

# Smoke Alarms



Horry County Fire Rescue

Community Risk Reduction Guideline

## What Are the Different Types of Smoke Alarms?

- **Ionization Alarms** – These types of smoke alarms sound in a quicker time-frame during a fast and flaming fire.
- **Photo-Electric Alarms** – These types of smoke alarms sound in a quicker time-frame during a smoky and smoldering fire.

## What Are the Different Types of Power Sources?

- **House Current Power** – All homes built beginning in the mid-1980's required the smoke alarms to be wired into the home, and also have a battery back-up. If a 9-volt back-up battery is present, it should be replaced at least yearly. If the back-up battery is a more modern lithium battery, it cannot be replaced, and the Smoke Alarm should be replaced every 10 years.
- **9 Volt Battery Power** – These smoke alarm batteries shall be replaced at least once a year. If the smoke alarm is over 10 years old, it is recommended to replace with a lithium battery powered smoke alarm.
- **Lithium Battery Power** – Lithium batteries do not have to be replaced. It is recommended to replace the entire smoke alarm every 10 years. **THIS IS THE SMOKE ALARM OF CHOICE**



## Five Quick Tips

1. Smoke alarms should be installed on every level of your home, as well as inside of all sleeping areas.
2. You should test your smoke alarm each month.
3. You should lightly dust or vacuum your smoke alarm after each test.
4. Smoke alarm should be completely replaced every 10 years.
5. Your family should plan and practice a home escape plan during your monthly smoke alarm testing routine.

## How to Maintain Your Smoke Alarm

- You should test your smoke alarm once a month with the test button and every six months with smoke from a blown-out candle.
- You should remove the cover and gently vacuum or dust your smoke alarm at least once a month.
- Standard 9-volt battery powered smoke alarms should have the battery replaced yearly; do this when you change your clock in the fall.
- Lithium battery powered smoke alarms do not need new batteries each year; instead, replace the entire smoke alarm every 10 years.
- Never paint over any portion of your smoke alarm.
- If your smoke alarm activates due to smoke or fire in your home, the smoke alarm should be replaced.

## Where to Install Your Smoke Alarm

- There should be a smoke alarm on every level of your home.
- You should install a smoke alarm in each bedroom and sleeping area.
- You should not install smoke alarms near fireplaces, wood stoves, or in the kitchen; they tend to false alarm more frequently in those areas.
- Install smoke alarms at least three feet away from any air return or air vent.
- If you have to install your smoke alarm on a wall, it should be placed at least 12 inches below the ceiling.

**We suggest you replace all your 10-year-old smoke alarms with Lithium Battery Powered smoke alarms**

**"Smoke Alarms and Exit Drills in the Home...A Plan You Can Live With"**

**For Additional Community Risk Reduction Information or to Schedule a Program - Call 843-915-5606  
X (Twitter): @hcfirerescue www.horrycountyfirerescue.com Instagram: horrycountyfirerescue**

# Updating the Smoke Alarms in Your Home



**Horry County Fire Rescue**

**Community Risk Reduction Guideline**

**To ensure the safety of your family in the event of a fire, Horry County Fire Rescue will install properly operating smoke alarms in your home, with a 10-year lithium battery.**

## **Horry County Fire Rescue will take the following steps to protect your family:**

- Members will determine the type, age, and power source of your current smoke alarms and if they are operating properly
- If your smoke alarms are battery operated only, we will replace them with 10-year lithium battery smoke alarms
- If your smoke alarms are powered by your electrical system with a 9-volt battery back-up, and are over 10 years old, they should be replaced. Horry County Fire Rescue Personnel cannot change these aged smoke alarms, as we cannot alter the electrical system in your home for liability purposes
- In an effort to ensure your family is protected, our members will install TEMPORARY 10-year lithium battery smoke alarms near your sleeping area. These will serve as a back-up to your end-of-life smoke alarms, until you are able to replace them
- We request you replace these end-of-life smoke alarms which are wired to your electrical system and have a 9-volt battery back-up. We recommend smoke alarms which are wired to your electrical system with a 10-year lithium battery back-up. This installation can be done by a family member, friend, handyman, or electrician. Please follow all installation instructions



