

SECURING WINDOWS AND DOORS IN THE EVENT OF A HURRICANE

Securing Windows

People used to think that they were supposed to put tape over windows when a hurricane threatens. While tape may keep windows from shattering, it will not keep them from breaking. When strong winds get inside your home or business, that's when the damage happens. Wind puts pressure on inside walls and the roof. These winds inside a building often cause the roof to blow off, followed by interior and exterior wall failure. Keep in mind that delaying evacuation is more dangerous than having unprotected windows.

The best way to protect your home is to install storm shutters that are rated to withstand winds of 120 mph or more. If you do not have storm shutters, get 5/8" marine plywood panels so that when a hurricane watch is issued, you can put up the plywood panels quickly. The panels should overlap the windows by 4 or more inches on every side. Do not fit the plywood inside the window opening, but to the wall of the house. Anchors should be set 2" from the edge of the plywood and 18" apart.

Securing Entry Doors

Sliding glass, double and french doors should be prepared the same as windows; however, you will need to add support to the plywood panels. Angle a 2 X 4 beam to the ground and secure the beam at the ground with a stake.

All other types of doors should also be reinforced against the storm's pressure and protected from flying debris. To strengthen doors, add surface mounted slide bolts to the inside and outside or bolt a 2 X 4 beam across the opening and secure it to the house frame.

Securing Garage Doors

In securing and strengthening garage doors, install vertical supports 18" to 24" apart, either wood or metal, behind the garage doors. They should be bolted to the garage floor and house frame.

While these projects, if done correctly, can make your home safer during a hurricane, they are not a guarantee that your home won't be damaged or even destroyed. *If you are told by authorities to evacuate, do so immediately, even if you have taken these precautions.*