



CYCLONE SAFETY TIPS



Tropical cyclones are a little unusual experience for Sri Lankans. We have been lucky not to feel the bitter taste of the rudeness of a tropical cyclone during the last 42 years. Many cyclones, though formed very close to us, left the island without causing its direct impact.

However, with the changing trends of climate, there could be such scenarios on our land as well. So, it is always good to be aware of a few points on safety against a cyclone; especially November and December of each year as it is the typical cyclone season of the Bay of Bengal.

And amidst the COVID-19 pandemic, it's crucial to take precaution now more than ever before!

BE READY

There are many things which we can replace as life goes on but for the immediate revival of our lives after a disaster, we must have the essential items with us. It is, therefore, crucial to have an evacuation kit and emergency bag ready:

Evacuation kit:

- Essential clothes and medications
- Few packets of biscuits
- Tissue and towels
- Mineral water bottles
- Face masks and hand sanitizers

Emergency bag:

- Family records (Birth, Marriage, Death certificates)
- NIC, passports and immunization records
- Bank cards, pass books, account details
- Important computer data (Passwords etc.)
- Copy of Will, insurance policies, contracts, deeds, etc.
- Inventory of household goods
- Keep your emergency lamps, cellular phones, battery backups always charged

LISTEN TO COMMUNIQUES

- Listen to the radio
- Watch news and news alerts
- Be alert on announcements by DMC and MET department

EVACUATION

The authorities may announce to evacuate:

- If the Cyclone threat is high
- Due to storm surge risk
- High flood risk



WHEN A CYCLONE WARNING IS ISSUED

- If requested by local authorities, collect children from school or childcare centre and go home (if only schools are open).
- **Park vehicles under solid shelter (hand brake on and in gear).**
- Put wooden or plastic outdoor furniture in your storeroom or pool and tie with other items to make it heavier.
- **Close windows, board-up, or heavily tape all windows, so they do not open.**
- Store small items in large heavy lockable cupboards.
- **Keep your evacuation kit and emergency bag ready.**
- Remain indoors (with your pets). Stay tuned to local news via a battery operated/mobile radio for further information.



IF WARNED TO EVACUATE

- Wear strong shoes and tough clothing for protection.
- Lock doors; turn off power, gas, and water; take your evacuation kit and emergency bag.
- If evacuating inland (out of city), take pets and leave early to avoid heavy traffic, flooding and wind hazards.
- If evacuating to a public shelter or higher location, follow police or other Emergency Services instructions.
- If going to a public shelter, take bedding needs and books or games for children.

WHEN CYCLONE STRIKES

- Disconnect all electrical appliances. Listen to your battery radio for updates.
- **Stay inside and shelter (well clear of windows) in the most stable parts of the building (e.g. cellar, internal hallway or bathroom).**
- Keep your evacuation kit and emergency bag with you.
- **If the building starts to break, protect yourself with mattresses, rugs or pillows, under a strong table or bench or hold onto a solid fixture.**
- Beware of the calm 'eye'. If the wind drops, don't assume the cyclone is over; violent winds will soon resume from another direction. Wait for the official 'all clear'.
- **If driving, stop (handbrake on and in gear) – but well away from the sea and clear of trees, power lines and streams. Stay in the vehicle.**



AFTER THE CYCLONE

- Don't go outside until officially advised it is safe.
- Check for gas leaks. Don't use electric appliances if wet.
- Listen to local radio for official warnings and advice.
- If you have to evacuate, or did so earlier, don't return until advised. Use a recommended route and don't rush.
- Beware of damaged power lines, bridges, buildings, trees, and don't enter floodwaters.
- Heed all warnings and don't go sightseeing. Check/help neighbors instead.



Disclaimer: The guidelines outlined in this document are to safeguard you and your loved ones from a Cyclone. We advise you to seek professional guidance if you wish to clarify any section on this document or if you feel the need to take any action based on this document.

This document has been developed based on the information published in www.jcu.edu.au and US Government - National Weather Service website.