## **Five Quick Tips**

- 1. Smoke alarms should be installed on every level of your home, as well as inside of all sleeping areas.**
- 2. You should test your smoke alarm each month.**
- 3. You should lightly dust or vacuum your smoke alarm after each test.**
- 4. Smoke alarm should be completely replaced every 10 years.**
- 5. Your family should plan and practice a home escape plan during your monthly smoke alarm testing routine.**

## **Options to replace your end-of-life, wired-in Smoke Alarms**

- Please ensure the new smoke alarms you purchase are designed to be wired-in to your electrical service, and are equipped with a 10-year-life lithium battery back-up
- If you have the capability to replace your smoke alarms, we suggest you follow all the instructions on the new smoke alarms, and secure the power supply before you complete the work
- If you do not have the capacity to install the new smoke alarms, we suggest checking with family members or friends who are able to safely complete the installations.
- Other options include a local handyman, electrician, or heating and air-conditioning service person.
- These replacements are considered maintenance work and do not require any permitting from the county

## **Where to Install Your Smoke Alarms**

- You should install a smoke alarm in each bedroom and sleeping area inside of your home
- There should be a smoke alarm in the hallway outside of the bedrooms
- You should not install smoke alarms near fireplaces, wood stoves, or in the kitchen; they tend to false alarm more frequently in those areas.
- Install smoke alarms at least three feet from any air return or air vent.
- If you have to install your smoke alarm on a wall, it should be placed at least 12 inches below the ceiling.

**Please complete the Home Fire Safety Inspection located in the Fire Safety Educational Booklet**

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# E. D. I. T. H

## Exit Drills in The Home



**Horry County Fire Rescue**

**Community Risk Reduction Guideline**

### Exit Drills In The Home (EDITH)

According to data from the National Fire Protection Association, an average of 2,620 fire deaths, and 11,700 injuries occur in home structural fires each year. Statistics also show that the majority of fires in the home occur between 5:00 and 8:00 pm, typically due to unattended cooking.

Unfortunately, almost half of these fire deaths occur between 11:00 pm and 7:00 am, when most of us are asleep. Knowing this information, it is critical that every household has a planned and practiced home fire escape plan to ensure each person living in the home can escape safely.

Once developed, the "Exit Drill in the Home" (EDITH) should be practiced each month, so everyone knows what to do in the event of a fire, and where the meeting place is located.



#### Five Quick Tips

- 1.** Develop a Exit Drill in the Home plan.
- 2.** Involve all family members when developing the plan.
- 3.** Establish a safe meeting place outside.
- 4.** Understand the dangers of smoke and how to react.
- 5.** Practice your plan so that each person knows exactly what to do, and where to go once outside.

#### Fire Escape Planning

Each family member must know exactly what to do in case of a fire in their home. It is important to practice an "Exit Drill In The Home" (EDITH) each month

- Plan in advance by making sure you have working smoke alarms in your home.
- In your escape route, include two exits from each room if possible.
- Practice your plan at night and during the day at least twice a year. Use different escape routes each time.
- Have an outside meeting place a safe distance from the house, such as a large tree or mailbox.
- Teach your children to escape on their own in case you cannot get to them.
- Provide for those that require additional help such as the disabled, infants, or the elderly. Include these provisions in the escape plan and practice them.

#### Dealing with Smoke and Heat

- Smoke and heat rises. This is why firefighters crawl through buildings on their hands and knees.
- Stay low. If you stand up, smoke may incapacitate you before you can escape.
- Smoke can be fatal. Most fire victims die from smoke, not fire.
- Drop and crawl. When you encounter smoke, drop to your knees or stomach, and crawl to the nearest exit.
- Check your bedroom door for heat with the back of your hand. If the door is hot, find another exit.

**The mailbox in the front of your home makes a great meeting place for your family**

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# "E. D. I. T. H."

