

Georgia Emergency Management Agency



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NEWS RELEASE

Residents Urged To Monitor Weather Reports As Tropical Storm Hanna Approaches

(ATLANTA) - The Georgia Emergency Management Agency (GEMA) encourages citizens to make preparations for possible severe weather in anticipation of Tropical Storm Hanna as GEMA continues to closely monitor the storm.

At 11 a.m. the center of Tropical Storm Hanna was located about 370 miles southeast of Nassau, Bahamas. Maximum sustained winds are near 70 mph and may strengthen in the next 24 hours.

Although it is too soon to tell what the impact on Georgia will be, it is never too early to prepare.

"Whether you're along the coast or inland, it is critical to heed local warnings and take preparedness steps now," says GEMA Director Charley English. "Even if the storm does not make landfall in Georgia, Tropical Storm Hanna may bring extensive flooding, tornadoes and power outages."

If you haven't already stocked your disaster supplies kit, you should do so now. Include:

- Enough water and non-perishable food per person to last for at least three days and special items for infants, the infirmed and the elderly. Don't forget to include pets in your preparations.
- First aid kit and essential medications.
- Protective clothing, rainwear and bedding or sleeping bags.
- Battery-powered radio, flashlight and extra batteries.
- An extra set of car keys and cash and a credit card.

Create your family evacuation plan.

- Choose a place where your family will meet if they can't return home when disaster strikes.
- Designate an out-of-town relative or friend as a point of contact.
- Become familiar with evacuation routes, and know where you will go if ordered to leave. Keep a road map in your car: You may need to take an unfamiliar route if major roads are closed or clogged.
- Remember to take your disaster supplies kit with you when evacuating.

If you live in a flood-prone or coastal area, be prepared to evacuate early and avoid the influx of out-of-state evacuees.

Coastal residents should prepare for high winds:

- Prepare to bring inside any outdoor furniture, decorations or ornaments, trash cans, hanging plants, and anything else that can be picked up by the wind.
- Prepare to cover all windows of your home. Install hurricane shutters or purchase pre-cut 1/2" outdoor plywood boards for each window of your home. Install anchors for the plywood and pre-drill holes in the plywood so that you can put it up quickly.
- Fill your car's gas tank.
- Recheck manufactured home tie-downs.
- Make trees more wind resistant by trimming diseased and damaged limbs, then strategically removing branches so that wind can blow through.

Stay tuned to television, radio and National Oceanic Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Weather Radio for the latest storm information.

Know the difference between a hurricane watch and warning. A watch means that hurricane conditions (winds exceeding 74 mph, storm surge, heavy rain, tornadoes and flooding) are possible within 36 hours. A warning means that hurricane conditions are expected within 24 hours.

When the hurricane warning is issued, you should:

- Listen to the advice of local officials and leave immediately, if advised.
- If you are not advised to evacuate, stay indoors, away from windows.
- Be aware that the calm "eye" is deceptive: The storm is not over. The worst part of the storm will happen once the eye passes over and the winds blow from the opposite direction. Trees, shrubs, buildings and other objects damaged by the first winds can be broken or destroyed by the second winds.
- Be alert for tornadoes. Tornadoes can happen during a hurricane and after it passes over. Remain indoors, in the center of your home, in a room without windows.
- Stay away from floodwaters. If you come upon a flooded road, turn around and go another way. If you are caught on a flooded road and waters are rising rapidly around you, get out of the car and climb to higher ground.

GEMA has activated the state operations center (SOC) and deployed field coordinators around the state to facilitate local needs. In addition, appropriate state agencies are standing by to provide assistance.

GEMA is the lead state agency for coordination of emergency and disaster response activities. For information on preparedness and response activities, visit GEMA's Web site <http://www.gema.state.ga.us/>, <http://ready.ga.gov/> or www.georgia911.org/. For information on specific risks in your area and how to prepare for them, contact your local emergency management agency.

In the event of an evacuation, please tune to your local public radio station for important evacuation information. A list of public radio stations in your area also can be found at www.gema.state.ga.us.

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www.gema.ga.gov

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