

APPENDIX G: HURRICANE PREPAREDNESS AND ELECTRICITY/WATER OUTAGES



Hurricane season is from June 30th to Nov 30th, though typically there are more hurricanes in late August to mid October. Hurricanes are classified from Category 1 to Category 5, with Category 5 being the strongest of the hurricanes. Prior to developing into a hurricane it is called a Tropical Storm (formed from a tropical depression). Typically warm water helps fuel a hurricane, while land masses or cold waters weaken a hurricane. Their movements are tracked and guesstimates of where they may go are forecasted. These forecasts are a bit of science with lots of unknown factors so the hurricane forecasts are typically very generic and broad. We cannot provide refunds due to tropical depressions (this is basically thunderstorms and rainy weather). Airlines may delay flights in this type of weather so we highly recommend buying travel insurance (we sell trip cancellation options directly via our site). If there is a FEMA evacuation order in San Juan and you have not been able to arrive (due to flight cancellations or other reasons) we can rebook you. For refunds, you would need to purchase the trip cancellation insurance via our site ahead of time.

PERSONAL HURRICANE PREPARATIONS

Most people wait to the last minute to prepare for a hurricane. While this works for college term papers, this does not hold true for hurricane preparation. If there is a true hurricane, most other people will have also waited. Lines for gas, food, ATM, water, etc will be long and supplies short. Do not wait to the last minute. Preparation is easy and takes about an hour.

- 1) If you have a rental car, make sure to fill up your tank. When it gets half full, fill it again. Do not let it be empty. Gas delivery may be disrupted for a few days.
- 2) Go to the grocery store. Make a list for 2 days of shopping. Think of things that do not necessarily need to be refrigerated. Things that are frozen solid are ok as your refrigerator/freezer will stay cold for about a day (if you avoid opening it except when necessary). So limited frozen meat, shrimps, etc is fine. Realize that this must be consumed fairly quickly after being defrosted. Some good staples: Dried pasta, tomato sauce, things to bake chocolate chip cookies (butter will be fine for a day), oatmeal, pancake ingredients, eggs (these are fine kept at room temperature), some harder cheese such as parmesan, dried sausage, and of course your favorite drinks. Yes, bottled water as well but take the occasion to get a nice bottle of rum, wine or beers. A hurricane is a bonding experience. Make sure to download your recipes now, as when the wind gets strong, we will likely lose Internet during the storm.
- 3) Take cash out at the ATM – the maximum that you can. It is likely that only cash will be accepted post-hurricane since the wifi-connections to charge credit cards will likely not be working. Take cash early as banks/ATMs will run out of money.
- 4) While at the store, think of buying an extra battery for your phone, a flashlight & extra batteries. We have these items but its best to have extra.
- 5) Our home is rock solid block concrete, rebar with poured concrete. We have already withstood a direct Category 5 hurricane with only superficial damages (the awnings were destroyed and some doors had damages). Our property is also above the flood areas that surround us. Your unit will be fine. Close your windows. Put your valuables in plastic and place in a higher area. Check in with our on-site manager and let them know your plans during the hurricane. They will check on you when the hurricane has passed. Stay in doors, and ideally in a room with fewer windows. The most injuries occur during a hurricane from flying objects hitting into people. Stay in doors and you will not have to worry about this. Our windows are hurricane safe glass (like a car's glass) and will not pose a threat to you.

- 6) A hurricane is made of an eye (with no wind and clear skies) surrounded by bands of strong winds going in circular patterns. If the eye of the hurricane misses you, then you will only feel an unending deluge of rain and strong winds. If the eye does go over you, then suddenly things will become very calm. This will not last as the other side of the hurricane will be passing you. Do not leave the house if things suddenly become calm. The winds will restart at the same high intensity as they left. The entire storm passing could take several hours.
- 7) The most people are injured AFTER a hurricane has passed. This is due to electric lines, broken glass, trees, and other objects in the street. BE VERY CAREFUL after a hurricane and dress appropriately. No flip-flops. Wear full shoes and jeans and explore only if you need to. Check in with our on-site manager.
- 8) Monitor the storm via local news stations or www.weatherpr.com

COQUI DEL MAR PREPARATIONS

Everything outside can become a flying object. This leads to both destruction and danger. Its best to not leave anything (unless it is extremely heavy) outside. For example, we leave our Jacuzzi full of water but we store the lid (which could take flight and cause damages to other buildings). Chairs, snorkel gear, umbrellas, etc must all be brought inside.

Electricity and water frequently are cut off or power lines knocked down, even during tropical depressions. This can cause power loss of anywhere from a few hours to, in the worst cases, possibly days. We have a whole house generator so this should not be a problem (there may be a few minutes delay while electricity is restored).

GENERATOR:

We have a whole house generator. However, this does have limits and if overburdened, will shut down. Use the electricity that you need. Turn off AC when out of the house.

LANTERNS:

Every apartment has a battery-powered lantern. We have spare batteries.

EXTRA WATER:

We have storage tanks on our roof with 1800 gallons of water. Since the typical person uses 100 gallons of water per day, and we may have as many as 30 people at our property, this translates into less than 1 full day of available water. If each person conserves water, especially with showers, this could easily be stretched to 2 days. As San Juan is the capitol, there has never been an instance with 2 days of no water (even if it has to be shipped in via trucks). Even so, please conserve water as much as possible during a hurricane. Do not flush the toilet for urine (use the "when its brown, flush it down" motto. Take minimal showers of 2-3 minutes. We also have 50 gallons of rainwater that can be accessed for flushing toilets if needed, as well as the 400-gallon Jacuzzi. Our water filter in La Hacienda will provide purified water. Even so, you may wish to buy 2 gallons of water per person in case there is any problem.

GAS STOVES:

Our stoves are gas, with gas lines internal to our property. These will work even in the worst hurricanes, even without electricity. When the gas turns off, it is likely because one tank is empty. Inform our on-site manager. He will switch the tanks (there are two) and order another tank to replace the empty one.

REFRIGERATOR/FREEZER/ICE COOLER:

Your freezer is your best way to keep things cool, even after electricity has shut down. DO NOT OPEN IT as every time you do the cold air escapes. A full freezer will stay cold longer than a half full freezer. Change your refrigerator temperature to the warmest level possible once power is lost, as the cold air is being robbed from your freezer to keep the refrigerator cool. With our generator, your refrigerator should not have a problem.

INTERNET:

Our whole house generator will power our Internet. Unknown is whether the local service will be on-line.

AIRTRAVEL:

Airlines may cancel or delay flights. Keep in touch with your airline. If you are cancelled we will do our best to accommodate you longer in our guesthouse (just let us know as soon as possible what your needs are).