

## SUMMER PREPAREDNESS

Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency

# BE AWARE, TAKE CARE

## PREPAREDNESS TIPS FOR SUMMER HAZARDS

Visit:

[MASS.GOV/MEMA](https://mass.gov/mema)



## Social Media Toolkit

[mass.gov/safety-tips-for-specific-threats-hazards](https://mass.gov/safety-tips-for-specific-threats-hazards)



Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency

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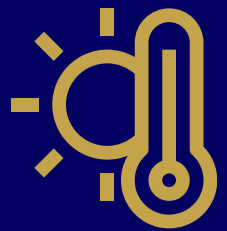
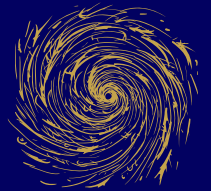
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**BE AWARE, TAKE CARE**

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**#BeAwareTakeCareMA**





# INTRODUCTION

Communication outreach strategies for your community, including key messaging, social media content, and printable materials (infographics and printable materials are included in a Google Drive on pg. 17).

## SUMMER HAZARDS

The Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency (MEMA) has developed this toolkit to help you share important messaging about summer hazards with your community. The toolkit includes key messages, which can be tailored to write local press releases or talking points, as well as sample social media posts and graphics that can be used or adapted for your community.



## PREPAREDNESS FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH ACCESS AND FUNCTIONAL NEEDS

- **Language Access:** MEMA has both physical and digital copies of general disaster preparedness flyers translated in seven languages, which are available here: <https://www.mass.gov/lists/emergency-preparedness-flyers-and-toolkits>.
- **Access & Functional Needs:** Be sure to include alternative text for your graphics on social media, and consider that not everyone in your community uses social media. Reaching individuals with access and functional needs is especially important since this population may need to take extra steps to ensure they are prepared for emergencies. Consider reaching out to or posting summer preparedness messaging within the following: places of worship, senior/community centers, housing authorities, public transportation (i.e. bus shelters).
- **Helpful Links:**
  - [MEMA](#)
    - MEMA provides information on how to support individuals with access and functional needs on our website



# KEY MESSAGING

## Extreme Heat

### Before Extreme Heat

- **Be Informed** by receiving alerts, warnings, and public safety information before, during, and after emergencies.
- **Create and review your family emergency plan.**
- **Assemble an emergency kit.**
- **Prepare your home for possible emergencies.**
- **Install air conditioners snugly, insulating if necessary.**
- **Cover windows that receive morning or afternoon sun. Outdoor awnings or louvers can reduce the heat that enters a home by up to 80 percent.**



Extreme heat is a prolonged period of very hot weather, which may include high humidity. In Massachusetts, a “heat wave” is usually defined as a period of three or more consecutive days above 90 °F.



# KEY MESSAGING

## During Extreme Heat

- **Never leave children or pets alone in a closed vehicle. Even with the windows cracked open, interior temperatures can rise almost 20°F within 10 minutes.**
- **Slow down and avoid strenuous activity.**
- **Wear lightweight, loose-fitting, light-colored clothing. Light colors reflect heat and sunlight, and help maintain normal body temperature.**
- **Drink plenty of water — even if you are not thirsty. Avoid alcoholic beverages and liquids high in sugar or caffeine. If your doctor generally limits the amount of fluid you drink, ask how much you should drink during hot weather.**
- **Eat well-balanced, light, regular meals.**
- **Stay indoors as much as possible and limit exposure to the sun. Do not leave pets outside for extended periods of time.**
- **If you must be outdoors, limit your outdoor activity to the morning and evening hours. Try to rest often in shady areas so your body temperature will have a chance to recover. Use sunscreen with a high SPF and wear a wide-brimmed hat.**
- **If you do not have air conditioning, stay on your lowest floor, out of the sun. Avoid using your stove and oven.**





