

# Cyclone: Do's & Dont's

## **Before the Cyclone season:**

- Check the house; secure loose tiles and carry out repairs of doors and windows
- Remove dead branches or dying trees close to the house; anchor removable objects such as lumber piles, loose tin sheets, loose bricks, garbage cans, sign-boards etc. which can fly in strong winds
- Keep some wooden boards ready so that glass windows can be boarded if needed
- Keep a hurricane lantern filled with kerosene, battery operated torches and enough dry cells
- Demolish condemned buildings
- Keep some extra batteries for transistors
- Keep some dry non-perishable food always ready for use in emergency

## **Necessary actions**

The actions that need to be taken in the event of a cyclone threat can broadly be divided into :

- Immediately before the cyclone season
- When cyclone alerts and warnings are communicated
- When evacuations are advised
- When the cyclone has crossed the coast

## **When the Cyclone starts**

- Listen to the radio (All India Radio stations give weather warnings).
- Keep monitoring the warnings. This will help you prepare for a cyclone emergency.
- Pass the information to others.
- Ignore rumours and do not spread them; this will help to avoid panic situations.
- Believe in the official information
- When a cyclone alert is on for your area continue normal working but stay alert to the radio warnings.
- Stay alert for the next 24 hours as a cyclone alert means that the danger is within 24 hours.

## **When your area is under cyclone warning get away from low-lying beaches or other low-lying areas close to the coast**

- Leave early before your way to high ground or shelter gets flooded
- Do not delay and run the risk of being marooned
- If your house is securely built on high ground take shelter in the safe part of the house. However, if asked to evacuate do not hesitate to leave the place.
- Board up glass windows or put storm shutters in place.
- Provide strong suitable support for outside doors.
- If you do not have wooden boards handy, paste paper strips on glasses to prevent splinters. However, this may not avoid breaking windows.

- Get extra food, which can be eaten without cooking. Store extra drinking water in suitably covered vessels.
- If you have to evacuate the house move your valuable articles to upper floors to minimize flood damage.
- Ensure that your hurricane lantern, torches or other emergency lights are in working condition and keep them handy.
- Small and loose things, which can fly in strong winds, should be stored safely in a room.
- Be sure that a window and door can be opened only on the side opposite to the one facing the wind.
- Make provision for children and adults requiring special diet.
- If the centre of the cyclone is passing directly over your house there will be a lull in the wind and rain lasting for half an hour or so. During this time do not go out; because immediately after that, very strong winds will blow from the opposite direction.
- Switch off the electrical mains in your house.
- Remain calm.

#### **During a cyclone**

DO NOT venture out even when the winds appear to calm down. The 'eye' of the cyclone might be passing. Winds might intensify and gush again and cause damage. Be safe inside till it is officially announced that the cyclone has passed.

#### **When Evacuation is instructed**

- Pack essentials for yourself and your family to last a few days. These should include medicines, special food for babies and children or elders.
- Head for the proper shelter or evacuation points indicated for your area.
- Do not worry about your property
- At the shelter follow instructions of the person in charge.
- Remain in the shelter until you are informed to leave

#### **Post-cyclone measures**

- You should remain in the shelter until informed that you can return to your home.
- You must get inoculated against diseases immediately.
- Strictly avoid any loose and dangling wires from lamp posts.
- If you have to drive, do drive carefully.
- Clear debris from your premises immediately.
- Report the correct losses to appropriate authorities.