



United States Coast Guard
U.S. Department of Homeland Security

29 MAY 2025
FM: CHDIRAUX
TO: ALAUX
ALAUX 020/25

Subj: HURRICANE RESPONSE OPERATIONAL SAFETY

1. Please read ALSAFETY 015/25, HURRICANE RESPONSE OPERATIONAL SAFETY which was issued earlier this month. Hurricane season starts on June 1 and its approach warrants reminders about precautions and actions that should be taken. This ALSAFETY message contains valuable information for anyone who lives in or responds to an area that can be impacted by a hurricane.
2. The ALSAFETY is attached to this message for your convenience
3. Internet release is authorized.

For many reasons including the value of keeping communication lines clear and open as well as facilitating access to training and educational tools, all Auxiliarists are urged to have their own email address and to keep it updated in AUXDATA II.

*All ALAUX's are posted on the Chief Director of Auxiliary web site located at: [CHDIRAUX ALAUX](#)

If you have a question regarding this ALAUX, please seek resolution within your Chain of Leadership and Management (COLM) including up to your servicing District Director of Auxiliary (DIRAUX). If your question still cannot be resolved after that, then please email CGAUX@uscg.mil.

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TO ALSAFETY

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ALSAFETY 015/25

SUBJ: HURRICANE RESPONSE OPERATIONAL SAFETY

References:

A. Safety and Environmental Health Manual, COMDTINST M5100.47 (series)

B. Coast Guard Occupational Medicine Manual, COMDTINST M6260.32 (series)

C. Motor Vehicle Manual, COMDTINST M11240.9 (series)

1. Overview

A. Hurricane response operations are fast-paced and often occur in environments with chemical, physical, and biological hazards. To ensure the safety of all responders and maintain operational readiness, the following guidelines outline key hazards and protective measures, REF (A-C).

Incident Management Team Safety Officers and Health, Safety and Work-Life (HSWL) Service Center safety professionals are available for additional guidance as needed.

2. Water Quality

A. Hurricanes can contaminate water supplies. Always follow local public health announcements regarding drinking water safety.

B. Drink only bottled, boiled, or properly disinfected water.

C. Water Treatment: Do not consume chemically contaminated water. If a health advisory is issued, boiling water for at least one minute is the most effective method for killing bacteria, viruses, and parasites. After boiling, disinfect by adding eight (8) drops of unscented 6% bleach per gallon of water, mix well, and let it stand for 30 minutes. For more information on emergency disinfection of drinking water please visit: <https://www.epa.gov/ground-water-and-drinking-water/emergency-disinfection-drinking-water>

D. Water Storage: Store at least a three-day supply (one gallon per person per day) in clean, tightly sealed plastic containers.

3. Food Safety

A. When in doubt, throw it out. Discard any food left at room temperature for more than two hours or if it looks spoiled, feels slimy, or smells. Refrigerators keep food cool for about four hours without power. If unopened, freezers can maintain temperatures for up to 48 hours if full or 24 hours if half full. To extend shelf life of meats, freeze cook 24 hours before the storm.

B. Do not consume food that has been contaminated by floodwater, including canned food if the can is rusty or seals are broken.

C. Maintain a supply of non-perishable food items such as canned meats and beans as well as dry goods such as crackers and dried fruits.

D. Avoid consuming ice from unknown sources. If drinking water lines have been contaminated, discard the first few cycles from ice makers and disinfect the equipment.

4. Waste and Sanitation

A. Dispose of food waste in heavy-duty plastic bags to reduce the spread of contamination and pests.

B. Sanitize all surfaces and utensils which may have contact with floodwater or contaminated food.

C. Use non-potable water to flush toilets if necessary. If restroom facilities are unavailable, use commercial chemical toilets or portable lavatories.

5. Wildlife and Insects

A. Be alert to displaced animals, including snakes, rodents, and insects, which may be aggressive.

B. Protect against mosquitos and ticks using permethrin on clothing and DEET (30% for adults, 10% for children) on skin.

6. Moisture Intrusion and Mold

A. Mold can develop within 24–48 hours of moisture exposure, causing health risks.

B. Remove standing water and discard porous materials (e.g., drywall) that cannot be dried within 24 hours. Contaminated materials (from sewage or chemicals) must be disposed of according to local policy while wearing PPE.