## Exit Drill's in the Home

## Home Fire Escape Plan

1. Draw a plan for each floor of home
2. Identify two exits from each room
3. Show each exit on the escape plan (doors, windows, stairs)
4. Label areas where anyone sleeps
5. Determine anyone who may need help
6. Identify and clearly mark your outside meeting place
7. Call 9-1-1 once you have left the home
8. Practice your Escape Plan each month

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# Fire Safety for Older Adults



**Horry County Fire Rescue**

**Community Risk Reduction Guideline**

## Preventing Fires and Injuries in the Your Kitchen

- Always stay in the kitchen while cooking, especially when cooking with grease or oil.
- If you are not frying foods, and have to leave the kitchen, carry a stirring spoon or pot holder as a reminder to return to the kitchen.
- Always wear short-sleeved or tight-fitting clothing that will not be able to drape over stove burners.
- Do not store spices, cookies, candy, or other food items in the cabinets above the stove.
- Proper housekeeping can reduce many fires in the kitchen. Make sure excess grease and food scraps are not left under burner covers or in the bottom of the stove.
- Never substitute dish towels or dish clothes for pot holders. Keep all combustibles like paper towels, dish towels, and pot holders at least three feet away from the stove top.
- Make a habit of not utilizing the oven for a storage place for pots, pans, or food storage containers.

**65+**

### Five Quick Tips

- 1.** Test your smoke detector each month and ensure you have a home escape plan and meeting place outside your home.
- 2.** Ensure your house number is visible to emergency responders.
- 3.** If you smoke in the house, always use a deep sided ash tray, and never empty at night. NEVER smoke in bed.
- 4.** Never leave the kitchen while cooking, especially when cooking with grease or oil.
- 5.** Keep all space heaters at least three feet away from any combustibles, such as chairs, sofas, curtains, and bed linens.

### Can We Find Your Address?

- Ensure your house number is displayed on your home and/or your mailbox.
- If you have to call 9-1-1, tell the dispatcher your address, the type of emergency, your name and your phone number.
- In the event of a fire, exit the home first and then call 9-1-1 from outside or from a neighbor's home.

### Proper Use of Portable Heaters

- Keep all space heaters at least three feet away from any combustibles, such as chairs, sofas, curtains, and bed linens.
- Never leave your home or go to bed when a heater is burning or turned on.
- Never utilize heaters as a clothes dryer.
- Keep heaters away from exit ways out of the home.

### Sleeping Safe

- Ensure your home has smoke alarm in all sleeping areas.
- Have a Home Escape Plan and designated meeting place.
- Turn off all space heaters before you leave the house or go to bed.
- NEVER smoke in bed. If you do smoke in the home, do not empty ash trays before going to bed.
- Always keep your glasses, keys, clothes and slippers or shoes close to the bed and always in the same place.
- Keep exit corridors and stairways clear of clutter and tripping hazards.

**STAY OFF THE LADDER**  
**Call your Local**  
**Fire Department to help**  
**you with your**  
**Smoke Alarm Battery**

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# Cooking Safety



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## Helpful Hints to Prevent Fires and Injuries in the Kitchen

- Fires originating in the kitchen are the leading cause of accidental fires in the home. The leading cause of kitchen fires is cooking with grease or oil. **NEVER LEAVE THE KITCHEN WHEN COOKING WITH OIL OR GREASE**
- In the event of a stove-top fire, never move a burning pan, and never extinguish with water. Ensure you have a fire extinguisher in the kitchen, and always have a pan-top or cookie sheet close by when cooking with grease or oil
- Proper housekeeping can reduce many fires in the kitchen, ensure there is no excess grease or food scraps under burners, or in the bottom of the stove. Never leave pot holders, towels, or paper and plastic items on the stove top.
- Always utilize the back burners of a stove, particularly if you have children in the home. Keep all pan handles facing the rear of the stove, and never leave them hanging over the stove front.
- If you or a family member receives a burn injury, immediately cool the area with cold tap water. If the burn forms a blister larger than a quarter, you should seek medical attention.
- If you leave the kitchen while the stove is on, always carry a cooking spoon or pot holder as a reminder, setting timers is also a good practice when leaving the room. **NEVER LEAVE WHEN COOKING WITH OIL OR GREASE.**



### Five Quick Tips

- 1.** Always stay in the kitchen when you are frying, broiling or grilling food.
- 2.** Keep a pan top or a cookie sheet nearby whenever cooking. Cover a burning pan with either of these in the event of a fire.
- 3.** Never pick up and move a burning pan from the top of the stove.
- 4.** Install a fire extinguisher near the exit door from your kitchen. If a stove top fire is small enough, use the fire extinguisher to put out the fire.
- 5.** Keep the cords to all electrical appliances wrapped so they do not hang over the counter, tempting a child to pull on them.

