

# Hurricane Season Public Health Preparedness, Response, and Recovery Guidance for Health Care Providers, Response and Recovery Workers, and Affected Communities — CDC, 2017

CDC 2017 Hurricane Incident Management System Team<sup>1</sup>

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CDC and the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR) have guidance and technical materials available in both English and Spanish to help communities prepare for hurricanes and floods (Table 1). To help protect the health and safety of the public, responders, and clean-up workers during response and recovery operations from hurricanes and floods, CDC and ATSDR have developed public health guidance and other resources; many are available in both English and Spanish (Table 2).

Hurricane Harvey made landfall on the Texas coast on August 25, 2017, as a Category 4 storm. In southeast Texas, record rainfall caused extensive flooding and damage to public infrastructure and communities, and displaced thousands of persons. As of September 12, 2017, the media have reported >80 storm-related deaths attributed to Hurricane Harvey (medical examiner confirmation is pending for some deaths). Most of these deaths likely were caused by drowning in flood waters within the first few days after impact (e.g., drowning at home or in vehicles).

On September 7, 2017, a Category 5 hurricane, Irma, reached the Lesser Antilles, including the U.S. territories of Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands. Hurricane Irma then continued its path across the Greater Antilles and made landfall in south Florida on September 10, 2017. Irma's hurricane-force winds and related storm surges caused substantial damage in the Caribbean and Florida.

Many areas in Texas, Louisiana, Florida, Georgia, and the U.S. territories affected by these storms are still experiencing disruptions in essential services, including electricity, potable water, food, and communications. Numerous health care and public health systems sustained damage. Environmental health impacts from the hurricanes included effects on industries, chemical plants, and hazardous waste sites. Many displaced persons remain in shelters or other temporary housing.

As part of the overall U.S. Department of Health and Human Services response and recovery operations, CDC and ATSDR are supporting public health and medical care functions for affected communities and persons displaced by the hurricanes. As of September 12, 2017, CDC and ATSDR had sent pharmacy and federal medical station supplies to Texas, Louisiana, and Florida. CDC and ATSDR have also activated and deployed members of the U.S. Public Health Service

Commissioned Corps and other personnel to provide technical support for critical public health functions. Field operations and the CDC and ATSDR Emergency Operations Center are supporting mortality and morbidity surveillance; public health messaging and risk communication; water, sanitation, safety, and facility assessments; community rapid needs assessments; mold abatement; industrial and residential contaminant exposure prevention; and vector control.

There are potential public health and safety concerns after hurricane impact. Many injuries and illnesses from hurricanes and floods occur during the response and recovery phases. Common hazards include vehicle- and nonvehicle-related drowning, carbon monoxide poisoning (e.g., from any gasoline-powered engine, including generators and clean-up equipment), electrocution, falls, lacerations, and exposure to mold and industrial and household chemicals (1–8). In addition, exacerbation of existing chronic conditions and development of acute mental health symptoms are frequent reasons for seeking health care services following a disaster (9–11). Guidance and other resources to assist in addressing many of these hazards and risk are available (Table 2).

CDC and ATSDR also offer a disaster response clinical consultation service to assist health care providers, public health professionals, and emergency response partners. This service can be accessed by emailing CDC IMS Clinical Inquiries at [eoevent168@cdc.gov](mailto:eoevent168@cdc.gov).

For additional assistance, health care providers, public health professionals, and members of the public can also use CDC and ATSDR's information service, CDC-INFO. Live agents provide up-to-date science-based health information. CDC-INFO can be reached Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. Eastern Time at 1–800-CDC-INFO (1–800–232–4636) or by submitting a web-based form (<https://wwwn.cdc.gov/dcs/ContactUs/Form>). Services are available in English and Spanish.

## Conflict of Interest

No conflicts of interest were reported.

