

Residential Emergency Information, Critical Communication Links, Emergency Preparation and Survival Guide

The St. James Emergency Management (SJEM) team is part of the volunteer staff for the Town of St. James (TOSJ). Information relating to Emergency Management can be found on the Town web site at www.townofstjamesnc.org, under Departments, Emergency Management or by clicking here <https://www.townofstjamesnc.org/departments/emergencymanagement>.

In addition to this document, other useful information on the web site includes evacuation routes from the town, route alternatives for the region, and alternative detours for road closures within the local area.

Severe weather (hurricane, snow/ice events, tornado, heavy rain), wildfires, nuclear radiation, and chemical releases are just a few examples of hazards that could affect the TOSJ. **Any situation that threatens the lives, safety, health/welfare of our residents is considered an emergency.** Depending on the severity of the event, the Mayor could declare a State Of Emergency (SOE) and by proclamation impose necessary restrictions and/or prohibitions within the municipal limits.

I. EMERGENCY SERVICES

DO NOT CALL SECURITY or SJEM IF THERE IS A MEDICAL, RESCUE, OR FIRE EMERGENCY! DIAL 9-1-1.

Residents **involved** in an emergency should dial 9-1-1. The 9-1-1 Communications Center operators will determine the appropriate response team (EMS, fire department, law enforcement, etc.) to dispatch. Be prepared to state your name and phone number, the location and nature of the emergency.

II. RESIDENT COMMUNICATION RESOURCES

Emergency situations require accurate and timely information distribution. There are several methods to keep individuals (hereafter identified as “residents”) informed during an emergency or potentially hazardous situation affecting the TOSJ.

The **Emergency Notification System (ENS)**: This system is used by the SJEM team. It allows for urgent messages to be sent to every telephone and email address in the notification database. **These numbers and email addresses are based on the information residents include in their POA profile.** Residents may list a primary and alternate telephone number and email address. For this system to perform correctly, it is critical that the information in the POA database is up to date. Residents are strongly urged to ensure the information contained in their profile is accurate. This system also has the capability to send text to a TTY device for the hearing impaired. Anyone needing this service should contact the Town Manager, at **(910)- 253-4730**.

The **BLAST Email System** is used by the TOSJ and the POA to communicate general information relating to operational changes, routine information, and other items of interest to town residents. Once again, for residents to receive these blasts, the information in the POA directory must be accurate. The link to the POA website is stjamespoa.frontsteps.com.

The **Emergency Operations Center (EOC)**: The EOC is fully activated when the Mayor declares a State of Emergency (SOE). When activated, the EOC is staffed by members of the SJEM team around the clock. In the event the Mayor issues a Mandatory Evacuation Order, the EOC will be operated remotely until the Mandatory Evacuation Order is lifted by the Mayor. Residents can call with questions, specific concerns or if they have information related to the situation. The phone number available to the residents during this period is **910-253-9980**.

The **Emergency Management Recorded Information Line** is updated regularly by the SJEM team to provide residents with recorded message information regarding emergency event. This line can be accessed by dialing **910-253-0949**.

III. *WEATHER INFORMATION AND ADVISORIES*

Severe, damaging weather is possible at any time. The National Weather Service (NWS) provides information, situational analysis and weather advisories on a continual basis. Advisories may deal with extremely urgent, short-term weather conditions such as a tornado, hail, and damaging winds associated with a violent thunderstorm cell, or longer-term threats such as a hurricane which may be tracked for weeks before making landfall. It is strongly recommended that all residents obtain an AC/DC Emergency Weather Band Radio. These radios may be programmed to automatically sound an alert when the National Weather Service issues certain types of regional weather advisories.

Websites such as the National Weather Service (www.weather.gov) or WECT weather (www.wect.com/weather/)

Coverage of any severe weather event is provided by Wilmington/Myrtle Beach TV stations including WECT, The Weather Channel, and some local radio stations.

IV. *HURRICANE PREPAREDNESS AND SURVIVAL INFORMATION*

Hurricanes are formidable weather systems with the potential to cause catastrophic property damage, severe flooding, and loss of life. As residents of an Atlantic coastal community, it behooves residents to familiarize themselves with the characteristics of hurricanes and with the planning, preparations, and actions that will reduce the risks of damage to personal property, bodily harm, and loss of life.

HIDE FROM WIND, RUN FROM WATER!