### Charcoal and LP Gas Grilling Safety

- When cooking on your LP Gas or charcoal grill, it should be placed in the yard or the outer portion of your deck. Never put it against the home or any combustible surface.
- When grilling has been completed, make sure your LP Gas is shut off at the bottle, and if using charcoal, the briquettes have been completely extinguished with water.
- Only use commercial lighter fluid to start your charcoal. Never use gasoline, kerosene, or any other type of flammable liquid.
- Never operate any type of grill inside your home, camper, garage, vehicle or tent.
- Store your spare LP Gas cylinder in a cool, shaded area; never keep it next to the grill. The cylinder should always be stored and transported upright.
- As a "Rule of Thumb", it is illegal to use an LP gas, or charcoal grill on an apartment or condominium balcony.

### Keeping Children Safe in the Kitchen

- Children should always be supervised whenever they are in the kitchen.
- Keep place mats and tablecloths off of the table when there are toddlers in the home, as they will reach up and use them for leverage to stand up.
- The temperatures reached on oven doors are hot enough to burn a child's hands; never operate the oven when toddlers are in the kitchen.
- Do not allow children to play with pots and pans, as they will see them hanging over the edge of the stove and grab them when they contain a hot liquid.

**NEVER LEAVE THE  
KITCHEN WHEN  
COOKING WITH  
OIL OR GREASE**

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# Calling 9-1-1



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## When to Call 9-1-1

Many people are hesitant to call 9-1-1 because they are unsure if their situation is an emergency, or they do not want to be a bother. **Always call 9-1-1 in the event of: Fires, Medical Emergencies, and Criminal Activity.**

## When Not to Call 9-1-1

If a true emergency does not exist, or you are seeking non-emergency information, please locate the non-emergency number for the local Fire Department, Police Department or Sheriff's Office to call for information.



### Five Quick Tips

1. Make sure emergency responders can clearly and easily see your house number.
2. Turn your porch light on and have someone meet the emergency responders at the street or driveway.
3. Advise the emergency responders of special issues prior to entry, such as dogs, hazards, and best access.
4. Do not block access to fire hydrants with fences, shrubs, cars or obstructions.
5. Answer all questions of the 9-1-1 Center call taker.

### Calling 9-1-1 from Home

Many areas have Enhanced 9-1-1 (E 9-1-1) and the call taker is automatically provided the location of the caller. We stress to always confirm the location of the emergency with the call taker before hanging up.

### When speaking to the call taker at the 9-1-1 Center:

- Speak calmly and clearly.
- Provide the exact address or location of the emergency.
- Provide the phone number you are calling from. Regardless of E 9-1-1.
- Describe the emergency.
- Give your name and information about who is involved.
- Answer all other questions as quickly and accurately as possible.
- Receive instructions given to you by the call taker.
- Stay on the phone until the call taker advises otherwise.

### Calling 9-1-1 from a Cell Phone

Cell phones do not have the E 9-1-1 capability, so the call taker will not know where you are calling from unless you tell them your exact location.

- Speak calmly and clearly.
- Provide the exact location or address of the emergency.
- Know what city or county you are in.
- Locate mile markers, and exit numbers on interstates, and describe major landmarks for a better location reference.
- After the call taker has obtained all information, leave your phone turned on in case you need to be contacted for further information.

**If you are ever in doubt of the situation, DO NOT HESITATE to call 9-1-1**

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# Home Fire and Life Safety Self-Inspection Program



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**Community Risk Reduction Guideline**

## Easy Steps to Completing a Home Fire Safety Inspection

Over 97% of the fire fatalities experienced in the United States occur in single-family and multi-family dwellings. Additionally, fires in these same dwellings account for over 90% of all fire related injuries. Unfortunately, the place where all these fatalities and injuries occur is the only place your local fire department cannot inspect, your home. Knowing this, Horry County Fire Rescue encourages you and your family to complete a fire safety self-inspection in your home each month, to identify and eliminate the common items which lead to fires.