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**TABLE 1. English and Spanish community guidance for preparing for hurricanes and floods — CDC, 2017**

English	En Español
Information about hurricanes and other tropical storms <a href="https://www.cdc.gov/disasters/hurricanes/index.html">https://www.cdc.gov/disasters/hurricanes/index.html</a>	Huracanes y otras tormentas tropicales <a href="https://www.cdc.gov/es/disasters/hurricanes/index.html">https://www.cdc.gov/es/disasters/hurricanes/index.html</a>
Preparations before a hurricane <a href="https://www.cdc.gov/disasters/hurricanes/before.html">https://www.cdc.gov/disasters/hurricanes/before.html</a>	Antes de un huracán <a href="https://www.cdc.gov/es/disasters/hurricanes/before.html">https://www.cdc.gov/es/disasters/hurricanes/before.html</a>
Family, health, and safety preparation <a href="https://www.cdc.gov/disasters/hurricanes/supplies.html">https://www.cdc.gov/disasters/hurricanes/supplies.html</a>	Obtenga suministros <a href="https://www.cdc.gov/es/disasters/hurricanes/supplies.html">https://www.cdc.gov/es/disasters/hurricanes/supplies.html</a>
Key facts about flood readiness <a href="https://www.cdc.gov/disasters/floods/readiness.html">https://www.cdc.gov/disasters/floods/readiness.html</a>	Datos importantes sobre los preparativos para una inundación <a href="https://www.cdc.gov/es/disasters/floods/readiness.html">https://www.cdc.gov/es/disasters/floods/readiness.html</a>

**TABLE 2. English and Spanish guidance for response and recovery from hurricanes and floods, by primary target audience — CDC, 2017**