The “official” hurricane season is June 1st through November 30th. Typically, hurricanes occur in the September/October period due to the warmer ocean waters; however, there are always exceptions. Hurricanes create hazards and damage through several mechanisms:

- 1) High velocity wind: Damage to structures, vegetation and unsecured objects becoming projectiles
- 2) Rain: Occurring before, during, or after the storm’s highest winds causing at least temporary localized flooding
- 3) Storm surge: Potential inundation to coastal areas as well as areas well inland
- 4) Flooding: May be localized during the storm, and far reaching for days afterward as storm water runoff raises water levels, threatening structures as well as making low lying roads impassable across the entire region
- 5) Enormous surf: May cause beach/coastal erosion, short-term inundation of coastal areas, and dangerous marine conditions

As stated above, an adage worth remembering: “Hide from wind, run from water.” There are more hurricane-related fatalities from water than from wind.

The National Hurricane Center (NHC) provides tracking, forecasting, and advisory services for tropical cyclones. By accessing the NHC website at www.nhc.noaa.gov residents may observe graphical five-day storm track forecasts. It should be noted that the forecast track is not a “line”, but a “path of uncertainty” that widens significantly as the forecast time frame increases from one day to five days. A five-day storm track forecast that shows a potential landfall anywhere between Charleston, SC and the Outer Banks should be of concern for the TOSJ. The Emergency Management team closely monitors these forecasts and will alert residents of potential impacts.

Additionally, the NHC is responsible for storm **watch** and **warning** announcements as a storm approaches land:

Tropical Storm Watch	Tropical storm conditions are <i>possible</i> within the specified area.
Tropical Storm Warning	Tropical storm conditions are <i>expected</i> within the specified area.
Hurricane Watch	Hurricane conditions are <i>possible</i> within the specified area.
Hurricane Warning	Hurricane conditions are <i>expected</i> within the specified area

Because outside preparedness activities become difficult once winds reach tropical storm force, watches are issued 48 hours in advance of the anticipated onset of tropical storm force winds. Warnings are issued 36 hours in advance.

V. HURRICANE CHARACTERISTICS

A hurricane is a strong tropical cyclone with counterclockwise rotation around an enclosed “eye” and winds of 74 mph or higher. It is important to remember that the **category** of a severe storm is not necessarily as important as the **impact** of the storm.

The following table shows the characteristics/categories of various types of tropical cyclones.

Characteristics of Tropical Cyclones		
Storm/Type	Wind/Speed	Typical Wind Damage
Tropical Depression	< 39 mph	Minimal
Tropical Storm	39-73 mph	Minor, tree limbs
Category 1 Hurricane	74-95 mph	Mobile homes, shingles, shrubbery
Category 2 Hurricane	96-110 mph	Roofing, windows, and trees down
Category 3 Hurricane	111-130 mph	Structural damage, many trees down
Category 4 Hurricane	131-155 mph	Roof damage, structural failure
Category 5 Hurricane	156+ mph	Complete structural failures and massive damage from wind-borne debris

VI. COMMUNITY AND PERSONAL STORM PREPARATIONS

Community Preparations

As a storm approaches, the following community preparations will be made:

- 1) The Emergency Management team will meet and participate in conference calls with the Brunswick County Emergency Services Director, the National Weather Service, law enforcement agencies and other Brunswick County municipalities.
- 2) The Emergency Management team will advise the POA of anticipated rainfall and POA will decide if pond levels should be drawn down as appropriate. Storm water handling structures will be given a final check by the POA.
- 3) The POA will require that building contractors shut down and secure construction sites to minimize the potential for flying debris.
- 4) Emergency Plans for the marina and the golf courses will be activated.
- 5) The EOC will be activated if the TOSJ Mayor declares a SOE and will be staffed around the clock until the emergency is over.

- 6) Residents will begin receiving periodic information through the ENS communication system. Depending on the severity of the storm, the forecast storm track, and the likely impact upon the TOSJ, the TOSJ Mayor may issue either a **Voluntary** or **Mandatory evacuation** order, defined as:

Evacuation Types

- 1) **Voluntary Evacuation.** A warning to people within a designated area that a threat to life and property exists or is likely to exist in the immediate future. Individuals issued this type of warning or order are NOT required to evacuate, but it would be to their advantage to do so. Usually issued for low lying areas that are prone to flooding.
- 2) **Mandatory or Directed Evacuation.** A warning to people within the designated area that an imminent threat to life and property exists and individuals MUST evacuate in accordance with the instructions of local officials.

