

2026 Hurricane Preparedness for Construction Operators



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Pre-planning Phase



Phase 1 – Pre-Season Planning

- A hurricane action plan should be developed well in advance, before a construction site is exposed to a storm event. Key preparation steps include:
- Designate an action team responsible for planning, coordination, and communication.
- Identify equipment, materials, and site features that must be secured, stabilized, or protected.

Phase 2 – Active Monitoring

- During hurricane season, consistently monitor weather conditions and official forecasts.
- Follow advisories and updates issued by the National Hurricane Center.
- Use reliable tracking resources such as:
 - <https://www.trackthetropics.com/graphical-tropical-weather-outlook/>
 - <https://www.weather.gov/safety/hurricane-ww>

Phase 3 – Storm Response Readiness

- When a tropical depression, tropical storm, or hurricane forms, maintain constant awareness of its projected path and potential impacts.
- Follow instructions and emergency guidance from local officials via TV, radio, mobile alerts, or other official communication channels.
- Evacuate immediately if directed by local authorities.

This document provides guidance to help clients prepare for hurricane season and outlines critical actions to protect construction sites from potential damage caused by hurricanes or tropical storms.

Establishing A Plan



A hurricane action plan should be established well in advance for any construction site located in hurricane-prone areas. Planning helps reduce safety risks, prevent damage to equipment and stormwater controls, and support an orderly shutdown if severe weather threatens the site. The following measures should be included:

Monitor weather conditions: Regularly track weather forecasts, tropical outlooks, and hurricane advisories. Set up real-time alerts so the site team can respond quickly to changing conditions.

Secure equipment and materials: Stabilize or relocate loose materials, tools, and equipment to protected areas. This includes securing scaffolding, containers, stockpiles, and any items that could become airborne or cause damage.

Protect critical records and data: Back up important documents, permits, plans, and inspection records to a secure cloud-based system to ensure access and prevent loss.

Establish clear communication procedures: Develop a communication plan so employees, contractors, and subcontractors understand their responsibilities, site shutdown procedures, and how to stay informed before and after the storm.

Develop an evacuation plan: Identify evacuation routes, assembly points, and safe locations. Ensure all personnel understand when and how to evacuate if ordered by local authorities.

Prepare for power disruptions: Arrange for backup power, if necessary, to support critical operations, security systems, or dewatering and stormwater control measures during outages.

Implementing a hurricane action plan helps protect personnel, equipment, and the construction site from potential storm impacts. The plan should be reviewed and updated regularly to ensure it remains accurate, effective, and aligned with current site conditions and responsibilities.

Types of Storms



Florida regularly experiences a wide range of severe weather, making it essential for construction operators and site managers to understand the different storm types and their potential impacts. Each type of storm presents unique risks to worker safety, equipment, and stormwater controls.

Thunderstorms:

Thunderstorms are the most frequent weather event in Florida, especially during the summer. They can produce intense rainfall, lightning, and strong wind gusts that may damage erosion and sediment controls or cause flooding.

Severe Thunderstorms:

Severe thunderstorms are more intense and may generate damaging winds, large hail, and isolated tornadoes. These storms can occur throughout the year but are most common during warmer months.

Hailstorms:

Hailstorms are less common but can occur during severe thunderstorms. Hail of varying sizes can damage equipment, temporary structures, and exposed materials.

Tornadoes:

Florida ranks among the most tornado-prone states in the U.S. Tornadoes may develop quickly from severe thunderstorms or tropical systems.

Tropical Storms:

Tropical storms occur during hurricane season (June through November) and bring sustained winds, prolonged rainfall, and flooding. Even without reaching hurricane strength, these storms can disrupt construction activities.

Hurricanes:

Hurricanes pose the greatest risk due to their destructive winds, heavy rainfall, storm surge, and widespread flooding. These events can cause extensive site damage, erosion, and environmental impacts if proper preparation measures are not in place.

Understanding these storm types and their potential intensity allows construction sites to prepare appropriately, implement protective measures, and respond quickly to protect personnel, infrastructure, and stormwater management systems.