# KEY MESSAGING

## During Extreme Heat

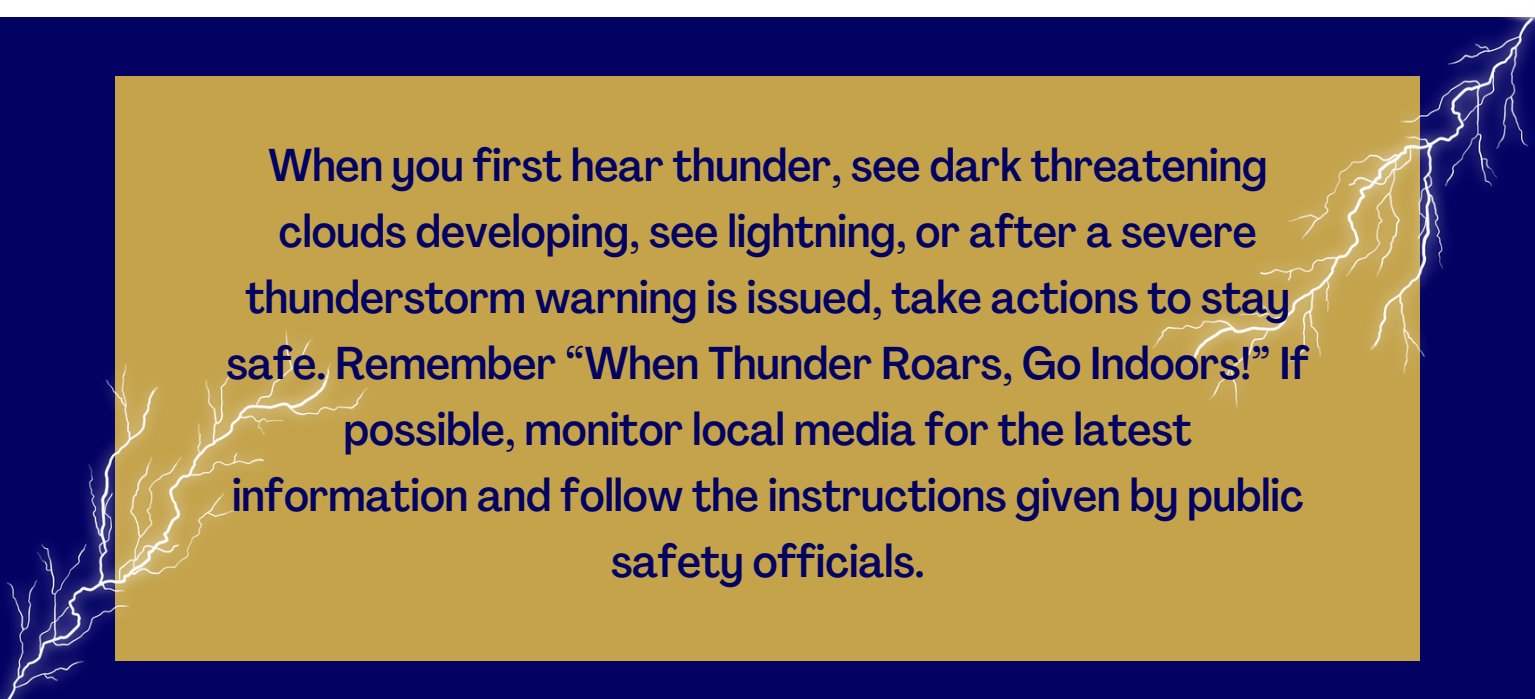
- Electric fans may provide comfort, but when the temperature is in the high 90s, fans will not prevent heat-related illness. Taking a cool shower or bath or moving to an air-conditioned place is a much better way to cool off. Consider spending time in air-conditioned public spaces, such as schools, libraries, theaters, and other community facilities.
- Check with your local authorities or Call 2-1-1 to find locations of cooling centers or shelters near you.
- On hot days, more people cool off around bodies of water. Playing in and around water can increase the risk of drowning. Learn how to keep yourself and your children safe in and around water with these Water Safety Tips.
- If there are power outages during warm weather, you may need to take additional precautions or go to a cooling center or emergency shelter to stay cool.
- Know the symptoms of and watch out for heat-related illnesses. Call 9-1-1 to report emergencies.
- Be a good neighbor. Check on family, friends, and neighbors, especially the elderly, those who live alone, those with medical conditions, those who may need additional assistance, and those who may not have air conditioning.

