



HURRICANE EVENT FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. What is the latest information on the hurricane and when is it supposed to hit Wrightsville Beach?

Stay informed by tuning in to your local media outlets via television, radio, and internet or check online weather websites such as the [National Weather Service](#) or the [Weather Channel](#) for the latest storm predictions and other pertinent information. The Town of Wrightsville Beach notifies local media outlets of any Town evacuation decisions and any other important information that may affect the public before, during, and after a storm. The Town also includes up-to-date information on its website, Facebook page, and emails information to those residents who provide us with their email address. [You may click here to add your email address to our distribution list.](#)

2. What does a State of Emergency mean? Does this mean we must evacuate?

A State of Emergency is declared to initiate state and/or federal funding and assistance when weather-related or other events have the potential to cause significant damage to an area. It does not mean that an order of evacuation or curfew has been instituted. A separate evacuation order may be issued following a State of Emergency declaration.

3. When is the drawbridge closing?

Once a mandatory evacuation has been ordered, the bridge remains in the down position, barricades are put into place, and traffic onto Wrightsville Beach is suspended by local law enforcement. Without a mandatory evacuation order, the US Coast Guard and the Bridge Tender will make the decision to lock the bridge in the down position when sustained winds reach 30 – 40 mph, suspending marine traffic only.

4. What is the criteria for an evacuation?

Evacuation recommendations are based on a variety of factors including hurricane conditions, predicted rainfall amounts, storm surge, and other potentially damaging effects that the hurricane could have on the Town of Wrightsville Beach. An order to evacuate is determined by the Town of Wrightsville Beach Board of Aldermen.

5. Who must evacuate?

Voluntary evacuation: A voluntary evacuation indicates that conditions are likely to deteriorate and you may want to seek alternative shelter.

Mandatory visitor evacuation: A mandatory visitor evacuation indicates that all non-residents must evacuate the Town of Wrightsville Beach and will not be allowed to return until the evacuation order is lifted.

Mandatory evacuation: A mandatory evacuation indicates that all persons must evacuate the Town of Wrightsville Beach. Emergency services may be suspended when conditions are too dangerous to respond. Electricity and water/sewer services may not be available due to storm-related outages.

What happens if someone chooses not to leave during a mandatory evacuation? Can they be arrested or forced to leave?

YES, North Carolina General Statute 14-288.20A makes it a Class 2 misdemeanor to violate any provision of an ordinance or a declaration enacted or declared by a municipality in an effort to deal with a State of Emergency. Under N.C.G.S. 166A-19.31, a municipality has the authority to place restrictions, curfews, or make evacuation orders in a state of emergency. It is unlawful to violate those restrictions or orders. Mandatory evacuation orders are initiated in order to help prevent injury or loss of life.

6. If I have to go to work or leave the island, how will I return to gather my belongings if a mandatory evacuation is ordered while I'm away?

The Town of Wrightsville Beach will make an announcement prior to enforcement of a mandatory evacuation that will allow residents enough time to comply with the evacuation order. Traffic checkpoints will be established when an evacuation order is given. Therefore, residents should have their vehicle tax decal affixed to their car in order to return to the Town of Wrightsville Beach prior to evacuating.

7. When and where should I purchase my [Wrightsville Beach Vehicle Tax Decal](#)?

Vehicle tax decals are also used for resident identification upon re-entry to the Town of Wrightsville Beach following an evacuation and may be purchased at the Lanier Parking office located at 321 Causeway Drive during regular office hours. The decals should be purchased annually on or before the first day of April. Sale of the vehicle tax decals will cease under hurricane warning conditions.

What identification do I need to show to purchase by vehicle tax decal?

A driver's license or other valid picture ID, plus an additional item such as a water bill, or other billing statement reflecting your name and Wrightsville Beach address is required when purchasing your vehicle tax decal.

Can you mail the vehicle tax decal to me?

Vehicle tax decals MUST be purchased in person from the Lanier Parking office anytime throughout the year during regular business hours. Tax decals will NOT be mailed.

Can I buy my vehicle tax decals online?

Not at this time.

8. Are you going to shut off electricity and/or water on the island? If so, when?

Once the Town has suspended operations during a mandatory evacuation, Town of Wrightsville Beach water and sewer services may be interrupted due to weather related damage or power outages. Electricity, provided by Duke Energy, may also be interrupted due to weather conditions.

9. Can I get a storm drain cleaned out before the storm gets here?

Storm drains are continually monitored before, during, and after all storm events.

10. Why is my street flooding?

During a storm event or an excessive high tide event, the storm drain fallout pipes are submerged underwater and will not drain until the tide recedes.

11. Is the water safe to drink and/or bathe in?

After an event, residents will not be permitted to occupy their homes until the water system has been deemed safe and the sewer system is operable.

12. Will the Town pick up loose refuse for disposal (yard waste, limbs, furniture, etc.) right before the storm?

As manpower allows, Public Works will send sanitation trucks to collect refuse. However, any loose objects should be secured prior to the storm's arrival in case conditions prevent collection.

13. When will hurricane debris be picked up? Will there be a fee?

The normal debris pick-up procedures are in effect unless Town of Wrightsville Beach officials determine that a free pick up will be offered. Instructions on what type of debris will be picked up and the schedule for that pick-up will be determined following the event. Free debris pick-up for vegetative debris, household waste, white goods, and e-waste is only for storm-related debris that is located on your property.