



## > Checklist for emergencies

When severe weather results in extended power outages, gathering the following items beforehand can make the experience easier for you and your family.

- First aid kit
- Medicine and prescription drugs
- Water containers
- Canned foods or other nonperishable food items
- Manual can opener and utensils
- Disinfectants
- Life jackets
- Charcoal (for outdoor use only)
- Fire extinguisher
- Matches
- Hammer, nails, masking tape, rope, boards, handsaw
- Battery-operated radio or TV
- Flashlight with extra batteries and bulbs
- Personal toilet articles
- Ice cooler
- Sleeping bags
- Tarp
- Trash bags
- Baby food, diapers
- Insect repellent
- Pet carrier, extra pet food
- Cash
- List of important phone numbers
- Insurance policies, property titles, personal identification documents, wills, deeds and family heirlooms and mementos



## > Evacuation tips

Don't wait until a storm is in the Gulf of Mexico to begin making preparations.

Once a watch is issued, fuel your vehicle and get extra cash.

You should evacuate as early as 36 hours and no later than 24 hours before landfall of a storm, depending on your location.

Consider locations other than public shelters since they are typically crowded.

Be certain all family members know the evacuation route.

Secure windows and doors before leaving.

## > After evacuation (re-entering your home)

Enter with caution. Assume all power lines are hot. Notify Cleco immediately if you spot downed power lines.

If your home has been flooded, **DO NOT** attempt to turn on lights or appliances, even if you have power. Have your home's wiring inspected by a licensed electrician before using electricity.

If your power is off, contact your neighbors to determine if the outage has been reported. If not, notify Cleco.

Be prepared for delays when contacting Cleco or other emergency response personnel following a major storm.

## > Weather advisory terms

**Severe thunderstorm watch:** Conditions are favorable for the development of severe thunderstorms in and close to the watch area. Watches are usually in effect for several hours, with six hours being the most common.

**Severe thunderstorm warning:** Issued when a thunderstorm produces hail 3/4 of an inch or larger in diameter and/or winds which equal or exceed 58 mph. Severe thunderstorms can result in the loss of life and/or property.

**Flash flood watch:** Flash flooding is possible in and close to the watch area.

**Flash flood warning:** Indicates a dangerous situation where rapid flooding of small rivers, streams, creeks or urban areas is imminent or already occurring.

**Hurricane/tropical storm watch:** Hurricane/tropical storm conditions are possible within the area of the watch, usually within 36 hours. During this period, prepare your home and review your plan for evacuation in case a hurricane/tropical storm warning is issued.

**Hurricane/tropical storm warning:** Hurricane/tropical storm conditions are possible within the area of the warning, usually within 24 hours. Complete storm preparations and leave the threatened area if directed by local officials.

Source: The National Weather Service



# Severe Weather

## SURVIVAL GUIDE





> **Create a plan** It's smart to plan ahead for severe weather so you can act quickly if needed. A family emergency plan is a good place to begin.



From hurricanes to ice storms, severe weather can strike throughout Louisiana. The power outages and dangerous situations that sometimes result from these events can be challenging.

Use this guide to help keep your family safe by learning how to prepare well in advance of severe weather.

Customer service, reliability and safety are all top priorities at Cleco. Our storm team works year-round to fine tune our storm plan to ensure we return power as quickly and as safely as possible. We'll be ready when the next storm hits, and we hope you will be too.

Depending on the situation, you may need to evacuate. When severe weather is predicted, listen for updates on television or radio. If an evacuation order is issued for your area, plan to leave early. This is easier if you have already made a plan.

**When making a family plan consider:**

- *Where to go if evacuation is necessary*
- *Various options and geographic locations based on the projected storm path*
- *What you will do with your pets*
- *How to take care of medical needs (refrigerated medications, special equipment, etc.)*
- *How to secure property*

Have copies of important papers placed in a waterproof box. If evacuation becomes necessary, valuables can be placed in the box, along with papers. Make a list of friends and family members to notify of your plans.

Be aware that communication may be difficult following a storm. Cell phones and telephone lines may be out of service.

Never touch a downed power line or anything touching a power line. Treat all lines as if they are energized and call Cleco or 911 to report this dangerous situation. Stay away and keep others away.

**Storms can result in power lines on the ground or down on buildings and other structures.**

> **Lightning**

Take action when a thunderstorm is approaching. If you can hear thunder, you are within 10 miles of a storm. This means you are within striking distance and should seek shelter as soon as possible.

Those in or near water are at extreme risk during thunderstorms. Swimmers, boaters and others should leave the water immediately and seek shelter.

If you can't get to a shelter, stay away from trees. If there is no shelter, crouch in the open, keeping twice as far away from a tree as it is tall.

Lightning hits the tallest object. Don't be the tallest object. Crouch down if you are in an exposed area. An umbrella can increase chances of being struck by lightning if it makes you the tallest object in an area.

Avoid contact with electrical equipment during a storm. If you are going to unplug equipment, do so before the storm reaches you.

The threat of lightning remains for up to 30 minutes after the last clap of thunder has been heard. Sunshine and blue sky do not necessarily mean you will be safe outside.

**Call Cleco or 911 to report downed power lines.**

Cleco provides regular updates to the media during power restoration. Tune in to your local designated emergency broadcast radio station for the latest information.



**Emergency broadcast stations:**

- Alexandria:** AM 970, FM 93.1, FM 96.9
- Baton Rouge:** AM 1150, FM 102.5
- Crowley:** FM 102.9
- Lafayette:** AM 1330, FM 99.9
- Lake Charles:** AM 1470, FM 99.5
- Monroe:** AM 540, FM 101.9
- New Orleans:** AM 870, FM 101.9
- Ruston:** AM 1490, FM 107.5
- Shreveport:** AM 1130, FM 94.5

> **Safe generator use**

If you decide to use a generator during a power outage, there are important safety guidelines to follow.

- *Never run a generator inside an enclosed area. Use it outside, in a clean, covered, well-ventilated area. Keep it free of oil and dirt.*
- *Never refuel a generator while it is running. Turn it off, let it cool down and then refuel.*
- *Never connect a generator directly to your home's wiring system. This could cause power to backfeed onto the power lines and seriously injure anyone who touches equipment or lines. Plug your appliances directly into your generator with grounded extension cords that can handle the load.*
- *Don't exceed the rated capacity of your generator.*
- *Follow all manufacturers' instructions for your particular generator.*