# KEY MESSAGING

## Thunderstorms and Lightning

### Before a Thunderstorm

- Be informed by receiving alerts, warnings, and public safety information before, during, and after emergencies.
- Create and review your family emergency plan.
- Assemble an emergency kit.
- Make a record of your personal property by taking photos or videos of your belongings. Store these records in a safe place.
- Prepare your home.
  - Remove dead or rotting trees and branches around your home that could fall and cause injury or damage.
  - Clear clogged rain gutters to allow water to flow away from your home.

A large, stylized lightning bolt graphic is positioned on the right side of the page, extending from the top right corner down towards the bottom right corner. It is white and yellow, set against a dark blue background.

When you first hear thunder, see dark threatening clouds developing, see lightning, or after a severe thunderstorm warning is issued, take actions to stay safe. Remember “When Thunder Roars, Go Indoors!” If possible, monitor local media for the latest information and follow the instructions given by public safety officials.





# KEY MESSAGING

## Thunderstorms and Lightning

### During a Thunderstorm

#### If You Are Outside

- Go indoors immediately. If you cannot get inside, take shelter in a vehicle.
- If you are in an open area, go to a low place such as a ravine or valley and watch out for flash flooding.
- If you are in a forest, seek shelter in a low area under a growth of small trees.
- If you are boating or swimming, get to land and seek shelter immediately.

#### If You Are in a Car

- Stay in your car if you are on the road. If driving conditions worsen, find a safe place to pull over and park.
- Avoid touching metal or other surfaces in and on your vehicle.

#### If You Are Inside a Building

- Stay away from windows and doors. Strong thunderstorms can cause flying debris that could do significant damage.
- Avoid using a corded telephone, except for emergencies. Cordless or cellular telephones are safe to use. Unplug appliances, air conditioners, and other electrical items like computers to avoid damage from a power surge.
- Avoid showering, bathing, washing dishes, or doing laundry. Plumbing and bathroom fixtures can conduct electricity.
- Avoid contact with metal objects (yard equipment, motorcycles, bicycles, etc.).
- Stay inside until at least 30 minutes after you last hear thunder or see lightning.



# KEY MESSAGING

## Thunderstorms and Lightning

### After a Thunderstorm

- Continue to monitor media for emergency information.
- Follow instructions from public safety officials.
- Call 9-1-1 to report emergencies including downed power lines and gas leaks.
- Call 2-1-1 to obtain shelter locations and other disaster information.
- Stay away from downed utility wires. Always assume a downed power line is live.
- Stay out of damaged buildings and areas until authorities deem them safe.
- Check your home for damage:
- If you believe there is a gas leak, go outdoors immediately, and do not turn electrical switches or appliances on or off.
- If your home or property is damaged, take photos or videos to document your damage, and contact your insurance company.
- If your power is out, follow our power outage safety tips.
- Report power outages to your utility company.
- Use generators and grills outside because their fumes contain carbon monoxide. Make sure your carbon monoxide detectors are working as it is a silent, odorless, killer.
- If phone lines are down, use social media or texting to let others know you are OK.
- Remember "Turn Around, Don't Drown!" Don't drive through flooded roads. Cars can be swept away in just two feet of moving water.



# KEY MESSAGING

## Flooding

### Before a Flood

- **Be informed** by receiving alerts, warnings, and public safety information before, during, and after emergencies.
- Find out whether your property is in a flood-prone or high-risk area. Explore the **Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) flood maps**.
- Contact your local **Emergency Management Director** to find out if your home or workplace is downstream from a dam and learn more about your community's risk of flooding.
- Create and review your **family emergency plan**.
- Have a plan to go to higher ground quickly if necessary.
- If you live or work in a flood zone, **hurricane evacuation zone**, or an area that is prone to flooding, you should be prepared to **evacuate**.
- Assemble an **emergency kit**.
- Make a record of your personal property by taking photos or videos of your belongings. Store these records in a safe place.
- **Prepare your home** for flooding.
- Flood losses are not typically covered under renter and homeowner's insurance policies. Consider purchasing flood insurance through the **National Flood Insurance Plan (NFIP)**. Flood insurance is available in most communities whether or not your building is in a flood-prone area, but there is a 30-day waiting period before it goes into effect.



