone book
- ☐ Extra roll of toilet paper
- ☐ Gloves and boots for cleanup after hurricane
- ☐ This booklet



When a Hurricane Warning is Issued...

- ☐ Move outdoor objects, such as porch furniture, grill, garbage cans, hanging plants, etc., into the garage or house.
- ☐ Store drinking water in clean containers and fill bathtubs with water, should the water supply be contaminated.
- ☐ Park extra vehicles in the garage.
- ☐ Leave a message on your answering machine so that relatives and friends will know when you left and where you are going. Know your answering machine codes so that you can retrieve messages and change the recording.
- ☐ Establish a contact (neighbor, friend, realtor or house sitter) who can assist you in getting your house ready in case you are out of town. If you are part time or gone for the summer, this is particularly important.
- ☐ If you have a pool, cover the pump filter.
- ☐ If told to do so, shut off your water, electricity and gas.

- ❑ Empty freezer and refrigerators of perishable items. Take these items with you in plastic bags to be appropriately disposed when you are out of the storm area.
- ❑ Lock doors and windows before you leave.
- ❑ Be sure your contact information on records with Windmill Harbour is up to date.
- ❑ Arrange for family members who need extra assistance.
- ❑ You will likely receive a Weather Emergency Alert (WEA) on your cell phone. WEAs are free messages sent by public safety officials directly to cell phones warning about severe weather, AMBER Alerts, and threats to safety in a designated area. Consumers do not need to sign up for this service and do not pay to receive WEA. A WEA alert appears on the screen of the recipient's handset as a text-like message. The alert is accompanied by a unique attention signal and vibration.

Your Pets...Do NOT leave pets behind. Take them with you.

- ❑ Make arrangements with off-island friends or hotel reservations where pets are permitted. Pets are not allowed in Red Cross shelters
- ❑ Make certain pets are wearing collars with current ID. Use adhesive tape and an indelible pen if the ID is not current, and tape the information to the pet's collar.
- ❑ Pack a pet disaster kit in advance, containing pet food, food and water bowls, medications, medical records, motion sickness pills for travel, sturdy leashes and/or pet carrier, current photo in the event of loss, pet bed and toys if space is available.
- ❑ For birds, reptiles and small animals, check with your veterinarian.
- ❑ For more pet information, contact the Beaufort County Animal Services at: (843) 255-5010.



During the Hurricane...

You must take responsibility for yourself and your family by being properly prepared ahead of time. Any residents who stay should expect to be without power, phone and water for a week or more. Emergency responders, police services and Windmill Harbour security evacuate the Island and will not be able to provide assistance to those who stay. Egress and ingress may be blocked by debris. Help may not be able to arrive for many days.

- **TAKE COVER** – Remain indoors during the hurricane. Blowing debris can injure and kill. Travel is extremely dangerous.
- **STORM SURGE** – Storm surge is a great dome of water that sweeps across the coastline near where the hurricane makes landfall. The surge, aided by breaking waves, sweeps everything in its path. This is the most dangerous part of the hurricane.
- **FLOODS** – Floods brought by the torrential rains of a hurricane are dangerous. Even though hurricanes weaken rapidly as they move inland, the storm can bring 6-12 inches of rain.
- **WINDS** – For some structures, wind force is sufficient to cause destruction. The greatest threat from hurricane winds is the debris – a deadly barrage of flying missiles such as lawn furniture, signs, roofing, trees, siding, etc.

Re-Entry Information...

It is our intention that, after a disaster, our community's website <https://windmillharbour.connectresident.com/> or email blasts will serve as the primary communicator of the status of conditions within Windmill Harbour. If you are currently NOT receiving community email blasts, **please be sure to login to your account and update your email address and other contact info.** Telephone communication is likely to be difficult or impossible.

To obtain current information on storm damage, road conditions and re-entry instructions call Beaufort County's re-entry hotline at **1-833-254-6400**

The phone numbers and fax line of **Windmill Harbour Security** are:
Phone: 843/681-6405 Fax: 843/681-6420

Please use these numbers only if essential.

We urge you to determine whether there is an Internet-accessible computer available to you at your evacuation destination. If not, take your computer with you if it's at all possible. Also, unless you have committed them to memory, please take a minute and jot down the following information to enable you to pick up and send your personal email:

Your Internet Service Provider's www address:

Your Email User Name: _____

Your Email Password: _____

Other Resources:

Beaufort County Contacts

Beaufort County EM:	843-255-4007
Public Info Phone System:	1-866-246-0133
BC EM Website:	https://bcso.net/
Traffic Info (SC DOT):	888/877-9151

Other Contacts

Town of Hilton Head:	hiltonheadislandsc.gov/hurricane/
Palmetto Electric:	800/922-5551
Public Service District	843/681-5525
Red Cross:	www.redcross.org
Fed. Em. Mgt. Agency (FEMA):	www.fema.gov
SC EMD:	http://hurricane.sc/

Windmill Harbour Association is managed by:

FirstService Residential
Customer Care 27/7: 800-870-0010
Direct Association Ph: 843-203-7462
Main Ph: 843-904-7001 Fax: 843-996-1899
Website: www.fsresidential.com

If the hurricane hits Hilton Head Island, don't expect the recovery to be quick or easy.

