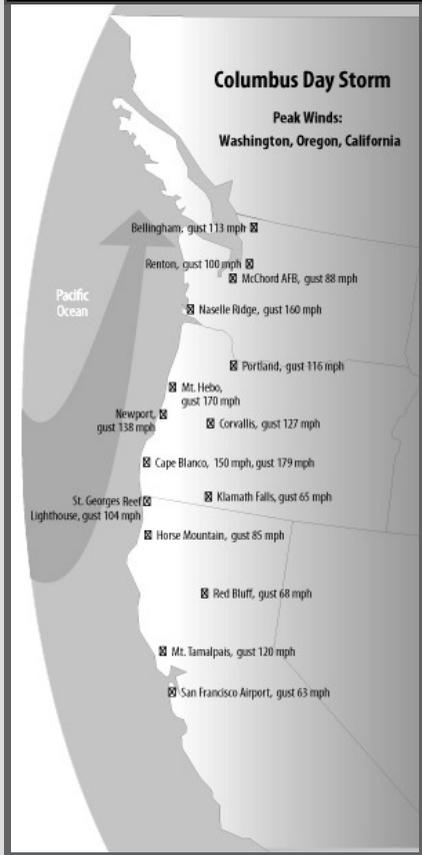


WASHINGTON STATE IS AT RISK FROM WINDSTORMS

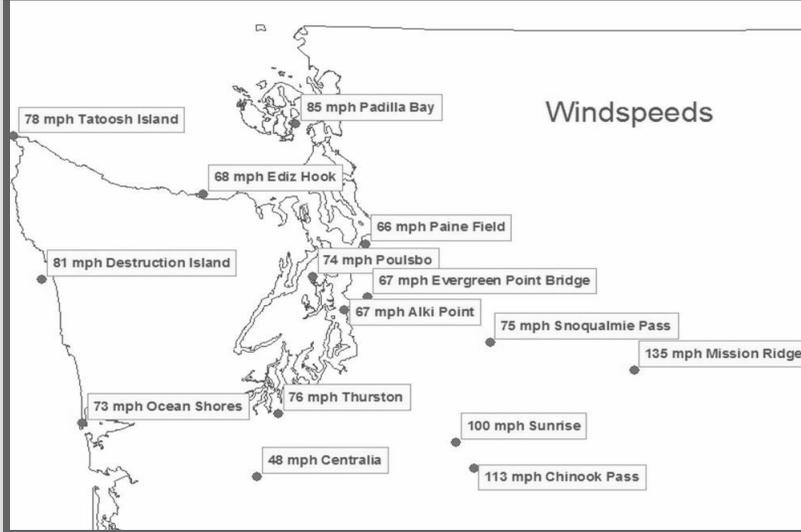
Although the Pacific Northwest escapes the threat of hurricanes, the region is no stranger to strong, damaging winds. Each fall and winter season, several Pacific low pressure systems impact the Pacific Northwest, producing strong winds to 60 mph and causing some power outages and property damage. About once every decade, storms with powerful winds of 70 mph or more pound the region, producing widespread power outages and significant property damage.

Columbus Day Windstorm (1962) Population: 3 million



On **Columbus Day**, October 12, 1962, the strongest non-tropical windstorm ever to hit the lower 48 states in recorded American history struck the Pacific coast, with sustained wind speeds of 150 mph and gusts to 179 mph. The storm claimed 46 lives (7 in Washington State), injured hundreds more, and knocked power out for several million people. Fifty thousand (50,000) homes suffered more than \$235 million dollars. The Columbus Day Storm is considered the benchmark of all windstorms, against which all others are compared.

Hanukkah Windstorm (2006) Population: 6 million



The **Hanukkah Eve Wind Storm of 2006** was a powerful Pacific storm that slammed into the Pacific Northwest region of the United States and southern British Columbia, Canada between December 14, 2006 and December 15, 2006. The storm produced storm to hurricane-force wind gusts and heavy rainfall, causing hundreds of millions of dollars in damage and leaving over 1.8 million residences and businesses without power. Eighteen (18) people were killed and 300 people were treated for carbon monoxide poisoning; most due to the improper use of charcoal grills, barbecue cookers, and generators.