A Stormwater Specific - Hurricane Preparedness Check List

Before a Tropical storm or hurricane - Watch stage.

STEP 1

- Document, confirm, and approve a tropical and hurricane preparedness plan for your respective site.
- Established your response team members and proactively assign specific duties.
- Identify materials, buildings, structures, and heavy equipment that should be secured or removed from the construction site.
- Ensure all BMPs are in place and maintained.
- Protect and stabilize all sensitive areas.

During a Tropical storm or hurricane - Warning stage.

STEP 2

- Make sure all building materials, debris, or supplies are properly secured.
- Areas prone to flooding should be prepared by pulling out inlet protection as needed.
- Properly brace structures that are considered incomplete.
- Ensure all openings to the construction structures are covered to limit water intrusion.
- Make sure fuel, hazardous liquids, or other equipment have been secured.
- Secure SWPPP books.
- Ensure port-o-lets are serviced and emptied out, and placement is far from inlets – place side down.

After a Tropical storm or hurricane - Recovery stage.

STEP 3

- Do not attempt to access any equipment until safe.
- Check the condition of local roadways and advise workers and sub-contractors.
- Assume that all downed power lines are fully energized and avoid them.
- Repair and replace any BMPs that were damaged or removed due to the storm, such as replace inlet protection.
- Review stormwater report thoroughly and delegate team to make corrections as needed.



KCI prioritizes client safety and compliance by suspending inspections before storms and resuming them only once local authorities deem roads safe.

We ensure SWPPP documentation is fully updated with all necessary records and executive orders, keeping clients informed and protected every step of the way.

Hurricane State of Emergency – Executive Orders



What is a state of emergency?

In Florida, a State of Emergency is declared by the Governor when a hurricane or other severe weather event poses an imminent threat to life, property, or infrastructure. This declaration allows state and local agencies to act quickly, mobilize resources, and implement protective measures before, during, and after the storm.

When a State of Emergency is issued, the following actions may occur:

- Activation of emergency response plans at the state, county, and local levels.
- Evacuation orders for vulnerable or high-risk areas to protect public safety.
- Opening of public shelters for residents who cannot safely evacuate.
- Deployment of the Florida National Guard and emergency personnel to assist with preparation, response, and security.
- Pre-positioning of equipment and supplies to support debris removal, flood response, and infrastructure protection.
- Restoration efforts, including clearing roadways, restoring power and utilities, and providing medical and public safety support.

KCI closely monitors all governmental announcements during severe weather, including State of Emergency notices. We ensure clients are informed and supported, providing timely formal documentation for Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) updates whenever needed.

Before, During, After a Hurricane



Proper planning and clear procedures are essential to protect personnel, equipment, and construction in progress when a hurricane or tropical storm threatens. The following guidance outlines key actions to consider before, during, and after a storm event.

BEFORE the Storm – Preparation and Site Securing

- **Early preparation reduces risk and allows for an orderly shutdown of site activities.**
- **Monitor weather conditions:** Stay informed by tracking forecasts, tropical storm advisories, and hurricane warnings from reliable sources.
- **Communicate the plan:** Ensure all employees, contractors, and subcontractors understand hurricane procedures through regular training and safety briefings, including applicable OSHA safety requirements.
- **Establish a shutdown timeline:** Define when construction activities will stop, when the site will be secured, and when operations may safely resume after the storm.
- **Document site conditions:** Record current work in progress with photographs, videos, and detailed inventories of equipment, materials, and installed controls. This documentation supports recovery, insurance, and compliance needs.
- **Secure the site:** Stabilize or relocate loose materials, reinforce stormwater BMPs, and protect exposed structures and equipment from wind and flooding.

DURING the Storm – Protect Personnel and Maintain Communication

- **Safety is the top priority during active storm conditions.**
- **Keep personnel off-site:** Do not remain at or return to the construction site during a hurricane due to risks from flooding, flying debris, structural instability, and electrical hazards.
- **Follow evacuation orders:** Immediately follow evacuation instructions and emergency guidance issued by local authorities.