# KEY MESSAGING

## Flooding

### During a Flood – Flood Watch or Flash Flood Watch

- Continue to Stay Informed
- Listen to a National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Weather Radio or to a local news station for the latest information.
- Monitor social media from trusted local officials.
- Be attentive to information provided by local public safety officials.
- Be alert to changing weather conditions and be ready to move to higher ground.

### During a Flood – Flood Warning or Flash Flood Warning

- Move immediately to higher ground or stay on high ground.
- Continue to check the media for emergency information.
- Follow instructions from public safety officials.
- If you must evacuate your home, take only essential items and bring your pets if safe to do so.
- If you must evacuate or are traveling during flooding, remember:
- Do not walk through flowing water.
- Most drownings occur during flash floods.
- Six inches of swiftly moving water can knock you off of your feet.
- Remember the phrase “Turn Around, Don’t Drown!” if driving.
- Do not drive around road barriers.
- If told to shelter in place, listen to local television or radio for updates. Conditions may change quickly, so be prepared to evacuate to a shelter or a neighbor’s home if necessary.

# KEY MESSAGING

## Flooding

### After a Flood

- Continue to monitor the media for emergency information.
- Follow instructions from public safety officials.
- If you have evacuated, return home only when authorities say it is safe to do so.
- Call 9-1-1 to report emergencies including downed power lines and gas leaks.
- Call 2-1-1 to obtain shelter locations and other disaster information.
- Be a good neighbor. Check on family, friends, and neighbors, especially the elderly, those who live alone, those with medical conditions, and those who may need extra help.



# KEY MESSAGING

## Hurricanes

### Before a Hurricane

- **Be informed** by receiving alerts, warnings, and public safety information before, during, and after emergencies.
- **Know Your Zone**. Learn if you live in a hurricane evacuation zone.
- Find out whether your property is in a flood-prone or high-risk area. Explore the **Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) flood maps**.
- **Create and review your family emergency plan**.
  - If you live or work in a flood zone, **hurricane evacuation zone**, or an area that is prone to flooding, you should be prepared to **evacuate**.
  - If you receive medical treatment or home health care services, work with your medical provider to determine how to maintain care and service if you are unable to leave your home or have to evacuate during.
- **Assemble an emergency kit**.
- **Follow instructions from public safety officials.**







# KEY MESSAGING

## Hurricanes

### Before a Hurricane

- **Prepare for possible power outages.**
  - **Ensure your smoke and carbon monoxide detectors are working and have fresh batteries.**
  - **Consider purchasing a generator to provide power during an outage. Follow the manufacturer's instructions and learn how to use it safely before an outage.**
  - **If you have life-support devices or other medical equipment or supplies which depend on electricity, notify your utility and work with your medical provider to prepare for power outages.**
- **Make a record of your personal property by taking photos or videos of your belongings. Store these records in a safe place.**
- **Prepare your home.**
  - **Consider attaching temporary plywood covers to protect windows and sliding doors.**
  - **If you live in a coastal community, review the Homeowner's Handbook to Prepare for Coastal Hazards.**
- **Flood losses are not typically covered under renter and homeowner's insurance policies. Consider purchasing flood insurance through the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP).**



# KEY MESSAGING

## Hurricanes

### During a Hurricane

- **Avoid driving or going outdoors during a storm. Flooding and damaging winds can make traveling dangerous.**
- **If you must be out in the storm:**
- **Do not walk through flowing water. Six inches of swiftly moving water can knock you off of your feet.**
- **Remember the phrase “Turn Around, Don’t Drown!” Don’t drive through flooded roads. Cars can be swept away in just two feet of moving water. If your vehicle is trapped in rapidly moving water, stay in the vehicle. If the water is rising inside the vehicle, seek refuge on the roof.**
- **Do not drive around road barriers.**
- **Continue to monitor media for emergency information.**
- **Follow instructions from public safety officials.**
- **If advised to evacuate, do so immediately. Take only essential items, and bring your pets if possible.**
- **If told to shelter in place:**
- **Stay indoors and away from windows.**
- **Listen to local television or radio for updates.**
- **Conditions may change quickly; be prepared to evacuate to a shelter or neighbor’s home if necessary.**



