

# Georgia Emergency Management Agency



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## NEWS RELEASE

### Coastal Residents Urged to Prepare Now As Tropical Storm Ernesto Approaches

**(ATLANTA)** -- The Georgia Emergency Management Agency (GEMA) encourages residents to make storm preparations in anticipation of Tropical Storm Ernesto as it continues to closely monitor the storm.

At 5:00 p.m. today Ernesto's center was located about 105 miles south of Miami, Florida, and moving northwest at 13 miles per hour. On this track the center of Ernesto will be near the Florida Keys and extreme southeast Florida tonight.

A tropical storm warning has been extended northward along the U.S. East Coast from north of New Smyrna Beach, Florida, to Altamaha Sound in Georgia, which includes Camden and Glynn counties.

A hurricane watch has been extended northward from north of Altamaha Sound in Georgia to Cape Fear, North Carolina.

Although it is too soon to tell what the impact on Georgia will be, it is never too early to prepare.

"Whether you're along the coast or inland, it is critical to heed local warnings and take preparedness steps now," says GEMA Director Charley English. "Even if the storm does not make landfall in Georgia, there is always the possibility of localized flooding, downed trees and power lines, and power outages."

As a reminder, it is always wise to be personally prepared for any event including tropical storms. The following are items that should be a part of everyone's disaster supplies kit:

- Enough water and non-perishable food per person to last for at least three days and special items for infants, the infirmed and the elderly. Don't forget to include pets in your preparations.
- First aid kit and essential medications.
- Protective clothing, rainwear and bedding or sleeping bags.
- Battery-powered radio, flashlight and extra batteries.
- An extra set of car keys and cash and a credit card.

Create your family evacuation plan:

- Choose a place where your family will meet if they can't return home when disaster strikes.
- Designate an out-of-town relative or friend as a point of contact.
- Become familiar with evacuation routes, and know where you will go if ordered to leave. Keep a road map in your car: You may need to take an unfamiliar route if major roads are closed or clogged **(more on next page)**.

- Remember to take your disaster supplies kit with you when evacuating.
- If you live in a flood-prone or coastal area, be prepared to evacuate early.
- If the forecast and local authorities advise you to prepare for high winds, then do the following things:
  - Prepare to bring inside any outdoor furniture, decorations or ornaments, trash cans, hanging plants, and anything else that can be picked up by the wind.
  - Fill your car's gas tank.
  - Recheck manufactured home tie-downs.
  - Make trees more wind resistant by trimming diseased and damaged limbs, then strategically removing branches so that wind can blow through.
- Stay tuned to television, radio and National Oceanic Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Weather Radio for the latest storm information.

Residents in coastal Georgia counties should:

- Listen to the advice of local officials and follow those instructions.
- If you are not advised to evacuate, stay indoors, away from windows.
- Always be alert for tornadoes. Tornadoes can happen during strong thunderstorms. Remain indoors, in the center of your home, in a room without windows.
- Stay away from floodwaters. If you come upon a flooded road, turn around and go another way. If you are caught on a flooded road and waters are rising rapidly around you, get out of the car and climb to higher ground.

The mission of GEMA is to provide a comprehensive and aggressive all-hazards approach to homeland security initiatives, mitigation, preparedness, response, recovery and special events. For information on preparedness and response activities, visit GEMA's Web site at [www.gema.state.ga.us](http://www.gema.state.ga.us) or [www.georgia911.org](http://www.georgia911.org).

In the event of an evacuation, please tune to your local public radio station for important evacuation information. A list of public radio stations in your area also can be found at [www.gema.state.ga.us](http://www.gema.state.ga.us).

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