- ❑ Evacuees could be kept off the Island for days, maybe even a week or more, so that emergency workers can assess damages.
- ❑ State and Federal disaster assistance will seldom compensate you for all your losses. In many cases, the assistance will come in the form of a low-interest loan.
- ❑ When you are allowed back onto the Island and into Windmill Harbour, it will take time for relief assistance to start, for all utilities to be turned on and for life to return to normal. Be patient.
- ❑ After a storm, be wary of strangers who want to sell you something or do work on your property. Hurricanes bring out con artists and crooks. Follow the recommendations of your insurance company.
- ❑ Remove hurricane shutters as soon as possible after a storm and when re-entry into the plantation is permitted.

Safety Tips When Returning To Your Home...

- ❑ Wear rubber gloves and boots when cleaning up after floodwaters to avoid infection from sewage and other contaminants.
- ❑ When entering your home, check for structural damage. If possible, look under the house to inspect support columns or beams to make sure the structure is not in danger of collapse.
- ❑ Do not smoke, strike matches or carry open-flamed lighting because of the possibility of gas leaks. A flashlight is best.
- ❑ Open doors and windows to let the air circulate. This will help to remove odors, accumulated gas and help to dry out your house.
- ❑ Watch for snakes, both inside and outside your home.
- ❑ Save your emergency water supply for drinking and cooking until you are sure the water supply is safe. In the meantime, water can be purified by boiling it at least ten (10) minutes or by mixing one tablespoon of laundry bleach with one gallon of water at room temperature.
- ❑ Advise friends and family that you are safe.
- ❑ Contact your local insurance agent.





Other Information...

Windmill Harbour wants to expedite the repair and reconstruction of damaged housing caused by a disaster. Residents are urged to acquaint themselves with the temporary housing market in the area such as condos, motels or time-shares. Review your insurance to ensure you have adequate coverage for alternate living expenses.

In the event of a major disaster that includes the devastation of homes, the use of temporary housing in WH may be permitted for a period of six months. The Board may extend this period when special need is demonstrated. Temporary housing must comply with the following guidelines:

1. The use of temporary housing is limited to permanent residents who are rebuilding or repairing an existing home.
2. Temporary housing is defined as travel trailers, motor homes or manufactured homes.
3. The temporary housing must be located entirely on the property owned by the resident.

Following a major storm, a significant amount of landscape debris will be strewn about our properties. It is the responsibility & obligation of each landowner to clear his/her property. If conditions allow, the WHPOA or its designated contractor will dispose of the landscape debris brought by the property owner to the roadside. Structural debris removal must be contracted on an individual basis by each landowner.

1. Place the debris in piles along the roadside; keep it off the paved surface but within 8' of the curb.
2. Do not pile debris near water meters, fire hydrants, electrical boxes or light poles.

ARB Guidelines for Disaster Recovery...

In case of a major disaster, the WH Architectural Review Board (ARB) has adopted temporary procedures to expedite each project and application as expeditiously as possible. This will facilitate tree removal, repairs and rebuilding while maintaining our general standards and guidelines.

Recovery Plan:

1. No approval is required to remove trees that are uprooted, have fallen across structures or trees that have fallen on the ground. Tree stumps must be cut flush with ground, grinded down to grade or removed.
2. No approvals are required to repair structural damage that is less than 50% of previous existing condition, provided there are no modifications whatsoever from original plans, as on file with the WHARB, for such things as (but not limited to) exterior color, window types, walls, roof, texture materials (siding), etc.

ARB approval is required when:

1. Replacement exceeds 50% of the structural damage including, but not limited to, roof, walls, paint color, etc.
2. There are any substantive architectural design changes.

The ARB is committed to working closely and cooperatively with each landowner to restore our community. If there is the slightest question on how or whether you should proceed, contact the ARB.



Windmill Harbour Marina
161 Harbour Passage
Hilton Head Island, SC 29926
Phone (843) 681-9235, Fax (843) 681-9394
www.windmillharbourmarina.org

Dear Windmill Harbour Boater:

June marks the beginning of Hurricane season for the coastal United States. We would like to review the precautions that you need to take to prepare your vessel in the event of a Tropical Storm or Hurricane.