# KEY MESSAGING

## Hurricanes

### After a Hurricane

- Continue to monitor the media for emergency information.
- Follow instructions from public safety officials.
- Call 9-1-1 to report emergencies, including downed power lines and gas leaks.
- Call 2-1-1 to obtain shelter locations and other disaster information.
- Stay away from downed utility wires. Always assume a downed power line is live.
- Remember the phrase "Turn Around, Don't Drown!" Don't drive through flooded roads. Cars can be swept away in just two feet of moving water.
- Stay out of damaged buildings and away from affected areas and or roads until authorities deem them safe.
- If you have evacuated, return home only when authorities say it is safe to do so.
- Listen to news reports to learn if your water supply is safe to drink. Until local authorities proclaim your water supply safe, boil water for at least one minute before drinking or using it for food preparation.
- Check your home for damage:
- Never touch electrical equipment while you are wet or standing in water. Consider hiring a qualified electrician to assess damage to electrical systems.
- Have wells checked for contamination from bacteria and chemicals before using.
- Have damaged septic tanks or leaching systems repaired as soon as possible to reduce potential health hazards.
- If you believe there is a gas leak, go outdoors immediately, and do not turn electrical switches or appliances on or off. If you turned off your gas, a licensed professional is required to turn it back on.



# KEY MESSAGING

## Hurricanes

### After a Hurricane

- If your home or property is damaged, take photos or videos to document damage, and contact your insurance company.
- If your power is out, follow our power outage safety tips.
- Report power outages to your utility company.
- Use generators and grills outside because their fumes contain carbon monoxide. Make sure your carbon monoxide detectors are working as it is a silent, odorless, killer. See more Generator Safety Tips.
- If a traffic light is out, treat the intersection as a four-way stop.
- If phone lines are down, use social media or texting to let others know you are OK.
- Look before you step. After a hurricane or flood, the ground and floors can be covered with debris, including broken bottles and nails.
- Avoid entering moving or standing floodwaters. Floodwater and mud may be contaminated by oil, gasoline, or raw sewage.
- Clean and disinfect anything that got wet, and take steps to prevent and detect mold. Consider using professional cleaning and repair services. See more tips to recover from flooding.
- Throw away food (including canned items), that has come into contact with floodwaters, was exposed to temperatures above 40 °F for more than two hours, or has an unusual odor, color, or texture. When in doubt, throw it out!
- Be a good neighbor. Check on family, friends, and neighbors, especially the elderly, those who live alone, those with medical conditions and those who may need additional assistance.

# SOCIAL MEDIA POSTS

Below are examples of social media posts that can be used to prepare your community for summer hazards. Included within this toolkit are infographics and printable materials that can be used on your own social media or as inspiration to create your own. Engage your audience further by adding emojis and linking information from local resources.

## Infographics Library:

MEMA has developed a library of Summer Preparedness graphics available for download at the following link:

[bit.ly/SummerPreparednessGraphics2024](https://bit.ly/SummerPreparednessGraphics2024)





# SOCIAL MEDIA POSTS

**Beat the heat when high temperatures are expected:**

- **Never leave children or pets alone in a closed vehicle.**
- **Recognize & respond to heat-related illnesses.**
- **Check on older adults, neighbors, and those at risk.**
- **Check with local officials to find cooling centers.**

**#BeAwareTakeCareMA**

**Excessive heat is expected in our area for the next several days. Take necessary precautions, including limiting outdoor activity as much as possible and staying hydrated. Stay safe and stay cool!**

**#BeAwareTakeCareMA**

**Is your family ready for common summer hazards?**

**Create a family emergency plan so you'll know what to do if disaster strikes:**

**[www.mass.gov/info-details/make-a-family-emergency-plan](http://www.mass.gov/info-details/make-a-family-emergency-plan)**

**#BeAwareTakeCareMA**

**Staying informed is a key part of preparing for severe summer hazards. Use a variety of sources, such as the media, statements from local officials, and emergency alerts to keep yourself informed before a disaster. #BeAwareTakeCareMA**

**Check to see if your local Police, Fire, Emergency Management Agency, or city/town offices are on social media. If so, follow them for local emergency information.**

