



# WINTER STORMS PREPAREDNESS

Local winter storms can bring heavy rains that cause flooding and mudslides, as well as strong winds that can threaten lives and property and cause power outages. These storms may even result in lighting and freezing temperatures. Prepare for these winter storms well in advance.

**GET READY NOW** by first following the recommended preparedness steps for any disaster: **know how to receive emergency notifications and alerts, have a family plan, have emergency supplies/water/food on-hand and be available to help others.** Refer to these Guides:

**Guide #02 – Notifications and Warnings**

**Guide #03 – Personal & Family Preparedness Before a Disaster**

**Guide #05 – Emergency Planning**

**Guide #07 – Evacuation & Go-Bag Checklist**

**Guide #08 – Power Outages (Public Safety Power Shutoffs)**



Know if any neighbors may need special assistance and have a plan with your community to check in with them regularly during the winter storm season and to provide help for them if needed.

## PREPARE FOR HEAVY RAIN/FLOODING

- if you live in a flood-prone area, have a plan for how you and your family can safely evacuate if necessary--refer to **Guide #06 – Emergency Evacuations** for evacuation planning information
- prepare your home for heavy rains; keep gutters clear of debris and ensure they drain away from the foundation, inspect the roof and make any needed repairs, seal all gaps and cracks
- consider installing check valves to prevent water from backing up into your drains
- plastic sheeting and sandbags may provide barriers to water entry (acquire these before the winter season starts), filled sandbags may be available at some local fire stations
- if you have a sump-pump, test it in advance to make sure it's operational and check the status of any back-up batteries.
- work with your community to help keep storm drains along your street clear of debris
- ensure that your homeowner's or renter's insurance is up-to-date and sufficient, flood insurance may be worth considering (purchase any well in advance)

## PREPARE FOR HIGH WINDS

- trim dangerous/dead tree limbs that could fall and cause personal or property damage
- if you have leaning or older tall trees near your home, consider hiring an arborist to assess their integrity--especially during high winds and when the ground is saturated with rain water
- identify an interior room of your home where you can take shelter in during periods of high wind
- learn what to do if you encounter downed power lines by going to [pge.com](https://www.pge.com)
- bookmark websites that provide weather/wind information such as [weather.gov](https://www.weather.gov) and [windy.com](https://www.windy.com)

# RESPOND SAFELY

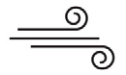
## DURING HEAVY RAIN/FLOODING - "TURN AROUND, DON'T DROWN!"

- monitor AC Alert ([acgov.org/emergencysite](https://www.acgov.org/emergencysite)), AM/FM/NOAA radio and other information sources
- stay off the roads if possible, if outside **do not** walk, swim or drive through any flooded area
- stay inside your vehicle if trapped in rapidly moving water, get on the roof if water rises inside
- watch out for mudslides or washed-out roads, especially in hilly areas, and respect all barricades
- stay away from large storm drains and any fast moving or deep water, watch for flash flooding
- if trapped in a building go to the highest level, only get on the roof if necessary and then signal for help--do not climb into an enclosed attic
- evacuate if instructed, if unable to leave then go to a higher elevation
- if evacuated, only return home when authorities deem it safe to do so
- do not enter any flooded rooms, especially basements, and avoid contact with floodwater



## DURING HIGH WINDS

- secure or bring inside any objects around the home that could be blown away or cause damage, such as outdoor furniture, a grill or trash bins, and secure loose gutters and shutters
- close and securely fasten all doors and windows and shut and latch any storm shutters
- park vehicles in the garage for better protection, know how to manually open the garage door
- stay inside away from windows if possible, if outside take cover next to a building or under a shelter
- watch for falling trees/branches and power lines--**stay well away** from any downed power line
- be aware of flying debris, especially from nearby balconies where loose objects may fall



**MORE INFORMATION** - there are many sources of additional information on preparing for and responding to winter storms, flooding and high winds, including:

**National Weather Service:** [weather.gov/safety/](https://www.weather.gov/safety/)

**FEMA:** [ready.gov/severe-weather](https://www.ready.gov/severe-weather)

**NOAA Safety Card:** [weather.gov/media/owlie/FloodSafety-OnePager-11-29-2018.pdf](https://www.weather.gov/media/owlie/FloodSafety-OnePager-11-29-2018.pdf)

**The American Red Cross:** [redcross.org/get-help/how-to-prepare-for-emergencies/types-of-emergencies/flood.html](https://www.redcross.org/get-help/how-to-prepare-for-emergencies/types-of-emergencies/flood.html)

**Alameda County:** [acpwa.org/prepare-for-winter-storms.page](https://www.acpwa.org/prepare-for-winter-storms.page)

**Oakland Public Works:** [oaklandca.gov/topics/winter-storms](https://www.oaklandca.gov/topics/winter-storms)

**DisasterSafety.org:** [disastersafety.org/rain/](https://www.disastersafety.org/rain/)

**OCP&R is a program of the Oakland Firesafe Council | [www.oaklandfiresafecouncil.org](https://www.oaklandfiresafecouncil.org)**

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