



Charleston County News Release

Hurricane Season Begins — Are YOU Ready?

Download Charleston County's official 2015 Hurricane Preparedness Guide and Disabilities & Special Needs Emergency Preparedness Guide.

June 1 marks the beginning of the 2015 hurricane season, but are most people prepared? Are you prepared? The [Charleston County Emergency Management Department](#) wants residents to get their family's emergency plan in place and put their emergency supply kit together prior to a storm.

Now is the time to get ready, and it's easy with the help of the new [2015 Charleston County Hurricane Guide](#). The public can go to www.charlestoncounty.org and click on the "Are You Ready?" banner on the front page of the County's website to download, print and share the:

- 2015 Charleston County Hurricane Preparedness Guide
 - In [English](#)
 - In [Spanish](#)
 - For those with [Disabilities and Special Needs](#)

Changes to point out in the [2015 guide](#):

- Additional transportation pick-up points have been added around the County for those who do not have transportation (all pick-up points are listed in the guide)
- The [procedures for opening shelters](#) changed before the 2012 hurricane season. As a reminder, the public should know that rather than having a list of shelters in advance, emergency shelters are determined with the approach of a hurricane to South Carolina. In the event of a hurricane or other major disaster, residents are asked to monitor local media outlets for a current list of open shelters. During an evacuation, listen for emergency alerts on the radio and look for road signs for shelter information.

"Charleston County Government can assure its citizens and visitors that we are working with local and state agencies to remain prepared for a storm, but everyone in Charleston County has an individual responsibility to ensure their family has a plan in place," said Cathy Haynes, Charleston County Emergency Management Department's Chief of Operations. "Churches, civic groups and community members can also help by printing the hurricane guide for those who do not have access to the Internet. Our entire community needs to work together to spread the word about the importance of being prepared."

The County also has an [Emergency Management Department](#) smart phone app to keep the public informed before, during and after an emergency situation. The app is available for free on all Apple and Android devices. While the app was designed with hurricane season in mind, the operation will be a valuable tool for any natural or man-made disaster.

- **To learn more about the app:** <http://charlestoncounty.org/News/3681.htm>
- **To get the app:** Go to whichever online app store is appropriate for your phone -- Google Play for Android or Apple for iPhones. In the *Search* field type **CC EMD**; if it doesn't work type **CCEMD** without the space.
- **To see an overview of the app's features, watch the short tutorial developed by Charleston County:** <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EaOwnxXpVwg>.

In anticipation of an evacuation order, which can only be given by the governor, Haynes also reminds the public that they should plan to leave town if at all possible, and everyone along the coast is strongly encouraged to make travel arrangements well in advance.

“Due to the storm surge risk county-wide, there will never be enough safe [shelter spaces](#) for all of Charleston County’s residents,” said Jason Patno, Charleston County Emergency Management Director. “Shelters should be considered a last resort and if you can, leave as early as possible to make your trip easier and to help relieve the traffic congestion on our roads.”

Citizens who do not have transportation should learn where their nearest evacuation pick-up point is located. The evacuation pick-up points are noted by blue signs with a hurricane and bus symbol, and are located across the county at many CARTA bus stops and popular areas like schools, churches and shopping centers. In the event of an evacuation order, buses will transport citizens from the pick-up points to the nearest available [Red Cross shelter](#).

Information in the [2015 Charleston County Hurricane Preparedness Guide](#) includes:

- What to have in your emergency supplies kit
- Evacuation information and routes out of Charleston County
- Shelter procedures
- What to do if you don’t have transportation – *look for pick-up point signs posted around the county!*
- Definitions and what you need to do during hurricane watches, warnings and tropical storms
- Rules to know and items to bring if you and your pet need to stay at the pet shelter
- Preparations for your home and your family before the storm
- High wind procedures for bridges
- What to do after a storm, including safety measures and handling debris
- A family communications plan form to fill out
- Important phone numbers, including ones that will be activated in the event of an emergency

The [S.C. Emergency Management Division](#) also produces a guide for residents throughout the state. Citizens can see the *2015 South Carolina Hurricane Guide* beginning June 1 at <http://www.scemd.org/component/content/article/26-guides-and-brochures/142-south-carolina-hurricane-guide> or pick up a free copy at any Walgreens store.

For information on Charleston County Government news and services, the public can:

- Visit our website: www.charlestoncounty.org



- Written by the Public Information Office -