**#BeAwareTakeCareMA**





# SOCIAL MEDIA POSTS

**Gather the supplies you may need in case a disaster leaves you without power, water, or gas.**

**Items can include water, food, flashlights, glasses, pet supplies, and copies of important documents.**

**#BeAwareTakeCareMA**

**Although tornadoes are considered rare in MA, they can still be impactful when they occur. Massachusetts can potentially experience up to 2 tornadoes per year.**

**Although some years are tornado-free, it's important to be prepared.**

**#BeAwareTakeCareMA**

**Tornadoes can happen quickly and without warning. Being prepared is key to keeping you and your family safe.**

- **Make sure you are signed up for public safety alerts.**
- **Create and review your family emergency plan.**
- **Assemble your emergency kit and document your personal property.**

**#BeAwareTakeCareMA**

**A tornado watch means that a tornado is possible in your area. Be prepared by staying informed and planning where you can take cover safely if you need to shelter in place.**

**#BeAwareTakeCareMA**

**Thunderstorms can produce all different types of meteorological conditions.**

- **If you are outside and hear thunder, go indoors immediately.**
- **If you are in a car on the road, stay in your car.**
- **If you are inside a building, stay away from windows and doors, and stay inside until at least 30 minutes after you last hear thunder or see lightning.**

**#BeAwareTakeCareMA**



# SOCIAL MEDIA POSTS

## General preparedness tips for summer hazards:

- Stay informed by receiving alerts, warnings, and public safety information before, during, and after emergencies.
- Create and review your family emergency plan.
- Assemble an emergency kit.  
#BeAwareTakeCareMA

When you first hear thunder or see lightning, take immediate action to stay safe. Remember “When Thunder Roars, Go Indoors!” If possible, monitor media for the latest information and follow the instructions given by public safety officials.

#BeAwareTakeCareMA

Prepare for a flood by knowing your evacuation routes, how you will get there, and where you will stay.

#BeAwareTakeCareMA

Most homeowners’ and renters’ insurance does not cover flood damage. Take a look at your policy to see if adding flood insurance would work for you. Start by visiting The National Flood Insurance program at [floodsmart.gov](http://floodsmart.gov).

#BeAwareTakeCareMA

Just six inches of fast-moving water can knock over and carry away an adult. It’s important to not walk or drive through flooded areas. Remember the phrase “Turn Around, Don’t Drown”!

#BeAwareTakeCareMA

Are your important documents protected if flooding occurs where you live? If not, it’s important to take action now. Make copies of insurance policies, financial records, and other critical documents, or store them securely online.

#BeAwareTakeCareMA



# SOCIAL MEDIA POSTS

**Prepare for everyone's needs!**

- **Stay informed about how flooding impacts your area.**
- **Make a plan, which includes emergency contacts from your support network.**
- **Create an emergency kit that is tailored to your individual needs.**

**#BeAwareTakeCareMA**

**Know your Flood Safety Terms:**

**Flood Watch = flooding is possible - be prepared!**

**Flood Warning = flooding is occurring or will occur - take action!**

**#BeAwareTakeCareMA**

**Dangerous fire weather conditions (Red Flag Warning) due to dry conditions, low humidity, and strong winds.**

- **Dispose of smoking materials properly.**
- **Use extra care with any BBQ or open flames.**
- 

**#BeAwareTakeCareMA**

**The weather is forecasted to have hot, dry & windy conditions, which will increase the fire risk. It's important no matter where you are that you live brush fire and wildfire ready.**

**#BeAwareTakeCareMA**

# THUNDERSTORMS

## If You Are Outside

- Go indoors immediately. If you cannot get inside, take shelter in a stopped vehicle.
- If you are in an open area, go to a low place such as a ravine or valley and watch out for flash flooding.
- If you are in a forest, seek shelter in a low area under a growth of small trees.
- If you are boating or swimming, get to land and seek shelter immediately.

## If You Are in a Car

- Stay in your car if you are on the road. If driving conditions worsen, find a safe place to pull over and park.
- Avoid touching metal or other surfaces in and on your vehicle.