*Even though a **Mandatory Evacuation** order has been issued, residents will not be forced to evacuate. However, every resident should take the Evacuation Order seriously. Evacuation decisions are made using all available storm information and are made with only one thing in mind, the health and safety of the residents in the TOSJ.*

THOSE RESIDENTS WHO ELECT TO STAY DESPITE A MANDATORY EVACUATION ORDER SHOULD BE PREPARED TO BE SELF SUFFICIENT DURING THE STORM AND FOR SOME INDETERMINATE PERIOD OF TIME THEREAFTER, AS IT MAY BE IMPOSSIBLE TO PROVIDE EMERGENCY SERVICES OR ASSISTANCE TO THEM.

*NOTE: Anyone requiring special assistance during an evacuation should contact the Brunswick County Emergency Services at **910-253-5383** or register on their website at <https://www.brunswickcountync.gov/203/Emergency-Management> well ahead of a possible evacuation. Special assistance may include those with physical limitations, health related restrictions, medical conditions requiring oxygen, insulin, and or treatment needs such as dialysis or other ongoing treatments.*

Emergency Shelters

In an emergency evacuation situation, Brunswick County and the Red Cross operates shelter in Brunswick County. Specific sheltering information, including provisions for sheltering pets, will be provided if evacuation orders are issued. For a severe storm, where large-scale evacuation of the coastal area is expected, residents will be advised of sheltering options in inland North Carolina counties. Residents with pets should, before the storm strikes, review hotels inland to ascertain which will accept pets in case they are unable to get to a pet-friendly emergency shelter.

Brunswick County Shelters

Cedar Grove Middle School – Pets allowed: Domestic cats and dogs only
750 Grove Trail, SW
Supply, NC 28462

Town Creek Middle School – Pets allowed: Domestic cats and dogs only
6370 Lake Park Drive, SE
Winnabow, NC 28479

Red Cross Shelters:

North Brunswick High School
1395 Scorpion Drive
Leland, NC 28451

South Brunswick High
School 280 Cougar Drive
BSL Southport, NC 28461

West Brunswick High School – Pet friendly shelter
550 Whitesville Road, NW
Shallotte, NC 28470

Special Needs Reception Center
Brunswick County Community
College Odell Williamson Auditorium
50 College Road
Bolivia, NC 28422
910-754-1050

Personal Hurricane Preparation

It is the responsibility of each TOSJ resident to prepare adequately for his or her own safety and protection of personal property. There are many organizations that produce and distribute information and recommendations for hurricane preparedness, in addition to the information that is available on the St. James Emergency Management website. For example:

The State of North Carolina – www.readync.org

WECT News Hurricane Survival Guide – www.WECT.com

Brunswick County – <https://www.brunswickcountync.gov/203/Emergency-Management>

Initial Storm Preparation

Standby supplies should be available at all times. Include emergency weather radio, emergency lighting, extra batteries, first aid supplies and enough water (one gallon/person/day) and non-perishable food for at least three days. Don't forget the pets.

A Survival Kit should be prepared if you decide not to evacuate or in case you cannot get out. This kit should, at the very least include a gallon of water per person per day, prescription medications, first aid materials, non-perishable foods for three days, flashlight(s) with extra batteries, a portable radio with extra batteries. Don't forget the pets.

An Evacuation Kit should be prepared in advance as a storm approaches, in the event that evacuation becomes necessary. Items such as cash, maps, insurance policies and other personal papers, car charger for electronic devices, portable battery powered lighting, extra batteries, medications and personal toiletries for each family member and enough water, snacks and food for the trip which could take much longer than normal. Don't forget the pets.

Final Storm Preparation

Final storm preparation should begin several days before the anticipated arrival of a storm and should include at least the following:

- 1) Final organization of activities described above
- 2) Keeping automobile gas tanks filled for possible evacuation
- 3) Installing storm protection devices on windows and doors
- 4) Securing all outside furniture, grills, propane tanks and other items that might become projectiles in hurricane force winds
- 5) Evaluating possible evacuation destinations and routes

Evacuations

Utilizing the many tools the Emergency Management team has available to gather information on the severity and impact to the TOSJ of a particular storm, and in conjunction with Brunswick County Emergency Services, the TOSJ Mayor may issue evacuation orders.

Voluntary Evacuation order - Town residents should give serious consideration to relocating, especially those who reside in low lying, or flood prone areas.

Mandatory Evacuation - Town residents should leave as quickly as possible. If residents choose to stay, it is highly unlikely that fire/rescue/law enforcement personnel will be able to respond to requests for assistance.

