

Hurricane season runs from June 1 through Nov. 30

Sun, surf and sand.... Living in a coastal community is like being on vacation every day, but it also has its occasional hurricanes, nor'easters, tropical storms and for the first time...COVID-19. The 2020 Atlantic Hurricane Season outlook is calling for 13-19 named storms, 6-10 hurricanes and 3-6 major hurricanes. We've already had two named storms even before the season began. Don't wait to prepare and protect your home and your family. Every year, we advise people to make a plan, get a kit, stay informed, know your risk, know your evacuation zone and know your evacuation route. But this year, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, we have to consider how and where we shelter, now that social distancing is a factor, as well as the need to add masks, hand sanitizer and disinfectant wipes to our emergency supply kits. Here are important tips to ensure your safety before, during and after severe weather:

Make a plan:

Have a family emergency plan. Talk to your children. Everyone should know what to do in case family members are not together when severe weather happens.

Make sure you have a safe place to go when severe thunderstorm or tornado warnings are issued. Safe areas include basements and interior rooms such as bathrooms or closets on the lowest level of a sturdy

building. Stay away from windows. If outside, don't seek shelter under trees.

Talk to your insurance agent about flood insurance policy options or go to www.floodsmart.gov. Remember there is a 30-day waiting period for insurance to take effect.

Know your evacuation zone and evacuation route in case you are to advised to leave the area.

Get a kit:

Start building your emergency supply kit now and be sure to add COVID-19 essentials like masks, hand sanitizer, disinfecting wipes, toilet paper and paper towels. As many residents are well aware, getting some of these items can be difficult. Start gathering them now so that you'll have time to locate them before a storm hits.

Keep emergency supplies on hand, including at least three days' nonperishable food and water, flashlights and batteries, first aid kit and medicines. Make a customized individual kit for babies, family members with functional or special needs, seniors, pets, and one to keep in each of your vehicles.

Stay Informed:

Register to receive emergency text messages, email alerts and warnings on your mobile devices at VBAAlert.

Log on to the city's website, www.VBgov.com, for the latest news and information.

Monitor local news radio stations.

Tune in to local television stations: WTKR TV-3, WAVY TV-10 and WVEC TV-13.

The City's VBTV channels: Cox Cable 46, 47 & 48 and Verizon cable 45, 46 & 47 will display emergency information including city operational status and facilities closure notices.

Follow the city's social media sites: www.facebook.com/cityofvabeach and www.twitter.com/cityofvabeach.

Contact Citizen Services: 311 will provide current operating conditions and facility closures; do not call 911 unless you have an emergency.

Get the latest weather information from the National Weather Service at www.weather.gov.

Purchase an NOAA Weather Radio or battery-powered/hand crank radio with an NOAA Weather Band to get weather warnings directly from the National Weather Service.

For more information on family preparedness for hurricane season visit www.cdc.gov/disasters/hurricanes/covid-19/prepare-for-hurricane.html, www.ready.gov, or www.vaemergency.gov/hurricanes.

###