## If You Are Inside a Building

- Stay away from windows and doors. Strong thunderstorms can cause flying debris that could do significant damage.
- Unplug appliances, air conditioners, and other electrical items like computers to avoid damage from a power surge.
- Avoid showering, bathing, washing dishes, or doing laundry. Plumbing and bathroom fixtures can conduct electricity.
- Avoid contact with metal objects (yard equipment, motorcycles, bicycles, etc.).
- Stay inside until at least 30 minutes after you last hear thunder or see lightning.



## STAY INFORMED


- Enable emergency alerts on your cell phone
- Subscribe to your community's emergency alert system
- Listen to NOAA Weather Radio & local news broadcasts
- Follow public safety accounts on social media




## HOW TO CONTACT YOUR LOCAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT DIRECTOR (EMD)



- EMDs prepare for and lead the response to disasters in your community

 [www.mass.gov/find-your-local-emergency-management-director-emd](http://www.mass.gov/find-your-local-emergency-management-director-emd)

 Contact your local fire, police, or emergency management department

## A GUIDE TO DISASTER PREPAREDNESS

### EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

*What do you need to know?*



#ReadyMA



Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency

**DO YOU FEEL PREPARED FOR YOUR COMMUNITY'S COMMON HAZARDS?**



## KNOW YOUR DEFINITIONS

**Watch...** Severe Weather is Possible  
**Be Prepared**

**Warning...** Severe Weather is Expected  
**Take Action**

## FLOODING

### DO NOT...

- Do not touch electrical equipment while wet or standing in water
- Do not drive through flooded roadways (12 inches of water can sweep away a vehicle) or around road barriers.
- Do not walk in flowing or standing floodwaters, if possible

### DO ...

- Create an emergency preparedness kit, including copies of important documents
- Create an emergency plan, including how to get to higher ground
- Consider everyone's needs, including those with access and functional needs
- Listen to local authorities and Stay Informed by monitoring local news & radio, social media, etc.



## CREATE AN EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS KIT

### Checklist (for up to 3 days)



- Water - 1 gallon per person for a few days



- Non-perishable food items



- Battery powered or hand-crank radio and NOAA Weather Radio



- Flashlight



- First-Aid Kit



- Extra batteries



- Personal hygiene items, glasses, and medication(s)



- Cellphone with charger



- Extra pet supplies

### Additional items::

- Copies of important documents kept in a safe place.
- Plan for everyone's needs.
- **Check in with your neighbors!**

## TORNADOES

**What are common descriptions of a tornado?**

- A revolving, funnel-shaped cloud
- A dark, almost greenish sky
- Large hail
- A large, dark, low-lying cloud
- A loud roar, similar to a freight train

**What to do during a Tornado Warning**

- In a residence or small building, go to a pre-designated area such as a basement, storm cellar, or the lowest building level. If there is no basement, go to the center of a small interior room on the lowest level (closet, interior hallway) away from corners, windows, doors, and outside walls.
- Put as many walls as possible between you and the outside.
- Do not open windows.

**If you are not in or near a building**

- If you are in a vehicle, put your seat belt on and cover your head with your arms and a blanket, coat, or other cushion if possible.
- Consider lying flat in a nearby ditch or low-lying area and cover your head with your arms and a blanket, coat, or other cushion if possible.
- Do not go under an overpass or bridge, you are safer in a low, flat location.
- Watch for flying debris to avoid injury.



## DURING A POWER OUTAGE

### Call 9-1-1 to report emergencies including:

- Downed power lines; or
- If you are dependent on equipment that requires electricity and need medical assistance.
- Call 2-1-1 to obtain shelter locations and other disaster information.