English	En Español
<b>General audience</b>	
Be safe after a hurricane* <a href="https://www.cdc.gov/disasters/hurricanes/be-safe-after.html">https://www.cdc.gov/disasters/hurricanes/be-safe-after.html</a>	Manténgase a salvo después de un huracán <a href="https://www.cdc.gov/es/disasters/hurricanes/be-safe-after.html">https://www.cdc.gov/es/disasters/hurricanes/be-safe-after.html</a>
After a hurricane <a href="https://www.cdc.gov/disasters/hurricanes/after.html">https://www.cdc.gov/disasters/hurricanes/after.html</a>	Después de un huracán <a href="https://www.cdc.gov/es/disasters/hurricanes/after.html">https://www.cdc.gov/es/disasters/hurricanes/after.html</a>
Floods (general information) <a href="https://www.cdc.gov/disasters/floods/index.html">https://www.cdc.gov/disasters/floods/index.html</a>	Información sobre inundaciones <a href="https://www.cdc.gov/es/disasters/floods/index.html">https://www.cdc.gov/es/disasters/floods/index.html</a>
After a Flood <a href="https://www.cdc.gov/disasters/floods/after.html">https://www.cdc.gov/disasters/floods/after.html</a>	Después de una inundación <a href="https://www.cdc.gov/es/disasters/floods/after.html">https://www.cdc.gov/es/disasters/floods/after.html</a>
Flood waters or standing waters health risks <a href="https://www.cdc.gov/healthywater/emergency/extreme-weather/floods-standingwater.html">https://www.cdc.gov/healthywater/emergency/extreme-weather/floods-standingwater.html</a>	Agua de la inundación después de un desastre o una emergencia: <a href="https://www.cdc.gov/es/disasters/floods/cleanupwater.html">https://www.cdc.gov/es/disasters/floods/cleanupwater.html</a>
Building and facilities damage: health risks <a href="https://www.cdc.gov/healthywater/emergency/extreme-weather/building-damage.html">https://www.cdc.gov/healthywater/emergency/extreme-weather/building-damage.html</a>	—†
Cleaning up your home after a disaster or emergency <a href="https://www.cdc.gov/disasters/hurricanes/cleanup-home.html">https://www.cdc.gov/disasters/hurricanes/cleanup-home.html</a>	Limpiar tu casa después de un desastre o emergencia Limpie su casa <a href="https://www.cdc.gov/es/disasters/hurricanes/cleanup-home.html">https://www.cdc.gov/es/disasters/hurricanes/cleanup-home.html</a>
Generator and furnace safety <a href="https://www.cdc.gov/co/pdfs/Generators.pdf">https://www.cdc.gov/co/pdfs/Generators.pdf</a> <a href="https://www.cdc.gov/co/pdfs/Furnace.pdf">https://www.cdc.gov/co/pdfs/Furnace.pdf</a>	Seguridad con los Generadores y Calentadores <a href="https://www.cdc.gov/co/pdfs/flyers_Spanish.pdf">https://www.cdc.gov/co/pdfs/flyers_Spanish.pdf</a>
Pressure washer safety <a href="https://www.cdc.gov/disasters/pressurewashersafety.html">https://www.cdc.gov/disasters/pressurewashersafety.html</a>	—
Carbon monoxide poisoning <sup>§</sup> <a href="https://www.cdc.gov/co/pdfs/Flyer_Danger.pdf">https://www.cdc.gov/co/pdfs/Flyer_Danger.pdf</a>	Intoxicación por monóxido de carbono <a href="https://www.cdc.gov/co/pdfs/campaign_flyer_ES.pdf">https://www.cdc.gov/co/pdfs/campaign_flyer_ES.pdf</a>
Carbon monoxide poisoning FAQs <a href="https://www.cdc.gov/co/faqs.htm">https://www.cdc.gov/co/faqs.htm</a>	Intoxicación con Monóxido de Carbono Preguntas Frecuente <a href="https://www.cdc.gov/co/es/faqs.htm">https://www.cdc.gov/co/es/faqs.htm</a>
Chemical hazards: asbestos in your environment: what you can do to limit exposure <a href="https://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/docs/limitingenvironmentalexposures_factsheet-508.pdf">https://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/docs/limitingenvironmentalexposures_factsheet-508.pdf</a>	—
ToxFAQs for asbestos <a href="https://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/toxfaqs/tf.asp?id=29&amp;tid=4">https://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/toxfaqs/tf.asp?id=29&amp;tid=4</a>	ToxFAQs Asbesto (Amianto) <a href="https://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/es/toxfaqs/es_tfacts61.html">https://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/es/toxfaqs/es_tfacts61.html</a>
Chemical hazards: mercury <a href="https://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/dontmesswithmercury/index.html">https://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/dontmesswithmercury/index.html</a>	No te metas con mercurio <a href="https://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/dontmesswithmercury/es/index.html">https://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/dontmesswithmercury/es/index.html</a>
Chemical hazards: lead <a href="https://www.cdc.gov/nceh/lead/tips.htm">https://www.cdc.gov/nceh/lead/tips.htm</a>	Lo que debe saber sobre el envenenamiento del plomo <a href="https://www.cdc.gov/nceh/lead/tools/know_the_factsspanish.pdf">https://www.cdc.gov/nceh/lead/tools/know_the_factsspanish.pdf</a>
Coping with a disaster or traumatic event <a href="https://emergency.cdc.gov/coping/index.asp">https://emergency.cdc.gov/coping/index.asp</a>	Cómo enfrentar un desastre o evento traumático <a href="https://emergency.cdc.gov/es/coping/index.asp">https://emergency.cdc.gov/es/coping/index.asp</a>
Food safety for infants after a disaster <a href="https://www.cdc.gov/breastfeeding/recommendations/food-safety-for-infants-after-a-disaster.html">https://www.cdc.gov/breastfeeding/recommendations/food-safety-for-infants-after-a-disaster.html</a>	Asegúrese de que los alimentos y el agua se puedan consumir sin correr riesgo (Cómo alimentar a su bebé) <a href="https://www.cdc.gov/es/disasters/hurricanes/foodwater.html">https://www.cdc.gov/es/disasters/hurricanes/foodwater.html</a>

See table footnotes on page 4.