WINDSTORMS

In Washington State



1962 Columbus Day Windstorm



2006 Hanukkah Windstorm



This brochure provides safety tips to help your household prepare for windstorms. By taking action now, you can save lives and reduce the damage caused by windstorms and other weather-related hazards.



www.emd.wa.gov

October 2012

What to do BEFORE

Preparedness Actions:

- Contact your local Emergency Management Office or the National Weather Service to find out what types of storms are most likely to occur in your area.
- Find out who in your area might need special assistance, specially the elderly, disabled, or non-English speaking neighbors. (use the Map Your Neighborhood program)
- Know what emergency plans are in place at your workplace, school, and daycare center.
- Check with your veterinarian for animal care instructions in an emergency situation.
- Conduct a home safety evaluation to find out which areas of you home may need to be repaired.
- Identify nearby trees that might fall in a windstorm. If possible, take action to remove them.
- If you have an electric garage door opener, locate the manual override.
- Know the locations of local bus/transit stations.
- Be familiar with evacuation routes.
- Always keep your vehicle gas tank 1/2 full.
- Purchase a generator and learn how to use it properly.
- Purchase a NOAA weather radio (battery/crank).
- Assemble a disaster supply kit (see below).

Disaster Supply Kit (3-day minimum)

- Store one gallon of water per person per day, bleach for purifying
- Store non-perishable food for each person per day
- Medications / first aid supplies
- Flashlight / lanterns / extra batteries / light sticks
- Toiletries (including toilet paper, feminine supplies, soap, personal hygiene supplies, etc.)
- Important documents (wills, insurance papers, etc.)
- Money, including change
- Multi-purpose tools, garbage & zip lock bags
- NOAA Weather radio (battery/crank) / extra batteries
- Special needs (elderly, baby, pets)
- Extra clothes / shoes / blankets
- Corded phone / cell phone with car charger
- Keep an extra supply of gas for your vehicle and generator.

What to do DURING

Weathering the storm:

- If you are indoors move to lower floors and away from windows that could shatter and objects that could fall.
- If you are outdoors, move indoor; avoid downed electric power lines, utility poles, and trees.
- If you are driving pull off the road and stop away from trees. If possible walk into a safe building. Avoid overpasses, power lines, and other hazards.
- If a power line touches your vehicle - stay inside, warn others to stay away, call 9-1-1 and wait until help arrives.
- Listen to your NOAA weather radio for instructions.

If the power goes out:

- Turn off the stove if you are cooking.
- Turn off natural gas and other appliances, leave one light on so you will know when the power is restored.
- Never bring in a gas stove to heat your home.
- Never use a propane or charcoal grill for heating your home or for cooking indoors.
- Never use a generator indoors or in a garage or carport.
- If you are indoors move to lower floors and away from windows

FACTS ABOUT WINDSTORMS



Power pole and line damage cause widespread power outages.



Improper use of generators and propane/charcoal grills cause carbon monoxide poisoning and is a leading cause in windstorm-related illness and fatalities.



Falling trees and blowing debris can cause severe damage to buildings and vehicles and may also cause injuries and fatalities.



Office buildings are generally structurally sound, but light metal building and structures such as bus stop shelters, where people might seek shelter, are vulnerable and could collapse, resulting in significant injuries and fatalities.



Garage doors are the weakest link in the outer structure of a house. Failure at this point has a domino effect.



Exterior load-bearing walls of buildings can fail resulting in the collapse of the roof. Failure of roof cover and structures can lead to additional damage and entry of wind and rain into the house.



Weathered, loose window frames are exceptionally vulnerable during severe windstorms. Shattered windows can cause injuries and lead to extensive wind and water damage.

What to do AFTER

When the storm stops:

- Check yourself and those around you for injuries.
- Call 9-1-1 only to report a life threatening emergency.
- Evaluate building damage and determine if evacuation is necessary. *It may be safer and warmer inside the building.* If you must evacuate **do not** re-enter until declared safe by authorities.
- Shut off the gas/propane **only** if you smell gas (usually smells like rotten eggs), hear a hissing sound, and/or the meter dials are spinning more rapidly than normal.
- Do not use matches, candles, open flames, or electric switches indoors.
- Provide assistance to your neighbors, especially the elderly or disabled. (use the Map Your Neighborhood program)
- Try to make contact with your out-of-area phone contact, but do not make local telephone calls.
- Listen to your NOAA weather radio for instructions. *Messages will include evacuation instructions, location of emergency shelters, medical aid stations, extent of damage, and other information.*

If the power is out:

- * Never use a propane or charcoal grill for heating your home or for cooking indoors.
- * Never use a generator indoors or in a garage/carport.
- * Keep refrigerator and freezer doors closed to keep food cold/frozen for up to two days.

For additional information visit these websites:

- *Washington State Emergency Management:*
www.emd.wa.gov
- *Federal Emergency Management Agency:*
www.fema.gov
- *National Weather Service:*
www.weather.gov
- *Take Winter by Storm:*
www.takewinterbystorm.org
- *School Closures & Notifications:*
www.k12.wa.us