



THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF PUBLIC SAFETY AND SECURITY



MASSACHUSETTS EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY

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MASSACHUSETTS ENTERS THE 2008 HURRICANE SEASON

Federal, State & Local Officials Prepare

Framingham, MA – To help increase public awareness of the effects hurricanes can have on the Commonwealth and the Preparedness steps we all must take, over the next fourteen weeks the Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency (MEMA) will be disseminating important information to ensure the continued safety of our citizens and property.

“In recent years, the severity of these storms and their destructive power has been witnessed in other areas of the country,” stated MEMA Director Don Boyce. “With another very active hurricane season predicted, the odds continually increase that New England may be due for its next major hurricane.”

MEMA will be continually promoting Hurricane Preparedness through weekly News Releases highlighting key issues relative to the New England Hurricane Season. In addition, there will continue to be numerous workshops and exercises for local officials, as well as Hurricane Preparedness information available on the MEMA website at www.mass.gov/mema. Topics will include Massachusetts’ Hurricane History, Preparedness Tips for Families, Home Owners, Populations with Unique Needs, Pet Owners, Boaters, Businesses, Inland Residents, as well as information about Sheltering-In-Place and Evacuation.

Although the Hurricane Season in New England is defined as June 1st to November 30th, 75% of the 40 tropical systems that have impacted our region in the past century have struck during the months of August and September. The last severe hurricane to hit Massachusetts was Hurricane Bob in August 1991. Bob, a Category 2 Hurricane, with winds between 91 and 110mph, caused almost \$1 billion in damage, at the time. More recently, Hurricanes Edouard (1996) and Bonnie (1998) threatened the Bay State, but veered out into the Atlantic as they traveled up the coast.

In 1999, Hurricane Floyd, although weakened to a tropical storm prior to its arrival in the Commonwealth, demonstrated that these storms are not merely ‘coastal events’. Most of that storm’s damage was rain and flood related, causing severe damage as far west as the Berkshires.

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In fact, some of our most devastating flooding associated with these storms has occurred in Central and Western Massachusetts – up to 17” of rain fell in association with the 1938 Hurricane and 25” of rain fell over a 5-day period in August 1955 from Tropical Storms Connie & Diane. The City of Westfield received 13.15” in a single day!

Southern New England lies in the unenviable position of receiving all three “Hurricane Threats”, depending upon the track and landfall location: 1) Coastal Inundation due to Storm Surge 2) Widespread inland River Flooding and 3) Widespread Wind Damage far inland.

SCHEDULE OF “HURRICANE SEASON” TOPICS

Week of June 1 – Beginning of Hurricane Season
Week of June 8 – New England Hurricanes of Note
Week of June 15 – Family Hurricane Preparedness
Week of June 22 – Preparing Your Home for a Hurricane
Week of June 29 – Evacuation for a Hurricane
Week of July 6 – Sheltering in Place during a Hurricane
Week of July 13 – Cape Cod Emergency Traffic Plan
Week of July 20 – Inland Flooding from a Hurricane
Week of July 27 – Power Outages during a Hurricane
Week of August 3 – Hurricane Challenges for Populations with Unique Needs
Week of August 10 – Protecting Your Pets during a Hurricane
Week of August 17 – Preparing Your Business for a Hurricane
Week of August 24 – Preparing Your Boat for a Hurricane
Week of August 31 – After the Storm

The Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency (MEMA) is the state agency responsible for coordinating federal, state, local, voluntary and private resources during emergencies and disasters in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. MEMA provides leadership to: develop plans for effective response to all hazards, disasters or threats; train emergency personnel to protect the public; provide information to the citizenry; and assist individuals, families, businesses and communities to mitigate against, prepare for, and respond to and recover from emergencies, both natural and man made. For additional information about MEMA and Hurricanes, go to www.mass.gov/mema.

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