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PREPARING FOR IRMA: RECOMMENDATIONS FROM CATAWBA COUNTY EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

NEWTON, NC – As projections continue to point Hurricane Irma toward North Carolina, Catawba County Emergency Management advises residents to take deliberate steps now to be prepared.

“Hurricane Irma is a very dangerous storm, and we urge everyone in Catawba County to take the risk of local impact seriously,” said Catawba County Emergency Management Coordinator Karyn Yaussy. “Based on Irma’s current trajectory, we anticipate the storm could affect Catawba County starting Monday afternoon into Tuesday. We strongly encourage residents to spend time this weekend ensuring they’re as prepared as possible.”

Emergency Management emphasizes the following preparedness steps as the most important things to do before Sunday night:

- Find a battery powered flashlight or lantern and put fresh batteries in it. Have extra batteries on hand. Please do not use candles due to the fire risk.
- Register for the Catawba County Community Alert System online at <http://www.catawbacountync.gov/alert>. (If you do not have internet access, call 828-465-8230.) Catawba County sends official information and emergency messages out through the Community Alert System.
- We strongly urge you to rely only on official information coming directly from Charlotte TV stations, Catawba County Emergency Management or the National Weather Service. In emergencies there are always lots of rumors and misinformation that go around through social media and word of mouth.
- Have a supply of bottled water at your house and in your vehicle. We recommend 1 gallon per person for at least three days. If you have 4 people in your family, that would be 4 people x 1 gallon of water x 3 days = 12 gallons. Don’t forget to have extra water for your furry family members, too!
- Have at least a three-day supply of non-perishable foods that do not require heating or refrigeration in the house and snack items in the car (examples: crackers, peanut butter, granola bars, tuna, canned fruit, etc.). Don’t forget to keep a non-electric can opener handy, too.
- Please check on your friends, neighbors and fellow church members to make sure they are preparing and do not need extra help to be ready.
- Get out your NOAA Weather Radio and turn it on, put fresh batteries in it and tune it to:
 - Linville Tower frequency 162.450 WNG538 or
 - Mooresville frequency 162.525 KJY85

The Weather Radio will give critical emergency information about a tornado or flash flood.

- Additional preparedness information for dealing with hurricanes is available at <https://www.ready.gov/hurricanes>.
- In the event the situation in North Carolina requires the opening of disaster shelters, real-time shelter information will be posted on <https://readync.org/EN/Index.html>. (There's also a mobile app called ReadyNC in your favorite app store.)

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