- **Make the home inspection a family project and include everyone in the process.**
- **Utilize the Home Fire Safety Inspection Checklist provided by the department to complete the inspection of your home.**
- **The home inspection should be performed each month.**
- **Once deficiencies are identified, make it a priority to correct them immediately.**



### Five Quick Tips

- 1.** Schedule a fire safety inspection and include the entire family in the process
- 2.** Make corrections as soon as problems are found, and assign unresolved tasks to family members to be completed within two weeks
- 3.** Do not overlook areas such as crawl spaces, porches, attics, and garages
- 4.** Speak to your home owner's insurance agent to check for potential savings due to your safety efforts
- 5. DO NOT PROCRASTINATE**

### Simple Steps for Your Home Fire Inspection

- Be prepared with several items to assist you, including: stepladder, screwdrivers, pliers, batteries, gloves, eye protection and a monthly checklist
- Start on the lowest level of your home and work up. Finish by inspecting the outside and garage areas.
- If you can make corrections immediately, do so. If not, make notes on what will be required to make corrections, and assign the tasks to a specific family member for completion.
- If corrections are beyond your expertise, hire a professional to make them.
- Maintain all inspection records to refer to during subsequent inspections.

### Critical Tasks for Each Inspection

- Test your Smoke Alarms monthly
- Replace 9-volt batteries October
- Replace your Smoke Alarms if they are over 10-years-old
- After **DISCONNECTING THE POWER** - Remove the cover of all bathroom vent fans and dust the motor, blades, and cover.
- Change furnace filters monthly.
- Move dryer, and thoroughly clean behind and underneath. Also clean out the dryer vent pipe and exhaust plate on the outside wall.
- Remove all accumulated clutter, newspapers, clothing and trash.

**An hourly time investment each month can help protect your family each day**

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# Fire Extinguishers



Horry County Fire Rescue

Community Risk Reduction Guideline

## What Are the Different Types of Fire Extinguishers?

Fire extinguishers are used to put out fires. They are classified into four types: A, B, C, and D. Type A extinguishers are used for ordinary combustibles like paper, wood, and rubber. Type B extinguishers are used for flammable liquids like grease, oil, and gasoline. Type C extinguishers are used for electrical fires. Type D extinguishers are used for fires involving metals.



Type "A" fire extinguishers are used for ordinary combustible products such as paper, wood, rubber and many plastics.



Type "B" fire extinguishers are used for flammable liquid fires such as grease, oil, gasoline and solvents.



Type "C" fire extinguishers are used for electrical fires in wiring, fuse boxes, electrical equipment, and other devices powered by electrical current.



### Five Quick Tips

1. If there is a fire call 9-1-1.
2. Know how to use a fire extinguisher and understand the risks of fighting a fire.
3. If the fire is too large, do not attempt the use of a fire extinguisher.
4. If it is too hot, or too much smoke in the area, get out.
5. Always stay between what's on fire and your exit from the room or building.

### Proper Use of Fire Extinguishers

Get proper training on the use, care, and maintenance of your fire extinguisher.

Remember: fire extinguishers are not meant to fight a large or spreading fire.

Know the acronym **P.A.S.S.** when operating a fire extinguisher.

- **P**ull the ring pin breaking tag
- **A**im the nozzle at the base of the fire
- **S**queeze the handle
- **S**weep the nozzle from side to side at the base of the fire

**Make sure your fire extinguisher is the right type and size for the fire you are attempting to extinguish**

### Is Your Fire Extinguisher...

- Accessible and not blocked by furniture and other objects.
- Still pressurized with the gauge in the green zone.
- Nozzle clear and unobstructed.
- Pull pin and tamper seal still in place.
- Free of rust and signs of wear.
- Less than 10 years old.

**When using a fire extinguisher during a fire, always stay between the fire and your exit out of the room or building**

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**Horry County Fire Rescue**  
**Community Risk Reduction Education**  
**Home Fire and Life Safety Self-Inspection Program**  
**Additional Information - Call 843-915-5606**



**One-Hour Home Fire and Life Safety Self-Inspection**

**Check the Hazard Items in each of the Primary Areas on the first Saturday of each month – Make Corrections Immediately**

Primary Areas Checked during Self-Inspection		JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
1	The Bedrooms and Sleeping areas in the home												
2	The Kitchen/Dining Room areas in the home												
3	The Living Room/Family Room/Den areas in the home												
4	The Bathrooms/Water Closets in the home												
5	The Garage/Utility and Furnace Room/Basement in the home												
6	The Porch/Sun Rooms in the home												
7	The Exterior and Perimeter of your home												