C. Avoid entering buildings with significant mold growth or strong mold odors, but if you must enter use required respiratory protection.

D. For more guidance, visit the Mold and Moisture - Habitability page: <https://uscg.sharepoint-mil.us/sites/hswlsc/SafeEvHealth/SitePages/Mold%20and%20Moisture%20-%20Habitability.aspx>

7. Heat Stress

A. Emergency responders can face extreme heat and humidity while performing strenuous tasks in protective gear.

B. Prevent heat-related illnesses by following work/rest schedules and staying hydrated. Drink at least one cup of water every 15–20 minutes, even if not thirsty.

C. More details can be found on the Thermal Stress and Rhabdomyolysis SEH portal page:

<https://uscg.sharepoint-mil.us/sites/hswlsc/SafeEvHealth/SitePages/Thermal%20Stress%20and%20Rhabdomyolysis.aspx>

8. Carbon Monoxide Safety

A. Carbon monoxide is an odorless, colorless gas that can be fatal. Common sources include generators, grills, and engines. Symptoms of poisoning include headache, dizziness, nausea, and confusion. If exposed, move to fresh air immediately and seek medical attention.

B. Prevention: Keep generators and grills outdoors, away from windows and doors. Never operate fuel-burning devices indoors or in enclosed spaces.

9. Asbestos and Lead Hazards

A. When clearing storm debris, be mindful of asbestos-containing materials (ACM) and lead-containing paint (LCP).

B. Review hazard management plans before disturbing any potentially hazardous building materials.

C. Coast Guard personnel are not authorized to handle ACM or LCP cleanup. Restrict access and hire certified professionals.

10. Safe Driving

A. Coast Guard personnel may be required to operate various specialized vehicles during hurricane response. Only trained, licensed personnel should operate these vehicles.

B. Vehicle Fording Safety: Driving through flooded areas is high-risk and requires training. Follow Coast Guard Motor Vehicle Fording Safe Work Practice guidance:

<https://uscg.sharepoint-mil.us/sites/hswlsc/SafeEvHealth/Documents/Motor%20Vehicle/Vehicle%20Fording%20Safe%20Work%20Practice.pdf>

11. General Safety Precautions

A. Wear appropriate protective gear, including long-sleeved clothing, long pants, and sturdy boots. Watch for sharp debris, broken glass, and other hazards.

B. Before re-entering a building: Ensure authorities have declared it safe for entry. Shut off electrical power before entry. Confirm sewage lines are intact before flushing toilets. Do not use electrical appliances until they are completely dry.

C. Chainsaw safety: Wear eye protection, gloves, hard hat with face shield and chaps. Avoid downed power lines. Visit the Chainsaw Hazards page for more information:

<https://uscg.sharepoint-mil.us/sites/hswlsc/SafeEvHealth/SitePages/Chainsaw%20Hazards.aspx>

D. All deployment-related mishaps must be reported using the ICS-237, Incident Mishap Reporting Record and entered in the CG eMisReps system at <https://hswl.uscg.mil/>

E. Acute exposure incidents must be reported immediately and documented on https://uscg.sharepoint-mil.us/sites/USCGReferences/forms/Forms/CG_6000_1.PDF

12. Additional Resources: For more information on hurricane preparedness, visit <https://www.ready.gov/hurricanes>.

13. Additional information on hurricane contingency response can be found at:

<https://uscg.sharepoint-mil.us/sites/hswlsc/SafeEvHealth/SitePages/Hurricane%20Contingency%20Response.aspx>.

14. POC: Mr. Ed Bock at (571) 608-0872 or edward.l.bock@uscg.mil, HSWL SC Safety & Environmental Health Division Chief.

15. Dr. Antonio Carvalhais, Chief (Acting), Safety and Environmental Health, sends.

16. Internet release authorized.

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