**TABLE 2. (Continued) English and Spanish guidance for response and recovery from hurricanes and floods, by primary target audience — CDC, 2017**

English	En Español
Keep food and water safe after a disaster <a href="https://www.cdc.gov/disasters/foodwater/facts.html">https://www.cdc.gov/disasters/foodwater/facts.html</a>	Asegúrese de que los alimentos y el agua se puedan consumir sin correr riesgo <a href="https://www.cdc.gov/es/disasters/hurricanes/foodwater.html">https://www.cdc.gov/es/disasters/hurricanes/foodwater.html</a>
Personal hygiene and handwashing after a disaster or emergency <a href="https://www.cdc.gov/disasters/floods/sanitation.html">https://www.cdc.gov/disasters/floods/sanitation.html</a>	Higiene personal y lavado de manos después de un desastre o emergencia <a href="https://www.cdc.gov/es/disasters/floods/sanitation.html">https://www.cdc.gov/es/disasters/floods/sanitation.html</a>
Extreme heat <a href="https://www.cdc.gov/disasters/extremeheat/index.html">https://www.cdc.gov/disasters/extremeheat/index.html</a>	Calor Extremo y Su Salud <a href="https://www.cdc.gov/extremeheat/espanol/index_esp.html">https://www.cdc.gov/extremeheat/espanol/index_esp.html</a>
Homeowner's and renter's guide to mold cleanup after disasters <a href="https://www.cdc.gov/mold/pdfs/homeowners_and_renters_guide.pdf">https://www.cdc.gov/mold/pdfs/homeowners_and_renters_guide.pdf</a>	Guía del propietario y arrendatario para la limpieza de moho después de desastres <a href="https://www.cdc.gov/mold/pdfs/IEPWG_Mold_Homeowners_and_Renters_Spanish_508.pdf">https://www.cdc.gov/mold/pdfs/IEPWG_Mold_Homeowners_and_Renters_Spanish_508.pdf</a>
Get rid of mold <a href="https://www.cdc.gov/disasters/hurricanes/pdf/flyer-get-rid-of-mold.pdf">https://www.cdc.gov/disasters/hurricanes/pdf/flyer-get-rid-of-mold.pdf</a>	Elimine el moho <a href="https://www.cdc.gov/es/disasters/hurricanes/pdf/flyer-get-rid-of-mold.pdf">https://www.cdc.gov/es/disasters/hurricanes/pdf/flyer-get-rid-of-mold.pdf</a>
Mold FAQs <a href="https://www.cdc.gov/mold/faqs.htm">https://www.cdc.gov/mold/faqs.htm</a>	Preguntas más frecuentes sobre molde <a href="https://www.cdc.gov/mold/es/faqs.htm">https://www.cdc.gov/mold/es/faqs.htm</a>
<i>Ready Wrigley Prepares for Storm and Flood Recovery</i> (a resource for children) <a href="https://www.cdc.gov/phpr/readywrigley/documents/17_279940_Ready_Wrigley_mold_508.pdf">https://www.cdc.gov/phpr/readywrigley/documents/17_279940_Ready_Wrigley_mold_508.pdf</a>	—
More resources for families <a href="https://www.cdc.gov/disasters/hurricanes/more-resources.html">https://www.cdc.gov/disasters/hurricanes/more-resources.html</a>	Más recursos para las familias <a href="https://www.cdc.gov/es/disasters/hurricanes/more-resources.html">https://www.cdc.gov/es/disasters/hurricanes/more-resources.html</a>
Public service announcements (PSAs) <a href="https://www.cdc.gov/disasters/hurricanes/psa.html">https://www.cdc.gov/disasters/hurricanes/psa.html</a>	Anuncios de servicio público (PSA) <a href="https://www.cdc.gov/es/disasters/hurricanes/psa.html">https://www.cdc.gov/es/disasters/hurricanes/psa.html</a>
<b>Health care professionals</b>	
Medical care of ill disaster evacuees: additional diagnoses to consider <a href="https://www.cdc.gov/disasters/medcare.html">https://www.cdc.gov/disasters/medcare.html</a>	—
Medical management and patient advisement after a disaster <a href="https://www.cdc.gov/disasters/management.html">https://www.cdc.gov/disasters/management.html</a>	—
