



# FranklinStreet

## HURRICANE PREPAREDNESS GUIDE - 2021

**STAY PREPARED FOR THE 2021  
HURRICANE SEASON**

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How To Guide For Multifamily Property Owners

# HURRICANE PREPAREDNESS GUIDE - 2021



## WE'RE HERE TO HELP

As hurricane season approaches, Franklin Street is here to offer guidance with useful tools and information that will help reduce the impact a storm may have on your properties. This week (May 9-15) is National Hurricane Preparedness week, and we want to give you the 360-degree view on how to stay prepared. We strongly believe that the only wrong time to prepare for hurricane season is when it is too late! To mitigate damage to your property and ensure safety to your employees and tenants, we encourage you to develop a disaster relief plan before the start of the season. We hope this guide gives you confidence that our team does not set limits to the amount of time we dedicate to our clients and that we are here for you when a natural disaster occurs.

## 2021 WEATHER PREDICTIONS

NOAA's Climate Prediction Center is forecasting another highly active season in 2021. The Atlantic hurricane season begins June 1, and the Pacific Season begins May 15. Both seasons end November 30; however, you can expect storms before and after these dates. The NOAA re-evaluates the definition of an "average" hurricane season every 10 years. As of 2021, the average number of named storms is now fourteen, seven hurricanes, and three major hurricanes (category 3, 4, or 5). Further predictions will be released, so we recommend that you follow your local news outlets for the most up to date information in your area.

## WHAT YOU CAN DO

Franklin Street wants to remind you that hurricanes can bring potentially damaging winds and rain. Always remember, preparedness is key. Even areas well away from the coastline can be threatened by dangerous flooding, destructive winds, and tornadoes from these storms. Consider incorporating the following hurricane preparation suggestions to prepare for the season and minimize damages to your properties. Throughout this guide, we hope you find value in the information to help reduce the impact a catastrophic storm can bring. Information includes:

- Our Franklin Street Claims & Risk Management Team
- How to report a claim
- How to prepare for a storm
- What to do following a storm
- Useful materials to help communicate with onsite staff and residents

# FRANKLIN STREET INSURANCE - CLAIMS & RISK MANAGEMENT

## INTRODUCTION

Our Franklin Street Claims Team is here as your trusted partner to advocate on your behalf and achieve optimal results during the claims adjusting process. Eric Smith, Director of Claims and Risk Management, leads his team to oversee and strategize with you on all new claims from start to finish. As we monitor storms, we have multiple emergency mitigation companies that are preparing to deploy to the affected areas when needed. If you do sustain damages from a storm, we can place you in touch with these companies to mitigate any further damages to your properties as expeditiously as possible. We are your resource for all claim and risk management related matters. Your concerns are our concerns, and we've got your back.

## INSURANCE COVERAGE

If you have questions regarding your property insurance coverage as to your specific coverages and deductibles, please contact us. Policies contain higher deductibles for Named Storms which will be a higher out of pocket expense than "All Other Peril standard deductibles".

## FRANKLIN STREET CONTACTS



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Claims Assistant  
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## HOW TO REPORT A CLAIM

For any claim related matters, or reporting a new insurance claim all information can be sent to [claims@franklinst.com](mailto:claims@franklinst.com).

# PRIOR TO HURRICANE SEASON

## PREPARE YOUR PROPERTIES

Preparing your properties for hurricane season is crucial to reduce the impact a storm may have on your property. We recommend taking these steps to reduce the possibility of reporting a claim to your insurance carrier:

- Consider installing impact-resistant film on your windows or install hurricane shutters if necessary
- Trim trees (this reduces potential of falling and windblown damages from tree branches)
- Assess inventory on hand for all items that may be needed immediately post storm (plywood, sandbags, flashlights etc)
- Remove window AC units
- Clear gutters and storm drains to ensure they are working properly
- Photograph and video the property to show condition of the property pre-hurricane to include taking picture and video of the roofs. A roof inspection report can be helpful to show hurricane damages post loss if roofs are in good condition prior to a loss
- Post a list of all emergency numbers including office and maintenance staff
- Gather a list of vendors and telephone numbers of individuals or entities that you would plan on contacting for services following a hurricane
- Continuously back-up all computer files on a cloud-based network storage solution
- Etc.

## PREPARE YOUR TENANTS AND STAFF

Property managers have the responsibility of ensuring the safety of their tenants and properties. Even though tenants must also prepare for hurricane season, it is important to share with residents that you will provide support in a time of need. Tenants will turn to property management for updates on power outages, water, or utilities. It is important to keep an open-door policy of communication when these things occur. See how you can help get your property managers and tenants prepare for hurricane season:

- Create a Hurricane Season Emergency Plan in the case of a major storm for on-site staff
- Ensure all employees have their address and emergency contact information updated. Also find out where they may vacate to if you are required to evacuate the city
- Provide employees with a chain of command and list of responsibilities to undertake following storm
- Prepare and distribute a Hurricane Preparedness Guide to tenants that includes a preparation emergency checklist
- Remind your tenants that water, utilities, and power may be impacted or shut off as a result of the storm and that they may have to stay indoors without access to food or other resources for a few days
- Notify tenants of evacuation area and locate the nearest official shelter. The Red Cross can tell you the nearest shelter to your community and explain the specific details on the accommodations and what items one should bring with them to a shelter. Have the route to the nearest shelter printed for distribution to your staff and residents
- Etc.



