

# Safety In The Home: Before And After The Storm

(NAPSA)—The peak of hurricane season is just around the corner, bringing with it high winds, extreme rains, and flooding. In anticipation of this volatile weather, the Electrical Safety Foundation International (ESFI) is educating consumers about the electrical dangers that can result in the aftermath of severe storms and providing resources to help safely weather the storms this season.

When re-entering your home after a storm, exercise extreme caution. Always have a licensed electrician check the house, including wiring and appliances, to make sure it is safe before flipping a switch or plugging in an appliance.

Follow these tips to keep your home electrically safe at the peak of severe weather season:

## Submerged Electrical Appliances

- Take care when stepping into a flooded area and be aware that submerged outlets or electrical cords may energize the water, posing a potentially deadly trap.

- Electrical items such as circuit breakers, fuses, GFCIs, receptacles, plugs and switches can malfunction when exposed to water and debris. Discard or replace them if they have been submerged.

- Have an electrician inspect electrical appliances that have been wet and don't turn on or plug in appliances unless an electrician has verified it is safe.

## Downed Power Lines

- Always assume fallen power lines are energized. Stay at least 10 feet away from a downed power line and any nearby objects it may be touching, such as a fence or a tree limb.

- Contact your utility company immediately to report downed



**Consumers are also strongly encouraged to share these tips with older adults, who are among the most vulnerable populations during a state of emergency.**

power lines outside your home.

- Never touch a person or object that is in direct or indirect contact with a downed power line. Instead, call 911 immediately.

- Never attempt to move a downed power line—leave it to the professionals.

## Portable Generators

- Do not operate a portable generator in your home, basement or garage. Generators can quickly produce high levels of carbon monoxide, which can be deadly.

- Be sure the generator is dry and properly grounded. Plug appliances directly into the generator to prevent back feed along the power lines.

- Make sure there's at least one working carbon monoxide detector in your home. Test the batteries at least twice a year, when you test your smoke detector batteries.

- Warn those in your home not to open windows while a generator is operating outside.

## Learn More

Visit Electrical Safety Foundation International at [www.esfi.org](http://www.esfi.org) for a comprehensive collection of severe weather safety resources, all free for downloading and printing.