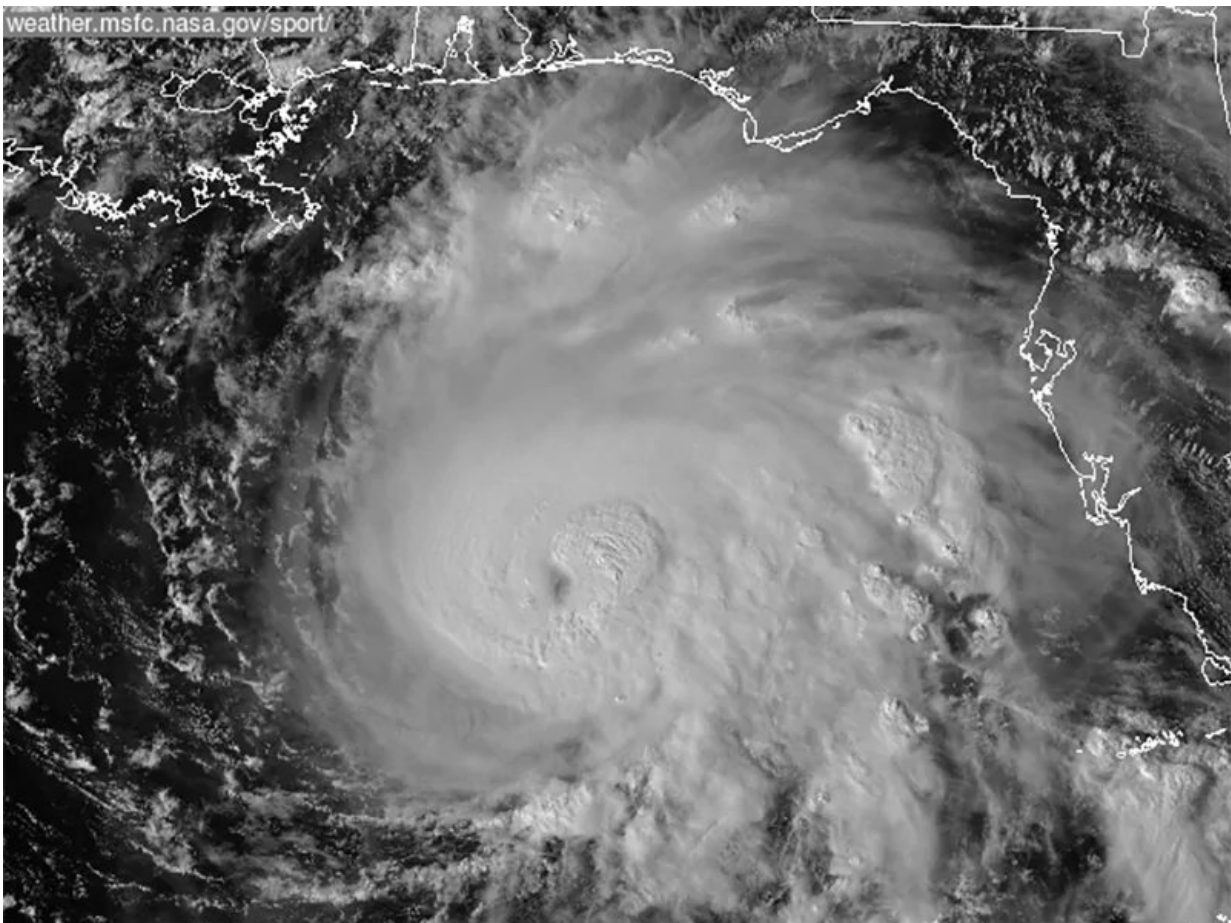


# As Hurricane Michael hits Florida, experts urge safety

October 11 2018

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Hurricane Michael. Photo: NASA

(HealthDay)—As category 4 Hurricane Michael slammed into northern

Florida on Wednesday, the National Safety Council offered residents steps to stay safe.

First, the council urges those in the storm's path to monitor its progress and heed government warnings.

It's vital to take a look at safety procedures you'll need during any [severe weather](#). Families should have [emergency](#) plans and a safety kit handy.

In 2017, nearly 60,000 weather events caused almost 600 deaths and more than 4,200 injuries, the council said. Most of the deaths were due to flash floods, tropical storms and heat waves.

The council urges everyone to keep an emergency kit at home and in the car. Kits should have basic needs to sustain a [family](#) for at least 72 hours.

Your emergency plan should include several methods of evacuation and identify places to shelter. You should also make emergency contact lists in case families get separated. And learn how your town alerts residents when severe weather or a natural disaster is near.

Tips for staying safe in hurricanes include:

- Board up windows and tie down loose items like patio furniture.
- Establish a point for family members to meet if separated, and pick one person everyone can contact.
- Shelter in sturdy buildings. Avoid isolated sheds or other small structures, open areas, hilltops, the beach and boats.
- If you are driving in heavy rain, try to exit the road, stay in the car and turn on the emergency flashers.
- Don't drive into flooded areas. If flood waters surround your car, leave the car and go to higher ground.
- Avoid touching electrical equipment, cords, metal and water.

- Listen for sirens, stay away from windows and outside doors, and seek shelter in a bathroom or basement.
- Stay indoors until you're told it's safe to go outside.

Tips for flash floods include:

- Know your distance to rivers, streams and dams.
- In heavy rain, stay away from underpasses, underground parking garages and basements.
- Never walk in water above your ankles—you could be swept off your feet in as little as 6 inches of rushing [water](#).
- Shut off the electricity and other utilities.

**More information:** SOURCE: National Safety Council, press release

Visit the American Red Cross for more on [hurricane safety](#).

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Citation: As Hurricane Michael hits Florida, experts urge safety (2018, October 11) retrieved 25 June 2024 from

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