

Prepare Your Insurance Coverage for Hurricane Season

The 2011 hurricane season is now well underway but many homeowners may find themselves still unprepared for flood damage often associated with severe weather systems.

Homeowners' policies typically provide protection against water damage resulting from rain entering the residence from a leak in the roof or window caused by wind damage from a storm. Damage from a water surge created by a hurricane, however, is not covered.

"From developing an evacuation plan to assembling an adequate disaster supply kit, there are numerous essential steps to prepare before a hurricane hits including checking your insurance policy," said Patty Mulvania, director of Flood Operations for [Assurant Specialty Property](#). "Floods are the most common natural disaster in the United States. This risk is greatest for the ten million U.S. homes located in designated as Special Flood Hazard Areas. Unfortunately, many are uninsured for such a catastrophe."



Property owners need to know what their insurance policy covers in advance of a storm hitting. Key questions to ask include: Does the coverage protect against wind and/or flood damage? Does it cover the current value of the property and its content? Does the policy cover any upgrades made to the property or expensive contents?

Some other key facts to know about flood insurance include:

- Federally regulated and federally insured mortgage lenders require flood insurance when obtaining a loan to buy, build or improve structures that are located in Special Flood Hazard Areas (those with the greatest risk).
- There is a 30-day waiting period before purchased flood coverage becomes effective, so plan ahead.
- Homeowners with property in high-risk flood areas are eligible for federal flood insurance protection if their community participates in the National Flood Insurance Program.
- Flood insurance is available for homes, condominiums, apartments, commercial structures and manufactured mobile homes.
- Ask a sales agent what the policy and does not cover. For example, does it adequately cover both the structural building as well as the contents of the property. Will it provide for temporary living expenses if required?

Learn more about Assurant Specialty Property flood insurance [online](#).

For more information on how to prepare for a hurricane event please go to http://www.nhc.noaa.gov/outreach/prepared_week.shtml.