  

Hazard Items to be Checked in all Rooms and Areas of the Home			
1	Always remain in kitchen when cooking with grease or oil	6	Candles are placed on a non-combustible surface
2	Dispose of excessive waste (clutter, trash, newspaper, boxes)	7	All dryer vents, LP Gas exhaust, exterior lights checked for bird nests
3	All combustibles are placed at least 3 feet from any heat source	8	Designated outside smoking areas with proper ash trays provided
4	Heating Systems/Fireplaces inspected before each heating season	9	Do not store or utilize Gas or Charcoal Grills on balconies
5	Extension Cords are not hidden under rugs, or used with appliances	10	Ensure all exit ways (doors and windows) open easily by everyone

  

Primary Fire Safety Equipment and Plans to Check		JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
1	All Smoke Alarms in the home are tested monthly												
2	* All Smoke Alarm batteries are changed every six months												
3	Home Escape Plan is reviewed and practiced each month												
4	** Carbon Monoxide (CO) Alarms are tested each month												
5	*** Fire Extinguishers are checked each month												
6	House Numbers visible to Emergency Responders (4 Inch Minimum)												

\* Replace Smoke Alarms which are 10-years-old with 10-year-battery Smoke Alarms, and \*\* Replace CO Alarms which are 10-years-old

\*\*\* Replace all Fire Extinguishers which are 12-years-old. We suggest a 5-Pound ABC as a minimum, placed in your home, garage, auto, boat, and RV

# Hurricane and Severe Weather Preparedness



**Horry County Fire Rescue**

**Community Risk Reduction Guideline**

## Ensure You and Your Family are Properly Prepared

Horry County is no stranger to tropical systems. Nearly every hurricane season, the county experiences direct or indirect hazards from tropical storms or hurricanes. The county's low topography and abundance of water features leave it very vulnerable to tropical systems. Make preparations for hurricane season well in advance of its official start - June 1st every year.

If a storm is forecast to hit Horry County, focus on the impacts being discussed, not just the category of the storm. The category only tells us how strong the winds are but does not provide any indication on the threats of storm surge, flooding, or tornadoes.



## Five Quick Tips

1. Register your family with the CodeRED System.
2. Know your Evacuation Zone by searching the interactive map at: [www.horrycountysc.gov](http://www.horrycountysc.gov) - Online Services - Know Your Zone.
3. Make a Family Emergency Kit to ensure you are prepared for three days of survival.
4. Monitor the local weather forecast during storm season.
5. Keep all cell phones, iPad's and computers fully charged.

## Important Numbers and Emergency Kits

- Compile a list of phone numbers of family members in your home, local family members, out-of-state family members, and physicians
- Include local neighbors and friends to the list in the event a family member cannot be contacted.
- Develop a paper copy of your contact list and provide copies to family members and friends.
- Review the information with your entire family and develop an Emergency Plan in the event of a dangerous weather event.
- Create an Emergency Kit to ensure everyone in the family (and pets) are prepared for three days (72 hours) of survival.
- Your Emergency Kit should include non-perishable food, water, cash, medicines, first aid kit, family documents, flashlights, batteries, pet food and medicines, blankets, clothing, toiletries, weather radio, and a manual can opener.

## Download the Horry County Hurricane Guide

- Locate the Hurricane Guide at [www.horrycountysc.gov](http://www.horrycountysc.gov)
- Go to **Departments**, Select **Emergency Management**, Click on the **Horry County Hurricane Guide link**.
- Review the Hurricane Guide information with your entire family. Develop and practice an Family Emergency Plan in the event of a dangerous weather event.
- Update and practice the Family Emergency Plan every year.

**Register your family for the CodeRED Alerting System.**  
**Access at:**  
**[www.horrycountysc.gov](http://www.horrycountysc.gov)**  
**SEARCH: CodeRED**

**"Everyday is a Great Day to prepare your family for Severe Weather"**

**Additional Information:** [www.horrycountysc.gov/departments/emergency-management](http://www.horrycountysc.gov/departments/emergency-management)  
**X (Twitter):** @horryEMD **Facebook:** Horry County Emergency Management **Office:** 843-915-5150