

**Fall 2022
Edition**

The 411 Newsletter

A Holland Police Department

Informational Publication

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PARE FOR:

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Disaster Preparedness

In September, as part of FEMA's National Preparedness month, The Town of Holland Office of Emergency Management [created and published an informational document to help our citizens understand and prepare for threats like hurricanes, floods, and other storms.](#)

This includes preparing for less predictable incidents like earthquakes, wildfires, and extended power outages. Severe weather

can happen at any time, and in any part of the country, but it is critical



that you know risk factors and understand the type of hazardous weather that is likely to affect your local community.

Basic individual

preparedness requires enough resources to survive without external help for several days. Severe weather can include hazardous conditions produced by thunderstorms, damaging winds, tornadoes, hail, flooding and flash flooding, and winter storms associated with freezing rain, sleet, snow, and strong winds. It is important to understand the impact natural hazards may have on your family.

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MVP/HMP Project Grant

On October 19, 2021, the Board of Selectmen voted to accept and approve an [Environmental Hazard Mitigation Project](#) proposal that was produced and submitted by the Office of Emergency Management. The purpose of this proposal is to

establish a multi-phase project consisting of an environmental hazard vulnerability assessment followed by implementing mitigation strategies and physical protective measures that will protect the health and safety of per-

sons and property.

Our overall goal is to adopt procedures that center on the protection, restoration, and management of our ecological systems to safeguard public health and the environment.

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"Avoid driving except in emergencies and never drive around barricades. Local responders use them to safely direct traffic out of danger areas. Stay clear of fallen power lines and trees. Always assume fallen power lines are live and report them immediately. Pay close attention to weather forecasts for information on when it is safe to go outside"

Bryan C. Haughey
 EMD-Chief of Police

Disaster Preparedness

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The community's ability to respond to and recover from disasters depends on the level of preparedness of each and every member of that community.

General Preparedness Safety Tips:

Pay close attention to authorities for information and instructions and evacuate immediately if told to evacuate.

Avoid driving except in emergencies and never drive around barricades. Local responders use them to safely direct traffic out of danger areas.

Do not drive through flooded roadways. Just six inches of fast-moving water can

knock you down, and one foot of moving water can sweep your vehicle away.

Stay clear of fallen power lines and trees. Always ASSUME that fallen power lines ARE LIVE and report them immediately.

Save phone calls for emergencies and be prepared to [get tech ready](#). Phone systems often are down or busy after a disaster. Use text messages or social media to communicate with family and friends.

Pay close attention to weather forecasts for information on when it is safe to go outside.

If you have not done so already, we recommend that you sign up for

Holland's community notification system, [CodeRED](#).

Any home or business in Holland with a landline telephone or TTY should automatically be in the system but you can also add your mobile phone number.

Additionally, The National Weather Service NWS Boston-Norton and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration NOAA [NWS-NOAA Weather Radio](#) provides emergency weather alerts.

Be sure to sign up for the [Emergency Alert System EAS](#) as well. This is a national public warning system that allows the President to address the nation within 10 minutes during a national emergency.

MVP/HMP Project Grant

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As detailed in last fall's edition (2021), the Town secured funding in the amount of \$27,000 from the Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs EEA by way of the Mu-

nicipal Vulnerability Preparedness Program [MVP](#).

The purpose of this program is to provide support for cities and towns to identify climate hazards, assess vulnerabilities,

and develop action plans to improve resilience to climate change. The Town has been working diligently with [CMRPC](#) on this project over the past several months and anticipate a spring 2023 completion date.

Emergency Planning

An important part of disaster mitigation is creating an [emergency plan](#) so that you and your family know what to do, where to go, and what you will need to protect yourselves from a severe weather event or disaster. Identify sturdy buildings close to where you live, work, study, and play. Your family may not be together if a disaster strikes, so



it is important to know which [types of disasters](#) could affect your area. Know how you will contact one another and reconnect if separated. Identify if you may need additional help during an emergency if you or anyone else in your household is an [individual with a disability](#). Establish a family meeting place that is familiar and easy to find.

Prepare for long-term stay at home or sheltering in place. Gather [emergency supplies](#), cleaning supplies, non-perishable [foods](#), [water](#), and medical supplies. Gather enough supplies in case you need to stay home for several days without power. Keep in mind each person's specific needs, including medication, and remember the [needs of your pets](#).

