

# Preventing Poisonings After a Hurricane

Poison Centers see an increase in poison emergencies after a hurricane. It is important to know how to prevent poisonings to keep you and your family safe.



On average, **6 hurricanes** strike the US coastline every year.

**Poison Centers** are a **critical resource for the public and healthcare professionals** during and after a hurricane.

For poison emergencies and questions, call **1-800-222-1222** to be connected to your local poison control center.

## Fast Facts: Post-Hurricane Poisonings



Carbon monoxide (CO) is called the invisible killer because it is colorless and odorless. CO poisoning from portable generators can happen so quickly that people can pass out or become disoriented before recognizing the symptoms.



Prolonged power outages and contamination with flood water are two of the biggest risks to your food. Poison Centers typically see an increase in calls related to foodborne illnesses after a storm.



Medications that need refrigeration can only last for a short time if stored at room temperature.

## Tips on Staying Safe



### Preventing Carbon Monoxide (CO) Poisoning

1. **Never** use a generator inside or in garages, carports, or patios.
2. Operate generators outside, **20+ ft. away** from open windows or intake vents.
3. Install battery-operated CO detectors near all sleeping areas, and on every level of your home.



### Preventing Food Poisoning & Water Contamination

1. When in doubt, throw it out!
2. Have about one (1) gallon of clean water per person per day for up to 3 days.
3. Keep refrigerator and freezer doors closed during a power outage to maintain safe temperatures for longer.



### Preventing Medication Poisonings

1. Call your doctor to develop a plan for your refrigerated medications and electric-powered medical devices.
2. Clearly label all medications in water-resistant bags or containers.
3. Lock up medicines and store them up, away, and out of reach of children.

If you experience any type of poisoning after a storm, call Poison Help (1-800-222-1222) to reach your local poison control center for immediate, expert assistance.

**POISON  
HELP**  
1-800-222-1222

**SOUTH CAROLINA  
POISON  
CENTER**

*In collaboration with and support from  
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