Clinical guidance for carbon monoxide (CO) poisoning after a disaster <a href="https://www.cdc.gov/disasters/co_guidance.html">https://www.cdc.gov/disasters/co_guidance.html</a>	Directrices clínicas para la intoxicación por monóxido de carbono (CO) después de un desastre <a href="https://www.cdc.gov/es/disasters/co_guidance.html">https://www.cdc.gov/es/disasters/co_guidance.html</a>
Safety information for health care professionals <a href="https://www.cdc.gov/disasters/hurricanes/hcp.html">https://www.cdc.gov/disasters/hurricanes/hcp.html</a>	Información de seguridad para los profesionales de la salud <a href="https://www.cdc.gov/es/disasters/hurricanes/hcp.html">https://www.cdc.gov/es/disasters/hurricanes/hcp.html</a>
<b>Public health professionals and response workers</b>	
Emergency: response resources for storm, flood, and hurricane response <a href="https://www.cdc.gov/niosh/topics/emres/flood.html">https://www.cdc.gov/niosh/topics/emres/flood.html</a>	NIOSH advierte sobre los peligros de limpieza después de una inundación <a href="https://www.cdc.gov/spanish/NIOSH/docs/94-123_sp/">https://www.cdc.gov/spanish/NIOSH/docs/94-123_sp/</a>
Death scene investigation after natural disaster or other weather-related events: a toolkit <a href="https://www.cdc.gov/nceh/hsb/disaster/docs/DeathSceneInvestigation508.pdf">https://www.cdc.gov/nceh/hsb/disaster/docs/DeathSceneInvestigation508.pdf</a>	—
Public health assessment and surveillance after a disaster <a href="https://www.cdc.gov/disasters/surveillance/">https://www.cdc.gov/disasters/surveillance/</a>	—
Community Assessment for Public Health Emergency Response (CASPER) <a href="https://www.cdc.gov/nceh/hsb/disaster/casper/">https://www.cdc.gov/nceh/hsb/disaster/casper/</a>	—
Emergency Responder Health Monitoring and Surveillance (ERHMS) <a href="https://www.cdc.gov/niosh/erhms/default.html">https://www.cdc.gov/niosh/erhms/default.html</a>	—
Assessment of Chemical Exposures (ACE) toolkit <a href="https://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/ntsip/ace_toolkit.html">https://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/ntsip/ace_toolkit.html</a>	—
Chemical hazards: lead information for workers <a href="https://www.cdc.gov/niosh/topics/lead/safe.html">https://www.cdc.gov/niosh/topics/lead/safe.html</a>	Instituto Nacional para la Seguridad y Salud Ocupacional (NIOSH) Plomo <a href="https://www.cdc.gov/spanish/niosh/topics/plomo.html">https://www.cdc.gov/spanish/niosh/topics/plomo.html</a>
Chemical hazards: resources for emergency responders for chemical or radioactive materials <a href="https://www.cdc.gov/niosh/topics/emres/chemagent.html">https://www.cdc.gov/niosh/topics/emres/chemagent.html</a> <a href="https://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/substances/ToxEmergency.asp">https://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/substances/ToxEmergency.asp</a>	Seguridad de productos químicos <a href="https://www.cdc.gov/spanish/niosh/topics/quimicos.html">https://www.cdc.gov/spanish/niosh/topics/quimicos.html</a>
Preventing carbon monoxide poisoning from small gasoline-powered engines and tools <a href="https://www.cdc.gov/niosh/docs/96-118/">https://www.cdc.gov/niosh/docs/96-118/</a>	Prevención de envenenamiento con monóxido de carbono producido por herramientas y equipos con motores pequeños de gasolina <a href="https://www.cdc.gov/spanish/niosh/docs/96-118_sp/">https://www.cdc.gov/spanish/niosh/docs/96-118_sp/</a>

