



COMSECNDFLT Public Affairs
1751 Morris St., Bldg D-29, Norfolk, VA 23511
Voice: 757-443-9850 (X47127)/Fax: 757-443-9805
POC: Cmdr. Elissa Smith
<http://www.secondfleet.navy.mil/>



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Hurricane Season Means Family Preparedness

From Commander, U.S. Second Fleet Public Affairs

NORFOLK, Va. – Hurricane season is now in full swing, and as the fleet prepares to deal with changing weather conditions Navy families must also prepare to handle potential weather related disasters at home.

“Not only do we want our ships to be ready for a hurricane, but family readiness is critical if our Sailors are given the order to get underway,” said Vice Adm. Daniel Holloway, commander, U.S. Second Fleet. “Sailors need to know that their families are prepared and the resources and support available for whatever challenges the storm may bring.”

Understanding the dangers of high winds, lightning and storm tidal surges is a critical component to understanding why it’s important to prepare for weather related emergencies. Hurricanes and other disasters can leave personnel cut off from power, transportation, communication, food and medical supplies for days. Many of the dangers of these situations can be managed or even minimized by planning ahead and taking basic precautionary measures.

Family preparedness should include, at a minimum, having an evacuation plan, access to emergency contact information outside of the region, and access to an emergency kit.

Emergency kits should consists of batteries, two-way radios, manual can openers, first-aid supplies, cell phone chargers, a weather band radio, prescription drugs, water and water storage as well as non-perishable foods. Ideally, the kit should include enough supplies to last three days.

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Preparations should also include attention to special needs, adequate gasoline supply for automobiles, chainsaws or generators and supplies for the caring and shelter of family pets.

Disaster preparations also include knowing what information resources are available before a crisis occurs. A variety of information is available online in support of family readiness including:

- Navy Family Accountability and Assessment System (<http://go.usa.gov/kQ4>) provides a standardized method for the Navy to account, manage, and monitor the recovery process for personnel and their families affected and/or scattered by a wide-spread catastrophic event.
- State of Virginia Emergency Management (<http://www.vaemergency.gov/readyvirginia>) has many resources for planning and preparing emergency kits, developing evacuation plans and addressing specific special needs for children, the elderly and others.
- Virginia Department of Transportation (http://www.virginiadot.org/travel/hurricane_defauLT.asp) Hurricane Evacuation Guide at provides more detailed information for preparing for a hurricane, hurricane evacuation and public shelters in Virginia.
- Prepare Hampton Roads website at <http://www.preparehr.org> provides valuable tips for preparing for high winds, evacuation, and also includes the Red Cross Hurricane Preparedness Guide at <http://www.preparehr.org/documents/RedCrossReadyHurricaneGuide2pg.pdf>

"In a world with hurricanes, tornadoes, tsunamis and earthquakes, it's extremely important for us as maritime operators to train like we fight and create a battle rhythm for events that not only impact our operational readiness, but our personal readiness with our families," said Holloway.

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