Practice and [learn your evacuation routes](#). You may have to evacuate quickly so it is important to know your evacuation zone and practice evacuating with your household. Identify where you will stay ahead of time.

Include your [workplace, children's day care, and anywhere else you frequent](#) in your emergency plans. If you have a business ensure that you have a [continuity plan](#) to continue operating when disaster strikes. Help your Neighborhood. Check with neighbors, [senior adults](#), or those who may need help establishing emergency plans.

Returning Home & Clean-up

Return home only when authorities say it is safe and be careful to avoid carbon monoxide poisoning.

Only use generators and grills outdoors and away from windows. Never heat your home with a gas stove-top or oven.

Wear appropriate gear during clean-up. Wear thick-soled shoes, long pants, and work gloves, and use appropriate face coverings or masks if cleaning [mold or other debris](#).

People with [asthma and other lung conditions and/or immune suppression](#) should not enter buildings with indoor water leaks or mold growth that can be seen or smelled.

Children should not take part in disaster cleanup work.

Contact your healthcare provider if you are sick and need medical attention.

Wait for further care instructions and continue to shelter in place.

Document any property damage with photographs and contact your insurance company for assistance.

Power Outages

Extended power outages may impact the whole community and the economy.

A power outage may disrupt communications, water flow, transportation, medical devices, and close retail businesses, grocery stores, gas stations, and banks. Power outages may also cause food spoilage and water contamination in your household.

Take an inventory of the items you need that rely on electricity. Plan for batteries and other alternative power sources to meet your needs when the power goes out, such

as a portable charger or power bank. Have flashlights for every household



member. Determine if your home phone will work in a power outage and how long battery backup will last. Know your medical needs

and talk to your provider about a power outage plan for medical devices powered by electricity and refrigerated medicines. Find out how long medication can be stored at higher temperatures and get specific guidance for any medications that are critical for life. If the power is out for more than a day, discard any medication that should be refrigerated, unless the drug's label says otherwise. Consult your doctor or pharmacist immediately for a new supply. Turn off or disconnect appliances, equipment, and electronics. Power may return with damaging surges or spikes.

Food Storage-Carbon Monoxide

Have enough nonperishable food and water. Keep freezers and refrigerators closed. The refrigerator will keep food cold for about four (4) hours. A full freezer will keep the temperature for about (48) hours. Use coolers with ice if necessary.

Monitor temperatures with a thermometer. Throw out food if the temperature is 40 degrees or higher. When in doubt, throw it out. Throw away any food that has been exposed to temperatures 40 degrees or higher for two (2) hours or more, or that has an unusual odor, color, or texture.

Carbon monoxide & generator safety: Generators can be helpful when the power goes out but it is important to know how use them safely to prevent carbon monoxide (CO) poisoning and other hazards. Carbon monoxide is a colorless, odorless gas that can kill you, your family, and pets. Install carbon monoxide detectors with battery backup in central locations on every level of your home.

Generators, fuel, camp stoves, and gas and charcoal grills should always be used outdoors and at least 20 feet away from windows, doors, and attached garages. Never use a gas stovetop or oven to heat your home.

Keep the generator dry and protected from rain or flooding. Touching a wet generator or devices connected to one can cause electrical shock. Always connect the generator to appliances with heavy-duty extension cords. Let the generator cool before refueling. Fuel spilled on hot engine parts can ignite. Follow manufacturer's instructions carefully.

Thunderstorms & Hurricanes

Lightning is a leading cause of injury and death from weather-related hazards. Although most lightning victims survive, people struck by lightning often report a variety of long-term, debilitating symptoms. Thunderstorms are dangerous storms that include lightning and can create or cause powerful winds over 50 mph, hail, flash flooding, and/or tornadoes.

Strengthen your home: Cut down or trim trees that may be in danger of falling on your home. Consider buying surge protectors, lightning

rods, or a lightning protection system to protect your home, appliances, and electronic devices.

If you are under a thunderstorm warning: When thunder roars, go indoors. Move from outdoors into a building or car with a roof, pay attention to alerts and warnings, avoid using electronic devices connected to an electrical outlet, and avoid running water. Pay close attention for information on whether it is safe to go outside and instructions regarding potential flash flooding.

Hurricanes are dangerous and can cause major damage from storm surge, wind damage, rip currents, and flooding. They can happen along any U.S. coast or in any territory in the Atlantic or Pacific oceans.

Atlantic- (east) coast hurricane season- is June 1 to November 30. Hurricanes are not just a coastal problem. Rain, wind, water, and even tornadoes could occur far inland from where a hurricane or tropical storm makes landfall.

