

STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

Department of Safety

Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management

NEWS RELEASE

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HSEM URGES PRECAUTIONS AS HURRICANE IRENE APPROACHES

CONCORD, N.H. – Hurricane Irene, the 2011 Atlantic Hurricane Season’s first storm, is approaching the U.S. mainland and is expected to reach New England over the weekend.

The N.H. Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management recommends that New Hampshire residents and visitors stay current on storm watches and warnings and take precautions to protect themselves and their families.

“Hurricanes pose dual threats: high winds that can down trees and power lines and heavy rain that can cause flooding,” said Christopher M. Pope, director of Homeland Security and Emergency Management. “Even if a hurricane is downgraded to a tropical storm or doesn’t directly strike New Hampshire it can push significant rainfall into the state. Flooding will be a serious threat.”

Pope recommended the following hurricane precautions for all New Hampshire residents and visitors:

- Hurricanes can be unpredictable in terms of their exact pathway, wind strength and rainfall. Everyone should monitor weather information from the National Weather Service, radio and TV broadcasts and Internet sources.
- Clear your yard of toys, lawn furniture and other objects that could become dangerous missiles in high winds.
- Stock up on water, non-perishable food and other supplies to be able to shelter at homes for up to three days.
- Prepare for power outages by stockpiling flashlights and fresh batteries and a battery powered radio. If you have a generator, ensure that it is professionally installed and can be operated without causing a carbon monoxide hazard. Report outages to your electric utility.
- If local officials order an evacuation, respond immediately.
- Use text messaging to communicate with family and friends during a storm, rather than cell phone calls. Texts use much less bandwidth than cell phone calls and messages are more likely to get through.

“People need to be aware of their surroundings and pay attention to local conditions that present a hazard during high winds or flooding,” Pope said. “I also encourage people to be good neighbors and check on elderly or handicapped relatives or acquaintances.”

For detailed information on emergency preparedness for individuals, families, businesses and organization see the state emergency preparedness website, ReadyNH at www.readynh.nh.gov.