



Prepare Your Home for Severe Summer Weather

Mother Nature's wicked rages can take a toll on your home, from flooding to tornados. Recently, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) predicted an above-normal 2022 Atlantic Hurricane Season. However, even if you do not live in a hurricane-prone area, natural disasters can happen at any time, anywhere. Due to the unpredictability of the climate, it is essential to take steps now to prepare your house and yard to withstand extreme weather.

Before you begin, review your insurance policies to ensure you are covered for losses that may occur from a natural disaster. An increasing number of homes and communities throughout the country are at risk of wildfires, floods, and other natural disasters. As a result of these growing risks, many insurance companies are providing fewer options, drastically increasing premiums, or dropping out of specific markets. Therefore, you must talk to your insurance company about any concerns or coverage questions you may have.

The best way to keep water out of your home is to prevent it from entering. You'll be surprised by the many places water can enter your home. Sealing cracks in windows, entry doors and garage doors is an excellent place to start. Especially in hurricane- or tornado-prone areas, it is essential to seal your windows and doors as tightly as possible. Local hardware stores sell a variety of sealant options depending on your needs.

High winds can easily tear through double doors, French doors, and sliding patio doors that have no structural device between them. You may need to purchase and install special hardware to ensure the doors are secure where they meet. For example, try bolts that fasten the door into the framing at the top and the bottom.

Your home's roof can shield its interior from the outside elements. Apply sealing around your chimney or vent pipes to help prevent water from seeping into your home. A qualified contractor can check for the structural integrity of the roof system. Visit our Member Directory to find a qualified roofer.

Clean out clogged gutters and downspouts. If rain can't run through the gutters and downspouts, it will spill over the sides, landing in areas where it can soak through to your home's foundation, causing flooding and structural damage.

Outside, protect your home from objects that can take flight during a storm. Remove dead and dying limbs from your trees, and secure lawn furniture, trash cans, flower pots, and other yard ornaments. High-speed winds could transform any of these objects into flying missiles traveling toward your house. You should also tie down the more oversized items such as sheds, doghouses, playhouses, swing sets and boats.

When you and your house are prepared, you're more likely to weather the most brutal storm with minor property damage. So taking time now to prepare your home for storm season could save you a lot of money later.

**Contact the Builders Association at 814-833-3999 for more information
on how to prepare a home against severe weather.**