Flooding

Flooding is a temporary overflow of water onto land that is normally dry. Floods are the most common natural disaster in the United States.

Failing to evacuate flooded areas or entering flood waters can lead to injury or death. Floods may result from rain, snow, coastal storms, storm surges, and overflows of dams and other water systems, and they may develop slowly or quickly. Flash floods can come with no warning at all. Floods may cause outages, disrupt transportation, damage buildings, and create landslides.

If you are under a flood warning: Find safe shelter right away. Do not walk, swim, or drive through flood waters. Remember, just six inches of moving water can knock you down, and one foot of moving water can sweep your vehicle away. Avoid wading in floodwater, which can be contaminated and contain dangerous debris. Underground or downed power lines can also electrically charge the water.

Get to the highest level if trapped in a building. Only get on the roof if necessary and once there signal for help. Do not climb into a closed attic to avoid getting trapped by rising floodwater. Stay off bridges over fast-moving water. Fast-moving water can wash bridges away without warning. Stay inside your car if it is trapped in rapidly moving water. Get on the roof if water is rising inside the car.

Depending on the type of flooding: Evacuate if told to do so. Move to higher ground or a higher floor. Stay where you are. Be aware of the risk of electrocution. Do not touch electrical equipment if it is wet or if you are standing in water. Turn off the electricity to prevent electric shock if it is safe to do so.

Winter Storms-Tornadoes



Winter storms create a higher risk of car accidents, hypothermia, frostbite, carbon monoxide poisoning, and heart attacks from overexertion. Winter storms including blizzards can bring extreme cold, freezing rain, snow, ice, and high winds. A winter storm can last a few hours or several days, cut off heat, power, and communication services, and put older adults, children, sick individuals, and pets at greater risk. If you are under a winter storm warning, find shelter.

Winter Storm Warnings are issued when hazardous winter weather in the form of heavy snow, heavy freezing rain, or heavy sleet is imminent or occurring. Winter Storm Warnings are usually issued 12 to 24 hours before the event is expected to begin. Winter Storm Watches are alerts the public to the possibility of a blizzard, heavy snow, heavy freezing rain, or heavy sleet. Winter Storm Watches are usually issued 12 to 48 hours before the beginning of a Winter Storm. Winter Weather Advisories are issued for accumulations of snow, freezing rain, freezing drizzle, and sleet which will cause significant inconveniences and, if caution is not exercised, could lead to life-threatening situations. Prepare your home to keep the cold out with insulation, caulking, and weather stripping, and learn how to keep pipes from freezing. Install and test smoke alarms and carbon monoxide detectors with battery backups. Have extra batteries for radios and flashlights on hand at all times.

If you need to go outside, then wear layers of warm clothing. Reduce the risk of a heart attack by avoiding overexertion when shoveling and walking in the snow, and stay off the roads if possible. Watch for signs of frostbite and hypothermia.

Frostbite causes loss of feeling and color around the face, fingers, and toes. Signs: Numbness, white or grayish-yellow skin, firm or waxy skin. Actions: Go to a warm room. Soak in warm water. Use body heat to warm. Do not massage or use a heating pad. Hypothermia is an unusually low body temperature. A temperature below 95 degrees is an emergency. Signs: Shivering, exhaustion, confusion, fumbling hands, memory loss, slurred speech, or drowsiness. Actions: Go to a warm room. Warm the center of the body first - chest, neck, head, and groin. Keep dry and wrapped up in warm blankets, including the head and neck.

Tornadoes are violently rotating columns of air that extend from a thunderstorm to the ground and can easily destroy buildings, flip cars, and create deadly flying debris. A tornado can occur at any time and in any location, and bring intense winds over 200 miles per hour. Tornadoes look like funnels.

Pay attention to weather reports. Meteorologists

can predict when conditions might be right for a tornado.

If you are under a tornado warning, go to a safe shelter immediately, such as a safe room, basement, storm cellar, or a small interior room on the lowest level of a sturdy building. Stay away from windows, doors, and outside walls. Do not go under an overpass or bridge. You're safer in a low,

flat location. Watch out for flying debris that can cause injury or death. Use your arms to protect your head and neck.

If you can't stay at home, make plans to go to a public shelter. Know the signs of a tornado, including a rotating, funnel-shaped cloud, an approaching cloud of debris, or a loud roar like a freight train.