

# Dutchess County Readies for Hurricane Sandy

## *Residents Urged to take Basic Preparation Steps*

**Poughkeepsie...** Dutchess County Executive Marcus J. Molinaro and County Emergency Response officials are closely monitoring Hurricane Sandy and urging residents to be prepared for the risk of severe weather on Monday and Tuesday. There is the potential for sustained winds of 30 to 50 MPH with higher gusts, significant rainfall of 5 to 12 inches, flooding from already rain swollen local streams, downed trees and power lines resulting in hazards and power outages.

“We are actively working to prepare for the potential impact of Hurricane Sandy,” County Executive Molinaro said. “Residents should take basic steps now to prepare their families and their home for potential storm impacts. It will be important for all residents to pay close attention to the storm’s progress and use common sense during the storm to remain safe and let emergency responders, public work and utility crews do their jobs.”

Over the past two days, the Department of Emergency Response has conducted briefings with regional and state Emergency Management officials as well as the National Weather Service.

County Executive Molinaro noted, “We have been in close contact with Governor Cuomo’s office to ensure coordinated response and direct communication if the impact of storm is severe.”

Emergency Response officials are working in coordination with various county departments and partner agencies including the the Dutchess County Sheriff’s Office, Dutchess County Department of Public Works, Dutchess County

Medical Reserve Corps, the American Red Cross, Central Hudson, MetroNorth and others, to plan for potential staff, equipment and other storm management needs.

It is anticipated the Dutchess County *Emergency Operations Center* (EOC) will be activated on Monday as the storm reaches the area to oversee storm response efforts.

Residents are urged to take steps to prepare for the approaching storm. “We are advising residents whose homes and businesses are prone to flooding to take the necessary precautions to minimize any adverse impact due to the heavy rain,” said Emergency Response Coordinator Dana Smith. “The weather is difficult to predict, but it is best to err on the side of caution and take some simple steps to prevent possible flooding.”

Steps residents can take to minimize the impact of heavy rain and possible flooding include:

- Keep drains clear of leaves and other debris.
- Ensure that drainpipes are not obstructed.
- Bring outdoor possessions, such as lawn furniture, grills and trash cans inside.
- Remove items stored in areas such as basements or sheds where flooding may have occurred in the past.

Heavy rains and flooding can be a problem for drivers, too. Residents are urged to exercise caution and heed the following travel advice to safely navigate wet roads:

- Budget extra travel time to avoid being marooned on flooded roads.
- Make sure you have enough fuel for your car.

- Watch for areas where rivers or streams may suddenly rise and flood, such as highway dips, bridges, and low areas.
- DO NOT attempt to drive over a flooded road. Turn around and go another way.

With heavy rainfall and strong winds predicted, residents should be prepared for power outages and other storm related issues. A good rule of thumb is to be prepared to be self-sufficient for at least three days, no matter what the emergency. Below is a basic emergency checklist for families to use as a guide. Store items in watertight containers that can be easily moved.

Items to keep in your home for emergency use:

- **Water** – one gallon per person per day
- **Food** – ready to eat or requiring minimal water
- **Manual can opener**
- **Radio** – battery operated
- **Flashlight**
- **Batteries**
- **Personal hygiene items** – toothpaste, toilet paper, soap, etc.
- **Cash** – power outages could impact ATMs
- **First Aid Kit**
- **Copy of important documents and contact phone numbers**
- **Medication & medical supplies** used on a regular basis – be sure to have a supply to last for several days
- **Large, heavy duty trash bags.** Garbage service may be disrupted
- **Pet supplies** including food, water and extra litter

Many of the items listed above should also be part of an emergency “go kit” in the event of an evacuation. For complete checklists for emergency planning, including specific tips for preparing for storms, flooding, hurricanes and evacuations, visit the county’s website at

[www.dutchessny.gov](http://www.dutchessny.gov) and click on the Emergency Preparedness tab under Quick Links on the left side.

You can also follow the updates on Dutchess County Government's social media pages including Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/pages/Dutchess-County-Government/73646813346> and Twitter at <http://twitter.com/#!/DutchessCoGov>.