



PRE-STORM DECISION MAKING

Evacuation, Voluntary or Mandatory?

It is the policy of the Village of Bald Head Island that all citizens leave the island in the event of a major hurricane or other disaster.

When a storm is predicted to affect Bald Head Island, and it is not considered major, a voluntary evacuation is typically issued by the Village. The mayor has the authority to proclaim a State of Emergency and to issue evacuation orders, curfews, and other restrictions in response to emergency events. In the absence of the Mayor, the Mayor Pro Tempore assumes these duties. The Governor of North Carolina can also issue State of Emergencies and issue evacuation orders for areas of North Carolina, including Bald Head Island.

Voluntary Evacuation – When a voluntary evacuation is issued, all residents, property owners, and visitors will be requested to leave the island as soon as possible. All non-residents will be required to evacuate. A non-resident is a person who does not use their Bald Head Island residence as their primary residence. A State of Emergency is declared and all persons remaining on the island will be restricted to their private property due to the potential for injury from storm-related damage to utilities, infrastructure, or trees. During a voluntary evacuation, the Village will maintain basic services (EMS, Fire, Police) to the extent reasonably possible in a Category I or II storm. There is no guarantee that services will be provided at normal levels thus individuals with known medical or other physical needs should leave upon notice of a voluntary evacuation.

Mandatory Evacuation – When a mandatory evacuation is issued it is not recommended that anyone remain on the island. No Village staff will remain on the island following a mandatory evacuation. There will be no Village services (Public Safety, Administration) available and residents who stay will be required to remain on their private property until the State of Emergency is lifted. All permanent residents and property owners are strongly encouraged to adhere to this policy and leave the island when directed to do so by the appropriate Village personnel.



POST-STORM DECISION MAKING

Re-Entry System

The initial re-entry back to the island will include members of the Village Emergency Operations Center (EOC). Members of the EOC will conduct an initial safety sweep to assess the overall condition of the Island. Following the initial safety assessment, the mayor, in conjunction with the Village Manager and Public Safety Director as the Incident Commander, will make the determination if the island is safe for re-entry.

The following re-entry guidance will be taken into consideration by the EOC, specifically the Incident Commander, Mayor, and Village Manager (in consultation with other EOC Team members), with "SAFETY" being the fundamental consideration in making decisions for the re-entry of the public following a mandatory evacuation.

Given uncertainties when dealing with natural hazards, particularly with tropical storms and hurricanes, if/when it is determined by the EOC that a phased re-entry process is required, the following re-entry principles will be taken into consideration:

1. Re-entry will prioritize, to the maximum extent practical and safe, businesses that have established agreements with the Village to provide initial first responders with specific services & products as part of the EOC's post-storm response and/or recovery efforts.
2. Re-entry will prioritize, to the maximum extent practical and safe, on-island food establishment operators who will have to pass the Brunswick County Health Department inspection before reopening to the general public once they return.
3. Re-entry will prioritize, to the maximum extent practical and safe, individual(s) with primary residences on the island.
4. Re-entry will prioritize after a prolonged emergency with a mandatory evacuation, to the maximum extent practical and safe, consideration by the EOC for island re-entry by geographical areas based on their availability of power, water, and sewer.

Once the EOC has completed an island-wide assessment and it is determined there are no safety hazards or risks to be found for the island and public, that restoration of ALL municipal services is available to the public, the mayor will amend the State of Emergency so that the process of re-entry can start. At this time, the Village will have returned to normal operating conditions.