

Guidelines for Safety in Hurricane Impacted Areas¹

- Do not attempt to do anything that you are not trained, qualified, or equipped to do.
- Do not attempt to turn on or turn off electrical power to structures. You are not qualified.
- Do not attempt to turn on or turn off gas to structures. You are not qualified.
- Do not enter areas that you cannot see or safely traverse.
- Do not assume that because the lights are out that all electrical power is off. Assume all electric power and power lines to be active. Assume that the electric can come on unexpectedly.
- Assume all gas lines to be active unless told otherwise by a qualified individual.
- Do not enter into areas of standing or moving water.
- Do not enter structures that you do not know the structural condition of. Property never takes priority over your personal safety.
- Always be aware of your surroundings. Be aware of overhead clearances, walking/working surfaces, and potential obstructions and hazards. Take a moment to stop and consider this before entering into an area that you are unfamiliar with. Be aware that conditions can change unexpectedly.
- Always work with a buddy. Never allow yourself to be alone.
- Make sure that you have a way to contact someone in the event of an emergency.
- Always know your way out of a building or area you enter.
- Make sure that your needs are attended to. Make sure that you know how and when you will be transported. Make sure that you have access to food and water and bathroom facilities.
- Fuel burning equipment (generators, heaters, etc.) must be kept well ventilated and should not be inside buildings. Exhaust from fuel burning is hazardous to your health and can be deadly.
- Lift carefully. Lift in teams or use mechanical means as appropriate (hand trucks, carts, etc.). Do not attempt to lift items that are too heavy. Be aware of what is under or near items in the event you unintentionally drop them.
- Always wear personal protective equipment (eye protection, gloves, hard hat, dust mask, etc.) when handling rough or sharp objects, when there is debris in the air, when pouring or transferring materials between containers, or when conditions warrant. A dust mask DOES NOT protect you from asbestos, hazardous chemicals, or mold. A hard hat DOES NOT protect you from all potential fall hazards.
- Do not enter areas that contain visible mold growth, hazardous material releases, or damaged asbestos materials unless properly equipped and protected.
- Keep sharp objects away from yourself. Be careful picking up debris or bags. There may be sharp objects that can hurt you.
- Use shop vacuums only for their intended purpose. Most shop vacuums require that you remove their filters prior to using them for wet vacuuming operations.
- Do not let electrical cords or energized equipment get wet. Do not use equipment or power tools that have frayed or damaged electrical cords.
- Always ask for instruction on how to use any hand tools or equipment that you have not used before.
- Do not operate heavy machinery or equipment. You are not qualified.
- Wear clothing and shoes appropriate for your work environment.
- Do not attempt to do anything that you are not comfortable or qualified to do. When in doubt, don't do it.
- Always ask questions.

¹ Received from the Office of Risk Management 11.9.2012