

**MASSACHUSETTS EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY**

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**CONTACT**

Christopher Besse, Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency

[christopher.besse@state.ma.us](mailto:christopher.besse@state.ma.us)



**2018 Atlantic Hurricane Season Begins**

*Start of Hurricane Season is a Reminder to Prepare*

**HURRICANE PREPAREDNESS**  
**Be Ready Before the Storm**

Hurricanes and tropical storms can impact the entire Commonwealth, not just coastal regions

<p>Use MEMA's interactive map to find out if you live or work in a hurricane evacuation zone</p>	<b>Know Your Zone</b>	<b>Make a Plan</b>	Have a predetermined emergency plan tailored to your family's needs
<p>Build an emergency kit that can sustain you and your family for 3-5 days</p>	<b>Build a Kit</b>	<b>Stay Informed</b>	As a storm approaches, closely monitor media reports and promptly follow instructions from public safety officials

Visit [mass.gov/mema](http://mass.gov/mema) for more hurricane preparedness resources

Source: Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency (MEMA)

Mass.gov

**FRAMINGHAM, MA** – Today, June 1st, marks the official start of the Atlantic Hurricane Season which runs through November 30th. While historically the majority of tropical storms and hurricanes that have impacted our region occurred during the months of August and September, now is the time to begin preparing yourself, your family, your home and your business. Throughout hurricane season, the Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency (MEMA) will share important preparedness information to help residents be aware of, and prepare for, the impacts of tropical storms and hurricanes.

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) seasonal outlook predicts a near, or above-normal number of hurricanes this season. Regardless of how many storms develop this year, it only takes one storm to severely impact an area. In 2011, Tropical Storm Irene produced devastating flooding in Central and Western Massachusetts. Irene was a reminder that hurricanes and tropical storms can impact the entire Commonwealth, not just coastal regions, and that all Massachusetts residents need to prepare for the possibility of hurricane impacts this season. To learn more about the

hazards associated with hurricanes and tropical storms, visit MEMA's hurricane webpage: [www.mass.gov/mema/hurricanes](http://www.mass.gov/mema/hurricanes).

"Now is the time for all residents of the Commonwealth to prepare for the impacts of a tropical storm or hurricane," **said MEMA Director Kurt Schwartz**. "As hurricane season begins, residents should learn if they live or work in a hurricane evacuation zone, make an emergency plan, assemble an emergency kit, and stay informed."

### **Know Your Evacuation Zone**

Massachusetts has defined hurricane evacuation zones, designated as Zone A, Zone B and Zone C, for areas of the state at risk for storm surge flooding associated with tropical storms or hurricanes. If evacuations are necessary because of a tropical storm or hurricane, local or state officials will use the hurricane evacuation zones to call for people living, working or vacationing in these areas to evacuate. Even areas not directly along a coastline may be at risk for storm surge flooding during a tropical storm or hurricane. Find out if you live, work or vacation in a hurricane evacuation zone by visiting the 'Know Your Zone' interactive map located on MEMA's website at [www.mass.gov/knowyourzone](http://www.mass.gov/knowyourzone).

### **Make an Emergency Plan**

Develop a plan with the members of your household to prepare for what to do, how to find each other, and how to communicate in a tropical storm or hurricane. An emergency plan should include:

- Meeting Locations
- Emergency Contact Information
- Evacuation Plans
- Shelter-in-Place Plans
- Considerations for Family Members with Access and Functional Needs, and Pets

For more information, see: <https://www.mass.gov/service-details/make-a-family-emergency-plan>.

### **Build an Emergency Kit**

Build an emergency kit containing items that will sustain you and your family in the event you are isolated for three to five days without power or unable to go to a store. Emergency kits are particularly important during hurricane season, as there is the threat of extended power outages, flooding, and impassable debris-covered roads. While it is important to customize your kit to meet the unique needs of you and your family, every emergency kit should include bottled water, food, a flashlight, a radio and extra batteries, a first aid kit, sanitation items, and clothing. Depending on your family's needs, emergency kits should also include medications, extra eyeglasses, medical equipment and supplies, children's items such as diapers and formula, food and supplies for pets and service animals, and other items you or your family members might need during a disaster. For a complete emergency kit checklist, visit: <https://www.mass.gov/service-details/build-an-emergency-kit>.

### **Stay Informed**

Receiving advance warnings and timely emergency alerts and information from public officials is critical to staying safe during a tropical storm or hurricane. Every family should have multiple methods for receiving emergency alerts. Learn more about different types of alerting and information tools including the Massachusetts Alerts Smartphone App, the Emergency Alert System, Wireless Emergency Alerts, NOAA Weather Radio, Social Media & Traditional Media, 2-1-1 Hotline, Local Notification Systems. For more information, please visit: <https://www.mass.gov/service-details/be-informed-and-receive-emergency-alerts>.

### **MEMA Hurricane Season Preparedness Activities**

In preparation for the 2018 hurricane season, MEMA has begun hurricane preparedness activities which will continue throughout the season:

- In early May, MEMA, FEMA and the National Hurricane Center hosted a "Hurricane Preparedness for Decision Makers" class for New England officials to learn about tropical cyclones, forecasts and evacuation decision making.
- In May, MEMA hosted hurricane preparedness webinars for 350 local, state, federal, private sector and non-profit partners to share information from the National Hurricane Center, National Weather Service, FEMA and MEMA about hurricane forecasting and emergency planning.
- In June, MEMA will convene 12 functional hurricane preparedness working groups with representatives of the state's Emergency Support Function (ESF) partner agencies to focus on air operations, distribution of critical commodities, communications, debris management, electricity restoration, evacuations, fuel supplies and distribution, sheltering, mass feeding, impact assessments, search and rescue, and operation of base camps and staging areas.

### **About MEMA**

MEMA is the state agency charged with ensuring the state is prepared to withstand, respond to, and recover from all types of emergencies and disasters, including natural hazards, accidents, deliberate attacks, and technological and infrastructure failures. MEMA's staff of professional planners, communications specialists and operations and support personnel is committed to an all hazards approach to emergency management. By building and sustaining effective partnerships with federal, state and local government agencies, and with the private sector - individuals, families, non-profits and businesses - MEMA ensures the Commonwealth's ability to rapidly recover from large and small disasters by assessing and mitigating threats and hazards, enhancing preparedness, ensuring effective response, and strengthening our capacity to rebuild and recover. For additional information about MEMA and Emergency Preparedness, go to [www.mass.gov/mema](http://www.mass.gov/mema).

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