

# Mayor Encourages Residents, Business Owners to Take Preparedness Steps as Hurricane Season Peaks



*Know the Risk, Be Prepared, Stay Informed*

Mayor Jon Mitchell and New Bedford Emergency Management Director Mark Mahoney today urged City residents and business owners to take basic preparedness measures to mitigate the risk of property damage, injuries and loss of life in the event of a tropical storm or hurricane. Mayor Mitchell declared the month of August 2014 as Hurricane Preparedness Month in New Bedford.

“Tropical Storm Irene in 2011, Hurricane Sandy in 2012, and most recently Hurricane Arthur which dumped eight inches of rainfall on New Bedford, remind us all how important it is to be prepared for severe weather including heavy rain and strong winds,” said Mark Mahoney, Emergency Management Director.

According to NOAA’s Climate Prediction Center, the 2014

Atlantic Hurricane Season brings a 70 percent likelihood of 8 to 13 named storms (winds of 39 mph or higher), of which 3 to 6 could become hurricanes (winds of 74 mph or higher), including 1 to 2 major hurricanes (Category 3, 4 or 5; winds of 111 mph or higher). Though Atlantic Hurricane Season officially began on June 1st and continues through November 30th, 75% of the 40 tropical storm systems that have impacted this region over the last 100 years have occurred during the months of August and September.

“I encourage every resident and business owner in New Bedford to take the potential for severe weather seriously. Preparation is the best way to reduce the likelihood of injury or property damage in the event of a hurricane or tropical storm—know the risks, take steps to prepare, and stay informed,” said Mayor Jon Mitchell.

The following information on emergency preparedness is provided by the Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency and the City of New Bedford Emergency Management Department:

### **1. Know Your Risk**

Understand the hazards that are associated with hurricanes, and what risks they bring. The biggest hazards associated with tropical storms and hurricanes include storm surge and storm tide, heavy rainfall and inland flooding, as well as high winds. These hazards can cause property damage, widespread loss of power, and catastrophic flooding both inland and along the coast.

In New Bedford, it may be necessary to evacuate parts of the city to protect residents from storm surge flooding. In all but the most severe storms, the area of evacuation will be those low-lying areas outside the New Bedford Hurricane Barrier. Evacuation is also an option for residents living outside potential flood areas who feel more comfortable “riding out” the storm in the safety and security of a mass care hurricane shelter. Residents and businesses are urged to

heed evacuation orders from city officials when issued.

## **2. Be Prepared**

There are important steps everyone should take to prepare themselves and their family for the next hurricane or tropical storm. Being prepared reduces the risk of property damage, injury or death.

- Be prepared to Evacuate or Shelter in Place;
- Ensure your family is prepared by building an Emergency Kit and developing a Communication Plan;
- Prepare your home and property for a hurricane.

## **3. Stay Informed**

Stay informed throughout Hurricane Season: know how to receive warnings and alerts, and critical information before and during a storm.

- The Emergency Alert System (EAS) via radio and television.
- Local “Reverse 9-1-1” type notification systems. These systems may require opt-in/registration in advance, so check with your local public safety officials about which systems are used in your community and how to register.
- Wireless Emergency Alerts.
- MEMA’s free Massachusetts Alerts app that delivers critical information to your smartphone. To receive emergency information on your smartphone, including severe weather alerts from the National Weather Service and emergency information from MEMA, download the Massachusetts Alerts free app. To learn more about Massachusetts Alerts, and for information on how to download the free app (called Ping4Alerts!) onto your smartphone, visit: [www.mass.gov/mema/mobileapp](http://www.mass.gov/mema/mobileapp).
- All Hazards National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Weather Radio.
- U.S. Coast Guard Marine Broadcast

- Traditional media.
- MEMA's Twitter or Facebook accounts or social media accounts of a public safety agency in your community.
- A message on Teletypewriters (TTY).

Other sources of important information:

- National Hurricane Center – <http://www.nhc.noaa.gov>
- National Weather Service (Taunton) – <http://www.weather.gov/box/>
- National Weather Service (Albany) – <http://www.weather.gov/aly/>
- Federal Emergency Management Agency – <http://www.ready.gov/hurricanes>

For additional information about Hurricane Preparedness, please visit the City of New Bedford Emergency Management [page](#).

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