# WHEN STORMS ARE IMMINENT - 72 HOURS PRIOR

## PREPARE YOUR PROPERTIES

- Outline the situation and required action plan
- Actively watch the weather channel and get updates from the NOAA
- Assign individual office duties for those who will be available during storm
- Assign tasks to team members for preparation
- Print a list of employee phone numbers and emergency contacts
- Print a list of residents and scan a copy of all leases - have backup records off site of important business documents
- Gather all monies and secure the bank
- Check your emergency supplies and stock up on any necessary items
- Charge golf cart batteries and put gas in any vehicles for use on property
- Begin boarding up windows with plywood
- Trim trees (reduces potential of falling and windblown damages from tree branches)
- Ensure property is clear of debris
- Follow all law enforcement guidelines
- Evacuate when mandatory evacuation issued
- Etc.

## PREPARE YOUR TENANTS AND STAFF

- A phone call, text or email with a simple message to tenants that says, "Just wanted to check in. Stay safe in the storm and let me know if you need anything." is a great way to communicate and promote an open door line of communication
- Notify residents of the impending situation. This can be accomplished by knocking on doors, prepared door hangers and telephone calls. Instruct them to remove all belongings from patios and common areas, hallways and breezeways. Include informational phone number outside of hurricane zone to answer questions should phone lines be out of order, as well as emergency numbers.
- Instruct residents to secure outside fixtures or bring them indoors (grills, patio furniture, potted plants)
- Help your employees get to their families safely. If it is not safe to leave the facility, establish a meeting point outside of the evacuation area for employees once you can leave.
- Make sure staff fill their personal cars with gas
- Post Emergency phone numbers for residents
- Follow all law enforcement guidelines
- Evacuate when mandatory evacuation issued
- Etc.

# WHEN STORMS ARE IMMINENT - 48 HOURS PRIOR

## PREPARE YOUR PROPERTIES

- Outline the situation and required action plan
- Actively watch the weather channel and get updates from the NOAA
- Begin boarding up the office doors and windows with plywood
- Unplug and cover computers
- Move furniture and office equipment from window areas. If possible, move it to an area where there are no windows. At a minimum, place the equipment in the middle of the room
- Cover filing cabinets and remove bottom drawers
- Pull keys from lock box and place in zip lock bag
- Arrange call forwarding
- Ensure you have petty cash available
- Lock maintenance shop/storage units reinforce doors
- Assess inventory on hand for all items that may be needed immediately post storm (plywood, sandbags, flashlights etc)
- Shutoff all pool/fountain pumps as well as gas to pool/spa
- Remove all pool furniture from the pool area and secure indoors (if possible) or sink to the bottom of the pool (there is a chance this may scratch your pool surface). Umbrellas should be taken indoors.
- Secure picnic tables, flags and signs, dumpster doors, pet stations, birdhouses, etc.
- Ensure property is clear of debris
- Etc.

## PREPARE YOUR TENANTS AND STAFF

- Continue communication with tenants and staff to ensure they are well prepared for the storm
- Remind them to follow all law enforcement guidelines
- Remind them to evacuate when mandatory evacuation is issued
- Encourage neighbours to connect in the case of an emergency
- Remind tenants and staff to have their personal emergency essentials on hand
- Etc.



# ACTIONS TO TAKE A FOLLOWING A PROPERTY LOSS

In the event of a property loss, it is critical to act promptly and perform the following actions immediately. See a more detailed checklist on the following pages.

- Perform initial inspection of the property to assess extent of damages
- Photograph and Videotape damages
- Determine safety of tenants and extent of tenant displacement. If there is tenant displacement, contact local Red Cross to accommodate residents. Website address for Red Cross is [www.redcross.org](http://www.redcross.org)
- Contact an emergency services contractor to perform any emergency services. This would include tarping roofs, perform immediate water extraction, debris removal, boarding up openings on property
- Create an accounting ledger to account for all expenses related to the hurricane
- Stay in contact with tenants and staff about the state of the property and what to expect (even if you are unsure at this point). The more communication the better



# HOW TO PROPERLY DOCUMENT YOUR PROPERTY LOSS

## 1. ASSESS BUILDING DAMAGES

After a loss, initial inspections need to occur of all units and on-site facilities to document full building damages. This includes

- Inspect Roofs and place tarping over all damaged areas
- Water leaks & Intrusions / Pipe Breaks
- Drywall / Flooring
- Potential for structural collapse / Potential for falling debris
- Integrity of electrical, gas and other utility lines
- Air quality samples as needed
- Boiler/Machinery Inspections
- Mechanical Equipment for pool operation
- Fire Sprinklers
- Emergency Power Equipment
- Need for security to prevent unauthorized entry
- Integrity of safety and security systems
- Etc.

