



Virginia Department of Emergency Management

News Release

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FOR RELEASE AT WILL

Virginians need to prepare for Hurricane Irene

RICHMOND, VA – Virginians need to prepare now for Hurricane Irene, which is forecasted to be a Category 2 hurricane as it passes near the Virginia coast on Saturday and Sunday. Irene has the potential to bring flooding to the eastern part of the state; winds could reach at least 39 mph west of Interstate 95 and up to 95 mph in the Hampton Roads area.

“Irene’s path is not certain, and a small change in the track could bring different impacts,” said Michael Cline, state coordinator for the Virginia Department of Emergency Management. “Virginia state agencies are getting ready for the storm, and so should residents.”

It is important for Virginians, especially those living in the Hampton Roads region, to pay close attention to the storm, find out if they are at risk for storm surge and review their evacuation, shelter and pet plans.

- Irene is a large, wide storm, and residents should pay attention to the extent of the storm, not the path or location of the eye.
- There are no evacuation orders in effect for any part of Virginia, and there are no plans for a regional evacuation. Localized evacuations could be ordered for low-lying areas.
- Local governments will open shelters if they are needed and in areas that are safe for residents. If shelters are opened, local governments will announce their locations.
- Residents should listen to their local media and local officials for instructions.

A series of videos are available online to help families understand storm surge (the reason for evacuations). The videos are available at <http://www.youtube.com/vaemergency>. A list of needed emergency supplies and maps of storm surge areas and evacuation routes can be found at <http://www.vaemergency.gov/>.