

# NODS

## HOME PREPAREDNESS CHECKLIST HURRICANE

### FOUNDATIONS

- ◆ They should be securely fastened to house (in the case of board houses)
- ◆ If you live in a flood/coastal area your foundation should be 150 yards from high water mark.
- ◆ Check for large cracks in concrete foundations especially if you live on hillside it could indicate land slippage and possible landslides in rainy conditions.

### ROOF

- ◆ Securely attached galvanized metal or concrete roofs are best.
- ◆ Flat roofs should have parapets to protect them.
- ◆ Low pitched or hipped roofs should have minimum overhangs (less than 18”).
- ◆ High pitched or Gabled roofs are less likely to be lifted by storm winds (should be more than 20 degrees).
- ◆ For concrete roofs check for cracks, leaks and sagging in roof slab/beam.
- ◆ Rafters should be no longer than 35 feet and 2 feet apart, and attached to Ring beams with bolts/cables.
- ◆ Each rafter should have two hurricane straps, one on either side or a ‘U’ shaped strip that goes over the rafter.
- ◆ The ring beam should be 6 inches thick and 12 inches in depth
- ◆ Hurricane straps should attach all roof members.
- ◆ Verandah/gallery roofs should be built as separate structures.
- ◆ If face-boards (those running around the edge of roofs) are rotten they need to be replaced.
- ◆ Ensure adequate Nails/screws,
  - Check metal bolts/straps etc for corrosion
  - Check annually for loose nails/screws

### WALLS

- ◆ Check for crumbling/cracking in concrete walls,
- ◆ Check for evidence of rusting/corrosion of reinforcing rod/cable, this will occur more frequently if sea/beach sand is used in concrete.
- ◆ Wall should be 8 inches thick,
- ◆ Look for cracks/gaps present in woodwork.
- ◆ Columns should be 16 ft apart.
- ◆ Corners and interior walls should be braced using continuous path strapping.
- ◆ Ring beam 12 inches in depth, are walls reinforced

## **WINDOWS**

- ◆ Should open & close easily and have a proper fastening device.
- ◆ Protected by shutters (impact resistant).
- ◆ Frames should be affixed properly to walls and be at least 3 inches thick.
- ◆ If nails are missing for the frames (after previous storms), avoid re-nailing the same frames in different spots.
- ◆ Windows should be properly caulked/weather stripped and have no broken panes.
- ◆ If possible replace them with impact resistant laminated windows.

## **SHUTTER MATERIAL**

- ◆ Plywood sheets about 5/8 of an inch thick are inexpensive materials.
- ◆ They should be pre-measured, cut, labeled and stored in a dry place directly out of the elements.
- ◆ Steel panels can also be used and are easier to handle than plywood sheets.

## **DOORS**

- ◆ Bolt doors with foot & head bolts (1 inch minimum bolt throw length).
- ◆ Glass doors must be protected by shutters.
- ◆ Frames should be 3 inches thick.
- ◆ Should open & close easily and have a proper fastening device.

## **UTILITIES**

### **ELECTRICITY**

- ◆ Safety plastic stoppers for outlets (especially if there are babies/toddlers present)
- ◆ Turn off major appliances if power goes out. Turn off the main breaker if you are threatened by flooding.
- ◆ Waterproof expensive electronic equipment computers etc.
- ◆ Raise equipment and furniture several inches off floor.
- ◆ Fuse boxes and bare wires need to be checked by qualified electrician.

### **WATER**

- ◆ Check for leaking pipes (inside and out side)
- ◆ Check faucets (kitchen, bathroom)
- ◆ Check for leaks around toilets.
- ◆ Clean containers for drinking water and bathtub for storing water, you can line it with a clean shower curtain or caulk the drain.

## **SANITATION**

- ◆ Have septic tank cleaned if full.
- ◆ Have soak away dug up, redone or relocated if necessary/effluent surfacing

## **WHEN BUILDING/REBUILDING OR REMODELLING**

- ◆ Check to ensure hurricane clips in place.
- ◆ Roof truss is connected to walls.
- ◆ Consider impact resistant glass/shutters etc. for windows/doors.
- ◆ Ensure adequate reinforcement of walls/columns is done.

## **IMPORTANT**

- ◆ Waterproof and securely store important documents; passports, deeds etc.
- ◆ Have cash on hand, ATMs/Banks will not be working in most places won't accept personal cheques/credit cards.
- ◆ Fill car with gas, check oil, water and tyres.
- ◆ Those with pools leave them filled and heavily chlorinated.
- ◆ Ensure wood pressure treated with inorganic pesticides (arsenic) is not used to construct structure that come into direct contact with food counters, cutting boards etc. These pesticides are persistent and last a very long time. Ensure the sawdust and chippings are completely removed from the home.

## **REFERENCES:**

(US Foreign Disaster Assistance; *Shelters & Shelter Management 2000*)

UNDP Antigua Barbuda; **Build it Strong Hurricane** resistant wood frame housing training Manual