## 2. MAKE TEMPORARY REPAIRS TO MITIGATE FURTHER DAMAGE

Property insurance policies have a clause that requires the insured to mitigate damages. This means that the insured should take all reasonable steps to prevent further damage to the property which may include hiring a remediation company to remove standing water or perform drying activities to prevent the presence of mold following a water loss. Ensure debris is cleaned up following a storm. Please ensure your mitigation contractor provide daily labour sheets of personnel on site, obtain daily moisture readings, and have inventory quantity documented.

## 3. DOCUMENTATION

Proper, accurate, and thorough documentation during these times is EXTREMELY IMPORTANT. The loss adjustment process during a major hurricane may not be as expeditious due to lack of resources. These include field adjusters, contractors, and building consultants. The carriers will complete their scope of loss by obtaining documentation and having their own consultants review the damages. Documentation includes:

- Take notes, photographs, and video.
- Collect repair receipts and invoices (Separate invoices and receipts by building which is preferred by the insurance company)
- Any extra property management hours in managing the loss including overtime
- Quantities and sizes of materials removed (i.e. 6x12 ft. carpet needs to be replaced)
- Line itemization of any initial expenses
- Additional labour personnel costs and time expended on a daily basis
- Track any relocation costs for tenant's relocation on property
- Any damaged furniture, fixtures and supplies
- Require contractor to provide detailed itemization of charges on their contractor scope
- Etc.



# HOW TO PROPERLY DOCUMENT YOUR PROPERTY LOSS

## 4. SEPERATE DAMAGED AND UNDAMAGED PROPERTY

Separate damaged from undamaged property and “group” damaged property into various damage categories. The purpose of doing this is to obtain agreement with the carrier on the extent of the damages to the property. When possible, it’s best to keep on hand any damaged property until the insurance adjuster has visited the premises. This property includes:

- Reusable after minimal clean-up
- Reusable after repair
- Not useable in the building construction but saleable in the secondary or salvage market
- Not useable, without value, and will be discarded

## 5. CREATING EXPENSE ACCOUNT PROCESSES

It is recommended that a property establish an accounting system code to track all expenses related to the loss. This will ensure all expenses are properly tracked for potential reimbursement. Specific costs should be grouped into one of the following categories with as many sub accounts as needed:

- Clean-up Charges
- Protection and Preservation of Property
- Buildings and Structures
- Machinery and Equipment
- Furniture, Fixtures and Supplies
- Property of Customers and Employees
- Excess Operating Costs (To Mitigate loss of business loss & operate as normally as possible)
- Instruct key personnel to properly identify and code all related invoices and costs.



# WHAT TO EXPECT



## WHAT TO EXPECT DURING THE CLAIMS ADJUSTMENT PROCESS

Due to the widespread nature of Hurricane Season, resources for mitigation services and repair contractor services may become scarce and challenging to obtain. We suggest you retain any contractor you can locate who is willing to work on your property and is able to provide an estimate in Xactimate fashion (appraisal software) for carrier review of the charges. If you are not able to find a contractor who has the Xactimate estimating software, please require your selected contractor to provide detailed itemization of charges on their contractor scope.

Franklin Street will be advocating on your behalf with the insurance adjuster and the property carrier throughout the life of the claim. The property adjuster will assist in the managing and coordinating of your inspection and discuss property coverages. Due to the volume of damage in a storm, the resources may be strained however, Franklin Street will be communicating with you throughout the entire process.

## WHAT TO EXPECT FROM YOUR FRANKLIN STREET TEAM

If a storm has caused damage to one or more properties, we will develop an ongoing schedule of communication so that you are well informed with advised next steps. We want to ensure that you feel taken care of in a time of uncertainty and we are here as your advocate to offer our guidance. We understand that hurricane season is stressful, and Franklin Street is here to lead you through the process in the case of a property loss.

Our commitment to you:

- Open line of communication to resolve any potential points of contention in the claims process
- Provide overview of summary of insurance coverage as it pertains to your property program
- Weekly update calls on current status of claims and next steps
- Provide consultative advice on the claims process to benefit your portfolio



# RISK MANAGEMENT MATERIALS PROVIDED



HURRICANE PREPARATION CHECKLISTS

ON-SITE PROPERTY CHECKLISTS

HOW TO DEVELOP A COMMUNICATION PLAN

RESIDENT EDUCATION MATERIALS

RESIDENT NOTICES

PROPERTY CLAIM REPORTING FORM



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