### Call your utility company to report power

**outages and get restoration information. Do not call 9-1-1 to report an outage or to ask about power restoration.**

- National Grid 1-800-465-1212
- Eversource (formerly NSTAR) 1-800-592-2000
- Eversource (formerly WMECO) 877-659-6326
- Unitil (FG&E) 888-301-7700
- Stay away from downed utility wires. Always assume a downed power line is live.
- Use generators and grills outside because their fumes contain carbon monoxide. Make sure your carbon monoxide detectors are working as it is a silent, odorless, killer.
- If possible, use flashlights instead of candles.
- During hot weather, use ice to help keep food cold.
- An unopened refrigerator will keep food cold for about four hours. A full freezer will keep the temperature for about 48 hours.
- **Be a good neighbor. Check on family, friends, and neighbors.**

## Contact your local Emergency Management Director

[www.mass.gov/find-your-local-emergency-management-director-emd](http://www.mass.gov/find-your-local-emergency-management-director-emd)

Contact your local fire, police, or town emergency management department

## EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

- **Stay Informed** by receiving emergency alerts and monitoring media sources
- Build an **emergency preparedness kit**
- Create a **family emergency plan**
- **Visit: [mass.gov/MEMA](http://mass.gov/MEMA)** for more information



MASSACHUSETTS EMERGENCY  
MANAGEMENT AGENCY

## EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS: WHAT DO YOU NEED TO KNOW?

Summer Preparedness



# HOW TO PREPARE FOR SUMMER HAZARDS

## WHAT TO DO DURING

### EXTREME HEAT:

- Do not leave children or pets alone in a closed vehicle
- Wear lightweight, loose-fitting, light-colored clothing.
- Avoid strenuous activity and limit outdoor activity to morning and evening.
- **NOTE:** Electric fans may provide comfort, but when the temperature is in the high 90s, fans will not prevent heat-related illness. Taking a cool shower or bath or moving to an air-conditioned place is a much better way to cool off. Consider spending time in air-conditioned public spaces, such as schools, libraries, theaters, and other community facilities.
- If you do not have air conditioning, spend time on the lowest level of your home

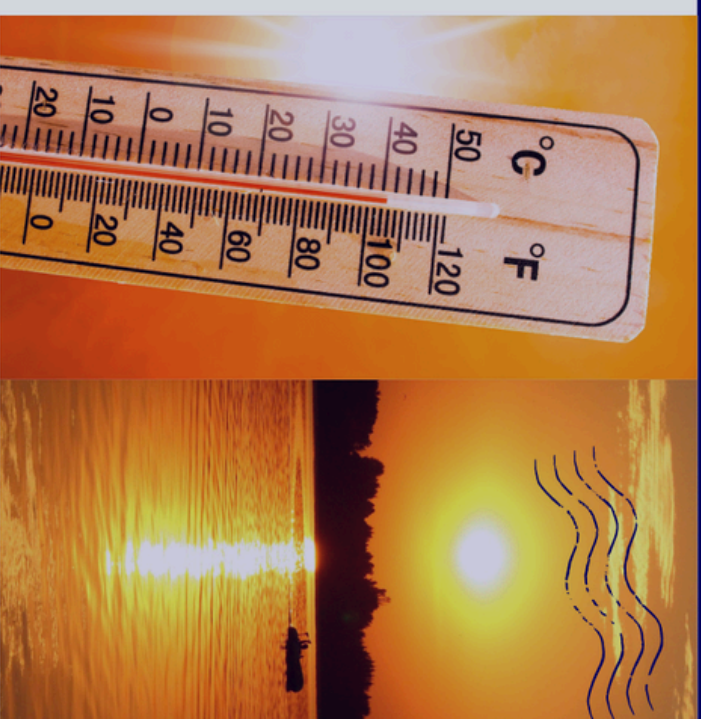
## TYPES OF SEVERE HEAT RELATED

### ILLNESSES

- Heat cramps
- Heat exhaustion
- Heat stroke

## WATER SAFETY TIPS

- Learn how to swim (Visit: [mass.gov/learn-how-to-swim](http://mass.gov/learn-how-to-swim))
- Never swim alone and always supervise children (Designate an adult “water watcher” even if a lifeguard is present)
- Learn CPR (The American Red Cross offers many classes)
- Know the following signs of drowning:
  - A person is floating on or treading water
  - A person is trying to swim to safety but unable to move forward
  - A person that is struggling to call for help
  - A person trying to keep their head above water to breathe
- Only swim in designated swimming areas
- Learn how to identify hazards, like rip-tides, in oceans, lakes, rivers, and ponds



Extreme heat is a prolonged period of very hot weather, which may include high humidity. In Massachusetts, a “heat wave” is usually defined as a period of three or more consecutive days above 90 °F.