See table footnotes on page 4.

**TABLE 2. (Continued) English and Spanish guidance for response and recovery from hurricanes and floods, by primary target audience — CDC, 2017**

English	En Español
Heat and outdoor workers <a href="https://www.cdc.gov/disasters/extremeheat/workers.html">https://www.cdc.gov/disasters/extremeheat/workers.html</a>	Los trabajadores al aire libre y el calor <a href="https://www.cdc.gov/extremeheat/espanol/workers_esp.html">https://www.cdc.gov/extremeheat/espanol/workers_esp.html</a>
Indoor environmental quality <a href="https://www.cdc.gov/niosh/topics/indoorenv/">https://www.cdc.gov/niosh/topics/indoorenv/</a>	—
Indoor environmental quality: preventing occupational respiratory disease from exposures caused by dampness in office buildings, schools, and other nonindustrial buildings <a href="https://www.cdc.gov/niosh/docs/2013-102/">https://www.cdc.gov/niosh/docs/2013-102/</a>	Prevención de enfermedades respiratorias ocupacionales por exposición causadas por la humedad en edificios de oficinas, escuelas y otros edificios no industriales <a href="https://www.cdc.gov/spanish/niosh/docs/2013-102_sp/">https://www.cdc.gov/spanish/niosh/docs/2013-102_sp/</a>
Indoor environmental quality: recommendations for the cleaning and remediation of flood-contaminated HVAC systems: a guide for building owners and managers <a href="https://www.cdc.gov/niosh/topics/emres/Cleaning-Flood-HVAC.html">https://www.cdc.gov/niosh/topics/emres/Cleaning-Flood-HVAC.html</a>	—
Safety: guidance on personal protective equipment and clothing for flood cleanup workers <a href="https://www.cdc.gov/niosh/topics/emres/ppe-flood.html">https://www.cdc.gov/niosh/topics/emres/ppe-flood.html</a>	Equipo de protección personal y la ropa para las personas que trabajan en la limpieza después de las inundaciones <a href="https://www.cdc.gov/spanish/niosh/topics/flood_sp/ppe-flood_sp.html">https://www.cdc.gov/spanish/niosh/topics/flood_sp/ppe-flood_sp.html</a>
Safety: information for response and cleanup workers <a href="https://www.cdc.gov/disasters/hurricanes/workers.html">https://www.cdc.gov/disasters/hurricanes/workers.html</a>	Información de seguridad para trabajadores de respuesta a emergencias y de limpieza <a href="https://www.cdc.gov/es/disasters/hurricanes/workers.html">https://www.cdc.gov/es/disasters/hurricanes/workers.html</a>
Worker safety after a flood <a href="https://www.cdc.gov/disasters/floods/workersafety.html">https://www.cdc.gov/disasters/floods/workersafety.html</a>	Seguridad de los trabajadores después de una inundación <a href="https://www.cdc.gov/es/disasters/floods/workersafety.html">https://www.cdc.gov/es/disasters/floods/workersafety.html</a>
Traumatic incident stress: symptoms and recommendations for responders <a href="https://www.cdc.gov/niosh/topics/traumaticincident/">https://www.cdc.gov/niosh/topics/traumaticincident/</a>	Estrés por sucesos traumáticos Información para el personal de emergencia <a href="https://www.cdc.gov/spanish/niosh/docs/2002-107_sp/">https://www.cdc.gov/spanish/niosh/docs/2002-107_sp/</a>
Tree removal: preventing chain saw injuries during tree removal after a disaster <a href="https://www.cdc.gov/disasters/chainsaws.html">https://www.cdc.gov/disasters/chainsaws.html</a>	Cómo prevenir lesiones causadas por motosierras después de un desastre <a href="https://www.cdc.gov/es/disasters/psa/chainsaw.html">https://www.cdc.gov/es/disasters/psa/chainsaw.html</a>
Tree removal: preventing falls and electrocutions during tree trimming <a href="https://www.cdc.gov/niosh/docs/92-106/">https://www.cdc.gov/niosh/docs/92-106/</a>	Retiro de árbol: prevención de caídas y electrocuciones durante la poda de árboles <a href="https://www.cdc.gov/spanish/niosh/docs/92-106_sp/">https://www.cdc.gov/spanish/niosh/docs/92-106_sp/</a>

\* Information on this webpage is available in 11 different languages.

† Currently not available in Spanish.

§ This fact sheet is available in six additional languages, available at <https://www.cdc.gov/co/factsheets.htm>.

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