

Hurricane Evacuation Tips for Renters

Property Management :

Whether evacuating or not, make sure your property management team and /or landlord has your contact info, fax, email and cell numbers and that you have his. Email typically works world wide; some Fax's are internet based and may still work even though phone lines in the disaster area are down. Call, email or fax last minute contact changes to your landlord and / or property manager before the hurricane approaches. Make sure keys on file are current. Management may not be able to help save your property or your lease if he can not contact you. If your rent is not current and especially if there has been no communication to satisfy the obligations of the Lease, then under "presumption of abandonment" your landlord may have no choice but to evict.

Refrigerators :

Pack all your perishable items left behind in your refrigerator / freezer in heavy duty zip lock freezer bags before evacuating. If power is lost all you have to do is throw out the bags and you will have little to clean up if you return within a reasonable amount of time. If you will not be promptly returning, contact your landlord and he may be able to assist in disposing of the food if you properly bagged all items before leaving and have copies of your key on file. Don't expect help from your landlord or insurer if you do not properly attend to your food items; you will be responsible for cleaning and / or replacing the refrigerator / freezer.

Weather Forecasting :

Most of us know that at least some forecasters are guilty of "selling" the weather. Do not fail to evacuate because of this. Excellent web based forecasting is available from the links at www.datakik.com/Forms/weather .

Personal Planning :

Store water in large containers before leaving as no water may be available upon your return. Bring loose outdoor items indoors. Store electronic items on the counter or table tops for flood resistance. No power means no air conditioning or refrigeration. Be sure to have an ice chest for food and mosquito repellent.

The *Louisiana Evacuation Guide* with maps is posted at www.gohsep.la.gov . You may be stuck in traffic for many hours so be sure to have a full tank of gas. Bring water, food (Dinty Moore or Hormel brand pre-cooked non refrigerated packaged dinners make excellent emergency meals), clothes and personal items. Also bring, hand cleaner, trash bags, tissue, a porta-potty or a good sized bucket with a secure lid and a sheet for privacy. A good evacuation kit could be made by packing all items in a 5-gal plastic bucket. Check www.wlvtv.com or www.wdsu.com for local info before returning.

Communications :

The internet has become a major source of information and disaster assistance. If you have a laptop or smart phone with wireless access then be sure to bring that or know how to use web-mail from a library or internet café computer. Be sure to bring a car charger for your cell phones.

Money & Documents :

In a wide spread disaster you may not be able to use checks or credit cards – bring some cash. Have copies of your insurance documents, passport, computer backup's, bank account numbers complete with routing code, etc. with you in the event the worst case happens. Also have a copy of your property tax bill & utility bill or if renting, a copy of your lease as these items may be necessary to later gain access to your property or to obtain disaster assistance. Write down and bring with you phone numbers and web addresses for your insurer, employer, landlord and city emergency contact numbers. It is a good idea for non drivers or minors to have a state ID card with them for personal identification. Everyone should know their social security number should federal assistance be required. Bring pen, paper, envelopes & stamps.

Pets :

You will need to have proof of required immunizations and pet identification. Keep a photo of your pet with you. You pet's collar should have an i.d. tag with its first name, your last name, phone number and / or email address. You will need to have a pet carrier or cage. Ask your Vet for a pet evacuation plan.