



Photo description: Palm trees blowing in stormy winds.

PROTECT YOUR PROPERTY FROM **SEVERE WINDS**



FEMA



Photo description: Home with palm trees and white picket fence.

Owning a property is one of the most important investments most people make in their lives. We work hard to provide a home and a future for ourselves and our loved ones. Why risk losing it when bad weather hits close to home?

Severe winds can occur anytime, or they can accompany storms like hurricanes, tornados, and severe thunderstorms. Flying debris or downed trees and power lines can make severe winds a threat to lives, property, and utilities.

While you can't prevent severe winds from happening, there are simple, low-cost ways to secure your property to minimize damage and keep your home and your future safe.

Here's how you can help protect your home from severe winds.



Photo description: Older couple reviewing papers at a table.

INSIDE THE HOME

REVIEW YOUR INSURANCE POLICY

Taking a few minutes to check your homeowners or mobile home insurance policy and verify your coverage can help you process a claim in the future and get back on your feet faster after a storm.

DOCUMENT YOUR HOME'S CONTENTS

Having a list of all your belongings will help with the insurance claims process. Consider documenting your contents visually, either by taking photos of high-value items or walking through your home and videotaping your belongings for reference.

IF YOU LOSE POWER, UNPLUG ELECTRICAL APPLIANCES

To prevent power-surge damage, make sure to unplug all appliances until after the storm is over and power is restored. Protect your electronics from power strikes with surge protectors.

BUILD A SAFE ROOM

Even if your home is built “to code,” it may not be able to withstand all types of severe winds, like tornadoes, thunderstorms, or major hurricanes. Safe rooms provide a space where you and your family can seek shelter. They provide a high level of protection. If your safe room is below ground, it must be designed to avoid gathering water during the heavy rains that can come with severe windstorm events.

DID YOU KNOW?

Learn more about safe rooms at [fema.gov/safe-rooms](https://www.fema.gov/safe-rooms)



PROTECT WINDOWS AND GLASS DOORS WITH STORM SHUTTERS

Storm shutters prevent windows from breaking when there is windborne debris. You can also add shatter-resistant film or stormproof high-impact glass to defend glass from breaking.

REINFORCE GARAGE DOORS AND DOUBLE-ENTRY DOORS

These doors can fail under wind pressure. Garage doors can be reinforced with girts and by strengthening the wheel tracks. Double-entry doors can be reinforced with a heavy-duty deadbolt, adding slide bolts on one of the doors, and using longer hinge attachments on the door and frame.

Photo description: Worker installing hurricane shutters inside a home.



Photo description: Dark clouds loom over a countryside road.





Photo description: Satellite dish and broken tree limbs on a lawn after a storm.

OUTSIDE THE HOME

FORTIFY YOUR ROOF

Your roof is your first line of defense in a high wind event. Re-adhere any loose shingles and consider impact-resistant shingles when installing a roof. Install roof strappings to anchor the roof framing to the wall framings so the wind can't lift your roof off your house.

TRIM OR REMOVE DEAD, DAMAGED, OR ROTTING TREES AND LIMBS

High winds can cause trees and branches to fall. Make sure any damaged trees on the property are trimmed or removed on a regular basis. Your home should be at least a full-grown tree's height away from the base of any tree, usually about 40 feet away.

SECURE OBJECTS OUTSIDE THE HOME

Loose shingles, your dog's house, trash cans, and sports equipment can be picked up by the wind and cause damage to your home. Secure outdoor objects like furniture, gutters, and downspouts.



Contact your local utility company to trim any limbs close to utility lines and poles



Photo description: Fallen tree and electrical wires cover a residential street.

SEAL CRACKS AND GAPS

Prevent wind or water from coming in. Make sure caulking around windows and doors is in good shape and not cracked, broken, or missing. Fill any holes or gaps around pipes or wires that enter your building with a waterproof sealant.

SECURE YOUR MANUFACTURED HOME TO THE GROUND

Bolt your entire structure to the foundation using anchor bolts. If you are also in the floodplain, your community may have specific requirements. Contact your local floodplain manager or permitting official for more information. Use a professional engineer or architect to make sure the anchoring system is designed and installed correctly.

SECURE FENCING, PORCHES, CANOPIES, AND SHEDS

Have them inspected and make sure they are firmly attached and in sound structural condition. Secure any parts of fencing that appear weak or loose.

REPLACE GRAVEL AND ROCK LANDSCAPING MATERIALS

Rock and gravel materials can cause serious damage during a severe wind event. During particularly strong wind events, gravel has been found in mailboxes and has even shredded vinyl siding. Replace these materials with a softer material, such as mulch or dirt.

ANCHOR ANY FUEL TANKS AND EXTERNAL UTILITY LINKS

If you have an exterior fuel tank or any of your utilities are located outside, anchor or tie them down according to the ground anchor instructions. This will help reduce the risk of them overturning and sliding.



REMEMBER:

Some of these tips may work better together than others. Mitigation measures need to be tailored to your home.

Always consult professionals such as your insurance agent, architects, engineers, contractors, or other experts in design and construction before making changes to your home. Your local planning and zoning office or building department is a good place to start for advice.

Finally, be kind to your neighbors! Talk to nearby property owners before you make changes, since some actions on your property may affect theirs.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

FEMA, REDUCE RISK FOR YOUR HOME

Learn how to protect your home or business from natural disasters.

<https://www.fema.gov/emergency-managers/risk-management/hazard-mitigation-planning/risk-reduction-activities>

FEMA, AGAINST THE WIND: PROTECTING YOUR HOME FROM HURRICANE AND WIND DAMAGE

View illustrations that explain wind mitigation techniques.

<https://www.hsdl.org/?abstract&did=459942>

FEMA, BUILDING SCIENCE HURRICANE ACTIVITIES AND RESOURCES

View resources specific to hurricane events.

<https://www.fema.gov/sites/default/files/2020-07/hurricane-hazard-publications.pdf>

FEMA BUILDING SCIENCE BRANCH BROCHURE: WIND HAZARDS

Learn more about how to improve wind resistance of buildings.

https://www.fema.gov/sites/default/files/2020-07/fema_p1089_wind_hazards_2017.pdf



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