



News Release

For more information contact:

Dr. Gary L. Wood or Dr. Patricia N. Alexander

(813) 870-0392 (Hillsborough County, Florida)

(727) 576-5164 (Pinellas County, Florida)

(800) 870-0392 (Out-of-area)

Hurricane Preparedness Part II

Tampa, Fla. (July, 2015). Learn the terms associated with a hurricane. A hurricane watch means a hurricane is possible in your area. Be prepared to evacuate. Monitor local radio and television news outlets or listen to NOAA Weather Radio for the latest developments. A hurricane warning is when a hurricane is expected in your area. If local authorities advise you to evacuate, leave immediately. Hurricanes are classified into five categories based on their wind speed, central pressure, and damage potential. Category Three and higher hurricanes are considered major hurricanes, though Categories One and Two are still extremely dangerous and warrant your full attention.

Some longer range planning might involve hiring a tree management company with a certified arborist who can look at all your trees and advise on their health and any trimming or removal that is necessary. Sometimes there are problems of which the ordinary home owner is unaware. An example is a 90 foot high Queen palm that looks just fine but may have a fungus that destroys the roots underground so that a fairly strong wind can topple it. Have you decided to purchase a generator and have you learned the safety factors needed and how to use it? Do you have window coverage that is cut to size and clearly marked as to which window goes with the plywood or other coverage? Do you have your pet carriers cleaned and available

should you have to evacuate? Do you keep your car filled with gas since pumps are often “down” when there is a major storm? Did you make copies of important documents and place them in a water proof container?

Hurricanes can produce widespread torrential rains. Floods are the deadly and destructive result. Flash flooding or a storm surge can occur due to intense rainfall. Flooding on rivers and streams may persist for several days or more after the storm. In a situation of immediate danger don't wait until the last minute to prepare your home: cover all of your home's windows with pre-cut plywood or hurricane shutters to protect your windows from high winds; bring in all outdoor furniture, decorations, garbage cans and anything else that is not tied down; keep all trees and shrubs well trimmed so they are more wind resistant; turn off utilities and propane tanks as instructed. Ensure a supply of water for sanitary purposes such as cleaning and flushing toilets. Fill the bathtub and other large containers with water.

Learn about the emergency plans that have been established in your area by your local and federal agencies and listen to the instructions given by local emergency management officials.

Take the time to get additional information on how to plan and prepare for a hurricane by visiting the following resources: Federal Emergency Management Agency, NOAA Watch, the American Red Cross, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Center for Disease Control.

One of the best websites that covers a wide range of potential natural disasters is : <http://www.nhc.noaa.gov/prepare/>

Remember that the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) is a benefit available to all employees and dependents of companies contracted with Wood & Associates for providing confidential free professional assistance 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Remember that you or a dependent may contact the EAP regarding any concern that you might have – you don't have to wait until a problem becomes big to seek help. Above all, keep in mind that concerns develop over time but the way you address them can be changed. And if you are impacted by a hurricane or other disaster, all you need to do is call

your EAP. It is that simple. We will help you cope, find assistance, and guide you down the path to effectively dealing with the major changes a hurricane can bring. Above all, keep in mind that concerns develop over time but the way you address them can be changed. So, if you are struggling with dealing with a critical incident, help is just a phone call away.

Sometimes dealing with letting go of old patterns can feel overwhelming because we've been responding in the same old way over and over. So if you are struggling with the question of what you need to change or want to change and need some help in accomplishing your goal, help is a phone call away. The EAP can help you find a new path so that change is managed, relationships are healed, support systems are developed, and expectations are kept realistic.

About Wood & Associates

Wood & Associates is an Employee Assistance Program and behavioral health consulting firm that helps employers maintain productivity, safety and behavioral health in the workplace. Wood & Associates is a pioneer in the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) industry and has served employers and employees in the greater Tampa Bay area and nationwide since 1982. The firm's diverse group of clients includes a number of major employers who also contract for its mental health and substance abuse services.

Gary L. Wood, Psy.D., founder of the Wood & Associates consulting practice, is a pioneer in the field of Employee Assistance Program (EAP) services. Since 1979, his practice has centered on providing solutions to employee and organizational problems. Wood is a licensed clinical psychologist, a member of the National Register of Health Service Providers in Psychology, and a graduate of Rutgers University, West Georgia College and Mercer University.

Patricia N. Alexander earned a Ph.D. in mental health counseling at the University of Florida. Trained in critical incident stress management through the International Critical Incident Stress Foundation, she is a Florida Licensed Mental Health Counselor and nationally certified counselor. Through her work experience she has

addressed all types of critical incident situations, including explosions, multiple homicides, suicides, line-of-duty deaths, serious accidents and robberies. Alexander conducts training on stress management for law enforcement and businesses, and has developed peer support programs for law enforcement and industry. Alexander is an educator and consultant on a wide variety of behavioral health concerns.