Before, During, After a Hurricane

- **Maintain situational awareness:** Continue monitoring official updates and maintain communication with staff to ensure accountability and awareness of emergency procedures.

AFTER the Storm – Safe Reentry and Recovery

- **Careful assessment is necessary** before resuming site activities.
- **Wait for official clearance:** Do not return to the site until local authorities indicate it is safe to do so.
- **Conduct a safety assessment:** Be cautious of hazards such as flooded excavations, unstable slopes, downed power lines, displaced BMPs, and loose or damaged materials.
- **Account for personnel:** Confirm all staff and contractors are safe before beginning recovery operations.
- **Document and begin cleanup:** Photograph site conditions, assess damage, repair stormwater controls, and safely remove debris before resuming construction activities.
- **Planning for each phase—before, during, and after a hurricane—helps** minimize risk, protect workers, maintain compliance, and support a faster and safer return to normal operations.

Construction site operators play a critical role in protecting personnel, infrastructure, and stormwater controls when severe weather threatens. In hurricane-prone regions like Florida, advance planning, continuous monitoring, and disciplined execution before, during, and after a storm are essential. Operators must establish and communicate a clear hurricane action plan, secure materials and equipment, document site conditions, and shut down operations in an orderly and timely manner. During a storm, personnel safety is the highest priority, and all evacuation orders and official guidance must be followed. After the storm, operators must wait for clearance, assess hazards, document impacts, and restore site controls before resuming work. Proactive preparation and responsible response help minimize damage, maintain regulatory compliance, and ensure safe and efficient recovery.

Frequently Asked Questions

What is a hurricane?

A hurricane is a tropical storm with sustained winds of at least 74 miles per hour. Hurricanes can cause significant damage from high winds, heavy rain, storm surges, and flooding.

What is a tropical storm?

A tropical storm is a type of cyclone with sustained winds between 39 and 73 miles per hour. Tropical storms can cause significant damage from high winds, heavy rain, storm surges, and flooding.

How are hurricanes named?

Hurricanes are named using a rotating list of names maintained by the World Meteorological Organization. Names are assigned alphabetically and alternate between male and female names.

Where do hurricanes form?

Hurricanes form over warm ocean waters near the equator. They typically form in the Atlantic Ocean, Gulf of Mexico, or the Caribbean Sea.

When is hurricane season?

Hurricane season runs from June 1 to November 30 in the Atlantic Basin, which includes the Atlantic Ocean, Caribbean Sea, and Gulf of Mexico.

What is the difference between a hurricane watch and a hurricane warning?

A hurricane watch means that hurricane conditions are possible within 48 hours. A hurricane warning means that hurricane conditions are expected within 36 hours or less.

What is the difference between a tropical storm watch and a tropical storm warning?

A tropical storm watch means that tropical storm conditions are possible within 48 hours. A tropical storm warning means that tropical storm conditions are expected within 36 hours or less.

Frequently Asked Questions

How can you prepare for a hurricane?

Prepare for a hurricane by stocking up on emergency supplies, securing your home, and developing an evacuation plan. Stay informed about the latest weather updates and follow any evacuation orders issued by local authorities.

What should you do during a hurricane?

Stay indoors and away from windows during a hurricane. If flooding occurs, move to higher ground. If you need to evacuate, follow your evacuation plan, and listen to instructions from local authorities.

What should you do after a hurricane?

Stay alert for downed power lines, standing water, and other hazards. Only return to your home or business after it has been deemed safe by local authorities. Contact your insurance company to report any damage and begin the claims process.

What are some things a construction site can do to prepare before the storm?

Secure the job site by tying down any construction equipment susceptible to heavy winds along with removing equipment like cranes from the site altogether. focus on materials, trash, tools, hazardous materials, dumpsters, and portable bathrooms, as well as job site signage and turn off the power.

What are some things a construction site can do after a storm?

Assess the damage. Pay close attention to possible structural integrity issues, along with possible hazardous spills and debris, and any destruction that interferes with the restart of the building.