

Hurricane season is almost here!

Here are some steps YOU can take to prepare NOW:

Sign up for the Code Red notification system. The Village of Bald Head Island utilizes an emergency notification system known as Code Red. Village of Bald Head Island citizens can register to receive emergency messaging and updates about specific events (i.e., hurricanes and/or tropical storms). This system will be used in addition to the Village's Voice to send important messages via email and text. Registrants can choose which methods of contact they prefer. Messages can be targeted to areas of the island, so be sure to use your physical address on the island when you sign up. The Village also uses this service to send messages about utility outages. You can sign up online from the Village's home page at www.villagebhi.org. Scroll down to Safety and click on Subscribe under Notifications.

Find the Village on Social Media. During the last few storms, the Village has used its social media accounts to distribute information and photos. Please follow or like us on our Facebook (www.facebook.com/villagebhi), Twitter (www.twitter.com/villagebhi), and Instagram (www.instagram.com/villagebhi) channels.

Create an emergency communication plan with your family, friends, and neighbors. This plan spells out how everyone will contact each other.

Create an emergency preparation plan for your property to include emptying refrigerators/freezers; securing outdoor furniture, clearing loose and clogged rain gutters and downspouts, moving golf carts to higher ground if you are on a lot with flooding tendencies. If you move your golf cart, you do it at your own risk. The Village is not responsible for damaged golf carts.

If you have a "house check" service with a property manager, building contractor, or other trusted source, reach out to them to establish communications before, during, and after the event passes.

Build an emergency kit. Keep it ready at home, at work, and in your golf cart. The ready.gov website has some ideas on what to include in your kit.

Check your insurance coverage. Damage caused by heavy winds, wind-driven rain, and flooding may not be covered by homeowner's insurance policies. Buy flood insurance. Buy golf cart insurance (considered much like an automobile policy). The NC Department of Insurance has "A Consumer's Guide to Disaster Preparedness" document online which can help guide you further.

Have an evacuation plan. Know the evacuation routes ahead of time. For permanent residents on the island, it is critical to have a plan for alternative living arrangements (include medications), which could extend into several weeks in the case of major damage to the Island.

Download an emergency weather app on your phone and purchase a weather radio.

Keep all important documents in a waterproof container to take with you if you evacuate.

Identify the safest place in your home. In case of a tornado and/or flooding. For a tornado, this would be a small interior windowless room or hallway on the lowest floor.

There are many resources online that provide additional helpful tips to prepare for hurricanes. Many of them are listed on the Village's emergency preparedness webpage at www.villagebhi.org/departments-services/public-safety/emergency-preparedness/.

If you are new to the island and have not experienced one yet, reach out to your neighbors. They can be very helpful in providing information on how they prepared for the last few storms and what they learned they need to do for the next one. If you have any tips you would like to share, which could be used in future Village communications, please send them to public.information@villagebhi.org.