The Windmill Harbour Marina Owner's Association (MOA) endorses the Beaufort County Emergency Preparedness policy that whenever possible vessels should be moved to areas less susceptible to hurricane damage. Such an area should be selected based on the ease of access, distance inland from oceans and sounds, adequate depth, the ability to hold anchor, and protection from wind blown debris. Select an anchorage and practice relocating your boat.

Boats being left at Windmill Harbour Marina are subject to the following conditions:

- Owners are responsible for any damage done by their boats to other boats or property.
- Owners will hold Windmill Harbour MOA and its employees harmless for any damage to their boats or equipment.
- Windmill Harbour Marina employees, at the discretion of the Harbourmaster, may board or move vessels as necessary to increase safety or lessen damage.
- Windmill Harbour Marina employees may deem it necessary to add items of marine equipment to unattended boats. This could include, but is not limited to, lines, fendering, anchors, and bilge pumps. The owner accepts financial responsibility for both equipment and installation costs. These items in no way absolve the owner of the necessity to properly prepare the vessel for severe storm conditions.

The following items are the Boat Owner's responsibility:

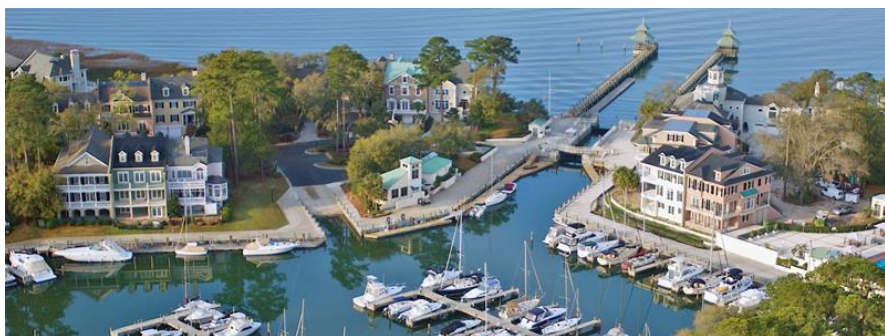
- Replace worn and chaffed dock lines. Ensure that dock lines are of adequate size and consider doubling up the lines.
- Be certain that you have sufficient fendering, anchors, and anchor line.
- Ensure that batteries are fully charged.
- Fill water and fuel tanks.
- Check bilge pumps and float switches.
- Record all serial numbers of equipment for insurance purposes. (Pictures are always helpful)
- Again, when a hurricane watch is posted consider moving to safe anchorage.

If you are personally unable to tend to your vessel, we have included a partial list of reliable marine services that you can contact to assure that your boat is adequately prepared in the event of tropical storms.

Majers Diving	843-298-0903
Italian Boat Works	843-683-2770
Mike Lamson	912-727-5203
Fleming Marine	843-816-0940

Each of these marine services has indicated that they will be available to assist you. Please feel free to call any of the Harbourmaster staff with any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,
Harbour Master



<https://bcso.net/how-to-secure-boats-and-watercraft-during-a-hurricane/>

This emergency plan booklet was compiled from information contributed by a number of sources, including the Town of Hilton Head Island, Beaufort County and various island communities.

This booklet recommends appropriate steps that you should take now, to adequately safeguard yourself, your family and your property. Please consider these seriously, as it may not be possible to complete them immediately before a storm. These steps include arranging for adequate property insurance, inventorying your possessions, pre-defining your evacuation plans, and preparing a “go kit” to take with you in an evacuation.

Following a hurricane evacuation, it could be some time before residents are allowed to return. If you cannot physically return to Windmill Harbour and wish to have a representative evaluate the condition of your residence and/or boat, it will be imperative that you apprise Windmill Harbour’s Security, or your representative may not gain access. You can provide this information by returning the enclosed Hurricane Evacuation Check Out Form to the security gatehouse at your earliest possible convenience.

In an evacuation, you are urged to take a laptop with you, or otherwise arrange for Internet access. Since telephone landlines and cell phones may not be operational during or after a storm, we urge everyone to monitor our website for information about the condition of Windmill Harbour and re-entry. **The primary mode of communication will be through the website and/or email blasts so be sure to provide management with your email address.**

The Security and Emergency Management Committee will do everything within its capabilities to get Windmill Harbour back to some semblance of normalcy after a storm. After a disaster, the Association will attempt to secure the entrance and clear all common area roadways as quickly as possible to allow for emergency vehicle passage. To help achieve these tasks, the Association has a contract with a disaster recovery and debris management company. It could take days or weeks depending upon the severity of a hurricane strike. The Association and/or its agents are NOT responsible to clear debris, mitigate damages, etc. from individual owners’ property. Each individual owner is responsible to obtain insurance to cover their own property, personal property, etc.

Your patience, understanding and assistance will be absolutely vital in order to get through this period.

Windmill Harbour Association
Security and Emergency Management Committee