These recommendations are taken with serious consideration to each resident's health and safety however, it is every individual's responsibility to secure his or her own personal safety.

NOTE: THOSE RESIDENTS WHO ELECT TO STAY DESPITE A MANDATORY EVACUATION SHOULD BE PREPARED TO BE SELF SUFFICIENT FOR AT THE VERY LEAST 72 HOURS. EMERGENCY SERVICES WILL MORE THAN LIKELY BE SUSPENDED DURING THE HEIGHT OF THE STORM TO PROTECT THE LIVES AND SAFETY OF THE FIRST RESPONDERS.

If you elect to evacuate please advise neighbors, friends and/or family of your time of departure, your destination and planned route. Turn off water to the house, turn off gas at the meter, turn off electricity at the meter. Store propane gas tanks outside and secure them well.

If a large-scale evacuation from St. James becomes necessary, special routing will be used and Fire, Police, or other Emergency Services personnel will be directing traffic within St. James.

During a Hurricane

- 1) If you do not evacuate, stay indoors and away from unprotected windows and doors. Have an escape plan. Have a designated place for family members to meet outside your home.
- 2) If using a portable generator during a power outage, be sure that it is used in accordance with the manufacturer's recommendations and those of the power company. **DO NOT** operate within an enclosed space or where exhaust fumes can enter the living area.
- 3) Be cautious of the "lull" if the eye of the storm passes overhead. Within a short time, the wind will return from another direction and possibly at greater force.
- 4) Listen to broadcast outlets to stay informed on storm status and its impact on the region
- 5) Call 9-1-1 to report any emergency. Immediate assistance may be impossible but will be provided as soon it is safe to do so.

After the Storm

Call the St. James Emergency Information Line (**910-253-0949**) for a recorded status report on conditions within St. James, an assessment of roads in our area and information for entrance to and egress from the community. Additionally, ENS messages will be broadcast to your email, and phones. Make sure your information is correct on the POA database.

Don't be a sightseer. Stay at home until emergency services personnel and TOSJ SJEM have been able to do their preliminary damage assessment, and the TOSJ contracted debris removal teams can clear major roads enough to allow emergency vehicles access all areas as needed.

- When driving within St. James observe and honor any barricades placed on the roads and obey Emergency Services personnel who may be directing traffic. They are there to protect YOU.
- If you must venture out, avoid roads that are covered with water. **TURN AROUND, DON'T DROWN.**
- If there has been a power outage, check refrigerated and frozen food for spoilage.
- Listen to broadcast outlets for general information on the storm and its impact on the region.

For Those Who Evacuated

Call the TOSJ Emergency Information Line (**910-253-0949**) to get recorded information regarding reentry plans and procedures. Reentry may be delayed depending on storm damage to Town infrastructure or adverse conditions in our region. TOSJ SJEM will also be broadcasting information via the ENS system. Again, make sure your information on the POA database is correct.

Go to <https://drivenc.gov> to find information regarding road and travel conditions within the state.

When returning, avoid roadways that are covered with water and be aware that water levels may still be rising several days after the storm has passed.

VII. CRITICAL PHONE NUMBERS

Fire, Rescue, or Medical Emergency- Dial 9-1-1

TOSJ Emergency Operations Center (EOC) – 910-253-9980

TOSJ Emergency Recorded Info Line – 910-253-0949

TOSJ Emergency Management Email: SJEM@stjames.town

TOSJ Security-Main Gate- 910-253-7177

TOSJ Town Office- 910-253-4730

TOSJ POA Office- 910-253-4805

TOSJ Fire Department (Non-emergency)- 910-253-9990

TOSJ Clubs - Troon Management- 910-477-8500

Brunswick County Emergency Services- 910-253-5383

Email: Emergency.Services@brunswickcountync.gov

Brunswick County Sheriff- 910-253-2777

NC State Highway Patrol- 910-733-7952

NC Highway/Travel Info Line- 511

National Weather Service – Wilmington – 910-762-4289

American Red Cross – Information Line – 1-800-733-2767

VIII. USEFUL WEB SITE LINKS

Town of St. James - www.townofstjamesnc.org

American Red Cross - www.redcross.org

National Weather Service - www.weather.gov

National Hurricane Center - www.nhc.noaa.gov

NC Emergency Preparedness - www.readync.org

ReadyBrunswick: <https://member.everbridge.net/311440963535093/login>

“When the time to perform is present, the time to prepare has passed”