

# How Safe Is Your Home?<sup>1</sup>

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This publication is part 1 of 6 in the Education + Action = Wind Damage Mitigation series. For the rest of the series, visit [http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/topic\\_series\\_wind\\_damage\\_mitigation](http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/topic_series_wind_damage_mitigation).

Living with hurricanes is a common event for Florida's residents. Researchers have found four major areas where homes commonly fail as a result of hurricane-force winds. Proper hurricane preparation takes action to strengthen these areas.

## What Should Be Done to Prepare This House for a Hurricane?



Figure 1. What should be done to prepare this house for a hurricane?  
Credits: Barbara Haldeman, UF/IFAS PREC

**Hint: Go to Figure 2 for answers.**

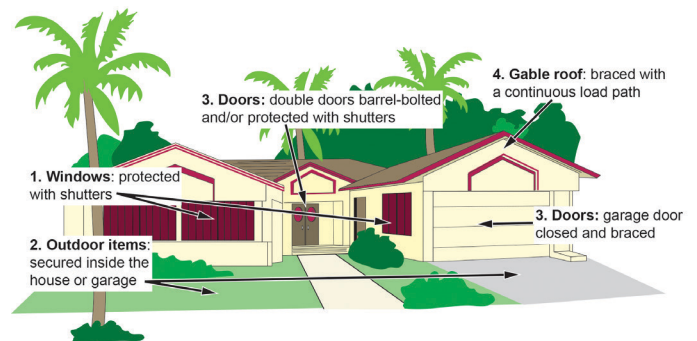


Figure 2. A house prepared for a hurricane.  
Credits: Barbara Haldeman, UF/IFAS PREC

To learn more about these items, ask a UF/IFAS Extension agent for the individual publications in this series, or find them online at [http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/topic\\_series\\_wind\\_damage\\_mitigation](http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/topic_series_wind_damage_mitigation).

## What Can You Do to Prepare Yourself?

All families should have a disaster kit ready before a storm hits. Refresh your kit every 6 months. Here's a checklist so you can be prepared whether you evacuate or stay home:

- Seven-day supply of food that does not need refrigeration or cooking
- Seven-day supply of water (one gallon per person per day)

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- Seven-day supply of clean clothes and shoes
- Sleeping items (blankets, pillows, etc.)
- Toiletries (toothbrush, toothpaste, soap, deodorant, shampoo/conditioner, etc.)
- Cash (in case ATMs/banks are closed)
- First aid kit (including basic medicines and prescription drugs)
- Operable vehicle with a full gas tank
- Radio (battery powered or wind-up)
- Flashlight (battery powered or wind-up)
- Spare batteries
- Tools (for basic car and/or house repair)
- Important documents stored in a waterproof container (medical records, insurance records, Social Security cards, etc.)
- Pet care items (food, water, cage, leash, immunization records, etc.)
- Any other specialty items

Some protective measures can bring insurance savings in Florida. The Florida Department of Community Affairs' interactive website Wind Insurance Savings Calculator (<http://www.floridadisaster.org/wisc/>) can give you a general idea of the insurance savings that may be available for building features that reduce wind damage, but note that the discounts listed are based on information from 2011. Check with your insurance provider for current information.

## Other Resources

For additional information on ways to prepare your property and your family for a hurricane, we recommend the following websites:

**University of Florida: The Disaster Handbook – Master Guide:** <http://disaster.ifas.ufl.edu/masterfr.htm>

**University of Florida: Landscape Plants – Storm Damage Prevention and Treatment:** <http://hort.ifas.ufl.edu/woody/stormy.shtml>

**Federal Alliance for Safe Homes:** <http://www.flash.org>

**Federal Emergency Management Agency Library:** <http://www.fema.gov/resource-document-library/>

**FloridaDisaster.org—Florida Division of Emergency Management:** <http://www.floridadisaster.org/>