

Hurricane Hazards

Living in Southern Connecticut means that each year from June 1st through November 30th we are at risk of being impacted by a hurricane. Unfortunately, previous hurricane seasons are not accurate indicators of our present risk each year. Whether it is forecasted to be a “higher than average,” “average,” or “lower than average” season, activity-wise, our risk is the same. It only ever takes one hurricane to affect a community!

Wind

Hurricanes are categorized by sustained winds of 74 mph to 157+ mph. Wind caused damage are to some degree dependent upon the local building codes in effect, how well, and how long they have been enforced.

Tornados

Tornados may form in the rain bands of a hurricane and cause significant damage. Tornados are commonly found in the right front quadrant of the storm. These tornados are not as intense as those in the Midwest tornado belt, but they can inflict tremendous damage with little or no warning.

Storm Surge

Storm surge is an abnormal rise of water generated by a storm that moves ashore prior to and during a hurricane making landfall. As the storm makes landfall, inundation levels (depth of water above ground level) of 2 to 30 feet may occur along the coastal areas, and major rivers of Connecticut. This is enough to inundate most populated areas.

Damage severity depends upon the hurricane’s size, forward speed, its direction of movement and intensity. Storm surge has the potential to cause the greatest loss of life, cripple communications, cause sewers and storm water basins to back up and contaminate drinking water supplies. Storm surge can leave road, streets and bridges filled with sand, debris and, in some cases structurally unstable.

Heavy Rain

Over the past 30 years, freshwater flooding has caused more drowning deaths than storm surge flooding. Torrential rains associated with slow moving, or stationary, tropical storms and hurricanes on average can produce 16 inches of rain within a 24 – 36 hour period. Heavy rains can create massive health problems and have a disastrous effect on a community’s ability to recover quickly.

When a Hurricane or Tropical Storm Threatens Southern Connecticut

As a hurricane or tropical storm moves closer to Southern Connecticut, your local Emergency Management Team will be activated. Emergency Management personnel will

remain in frequent contact with the National Hurricane Center and the local National Weather Service office to closely monitor the development and progress of the hurricane or tropical storm.

Your local Emergency Management Team will utilize the area media outlets to provide frequent updates on the storm, recommend emergency protective actions, and issue evacuation orders.