

## **Severe Weather Planning For: Tyler County Residents**

### **Prepare Your Home**

#### **Steps you can take NOW:**

Here are some steps you can take to protect your property before a storm:

- Find out the elevation of your property and check floodplain maps.
- Check your insurance coverage. Most homeowner insurance policies do not cover flood damage. Learn about the National Flood Insurance Program.
- Find out if your home meets current building code requirements for high winds. Structures that meet current high-wind provisions have a better chance of surviving violent windstorms.
- Install commercial shutters or prepare 5/8 inch plywood panels for your windows.
- Garage doors are frequently the first feature in a home to fail. Reinforce garage doors so that they are able to withstand high winds.
- If you do not live in an evacuation zone or a mobile home, designate an interior room with no windows or external doors as a “safe room”.
- Assess your property to ensure that landscaping and trees do not become a wind hazard. Trim all dead wood, and weak branches or overhanging branches from all trees. Certain trees and bushes are vulnerable to high winds and any dead tree near a home is a hazard.
- Consider landscaping materials other than gravel or rocks.

#### **Before the storm hits:**

- Put up shutters or plywood on windows and openings. Remember that winds are stronger at higher elevations, like high-rises.
- Move outside items to safety, such as patio furniture, plants and grills.
- If your home is in a floodplain, move valuables and furniture to a higher level.
- Put valuable documents in waterproof containers, and take them with you if you evacuate.
- Turn off electricity at the main circuit breaker or fuse box to protect appliances from power surges and reduce the risk of live dangling wires after the storm.
- If your house is supplied with natural or propane gas, turn it off at the meter or tank.
- Remove perishable items from your refrigerator and freezer if you evacuate.
- Make a final walk-through inspection before closing the door.

## **Prepare Your Vehicle:**

- **Fill up with gasoline before you leave town. It's smart to keep your tank full during hurricane season.**
- **Check your vehicle's fluid levels and ensure there is adequate coolant in the radiator.**
- **Don't forget your tires. Check for proper air pressure because hot road surfaces are rough on tires. Be sure that your spare tire has air and that you have the proper equipment to change your tire. Ensure you have a jack and lug wrench in your vehicle and know where they are in the vehicle. Your owner's manual should have instructions for changing tires and flats.**
- **Make sure to carry water and non-perishable food for you and your passengers in case you become stranded.**
- **If you are stranded, stay with your vehicles and use emergency flashers. Tie a white cloth to the antenna or a door handle and raise the hood.**
- **Carry a cell phone. You may need assistance. DPS help line is 1-800-525-555 or \*DPS (on certain wireless carriers.)**
- **Have a working flashlight and extra batteries in your vehicle.**