

Weather Warnings: Know the Signs!

If the weather starts to get scary, what should you do? First, tune in to local area weather television or radio for weather warnings and updates. If you live in a hurricane sensitive region, you should know the definitions of the categories of tropical storms and what to expect. First and foremost, be safe!

- ◆ **Tropical Storm Watch:** This is issued when a tropical storm or tropical storm conditions could occur within the watch area. This type of warning is typically issued within 36 hours of the time that the storm may make its way into the watch area.
- ◆ **Tropical Storm Warning:** A warning is issued when a tropical storm or tropical storm conditions are expected to occur within the warning area. This warning is usually issued within 24 hours of the time the storm is predicted to come into the warning area.
- ◆ **Hurricane Watch:** As with the tropical storm watch, this type of warning is issued when a hurricane or hurricane conditions will possibly enter into the watch area. This is usually issued within 36 hours of the time that the hurricane may come into the watch area.
- ◆ **Hurricane Warning:** This type of warning is issued when a hurricane is expected to occur within the warning area, within 24 hours of the time the hurricane should come into the warning area.

NASA's Observatorium says to be prepared. "If your area is designated as a storm watch area, especially a hurricane watch, take time to prepare for emergencies. Even though you may not be sure that a storm will hit your area, it is better to be safe than sorry. Preparing for a storm can involve several activities, such as storing food items, and bringing in loose objects, such as patio furniture or bicycles, from porches or lawns."

What else should you do? Keep the lines of information (TV, radio) open when possible. Your family should have: spare fuel, emergency food supplies (canned foods and other non-consumables), flashlights with batteries, and extra cash. If the authorities in your community issue an evacuation, leave the area.

Source: NASA's Observatorium, <http://observe.arc.nasa.gov/nasa/earth>