



South Carolina Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation

Division of Fire and Life Safety

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For Immediate Release:

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State Fire Marshal: Be Prepared and Fire Safe as Hurricane/Tropical Storm Ian Moves Toward SC

State Fire Marshal Jonathan Jones is urging citizens to make necessary preparations and to be fire safe as the winds and rain from Ian make their way to South Carolina

“The first priority is to be prepared, which includes having a basic disaster supply kit,” Jones said. “This kit should include bottled water (one gallon per person per day for three days), a three-day supply of food with a manual can opener, a battery-operated portable radio, first aid kit, flashlight, an extra set of batteries, and a fire extinguisher. Keep the kit in a designated location after it has been assembled.”

During a hurricane or tropical storm, there is an anticipated loss of power. It is important to remember that candles and portable generators can pose additional hazards.

“Instead of candles, use flame-free emergency lighting,” he said. “It is safer to use a flashlight, battery-powered tea lights, or the light on your cell phone than a candle. If you must use candles for any reason, avoid carrying them from one room to the next.”

South Carolinians can reduce their risks of becoming a fire casualty by identifying potential hazards and following these additional safety tips:

Candle Safety

- Use a sturdy candleholder and place it on an uncluttered surface.
- Carefully light candles. Keep your hair and any loose clothing away from the flame.
- Don't let a candle burn all the way out — extinguish it out before it gets too close to the holder or container.
- Never use a candle if oxygen is used in the home.
- Never leave a burning candle unattended. When you leave a room, extinguish it.

Portable Generator Safety

- Use a generator outdoors in a well-ventilated area away from doors, windows, and vent openings.
- Position generators so that exhaust fumes do not enter the home via windows, doors, or other openings.
- Never use a generator in an attached garage, even if the door is open.
- Never refuel a generator while it is running. Before refueling, turn off generators and allow them to cool down.
- Install carbon monoxide (CO) alarms in your home. Follow the manufacturer's instructions.
- Keep generator fuel in a labeled container. Store the container outside of living areas.

“Portable generators are commonly used after a hurricane,” Jones said. “I can't emphasize this enough: read and follow the safety manual. Never use generators, grills, camp stoves, or other gasoline, propane, natural gas, or charcoal-burning devices inside your home, basement, garage, or camper – or even outside near an open window. This eliminates the risk of carbon monoxide entering your home.”

Lastly, if there is a fire emergency, call 9-1-1 as soon as possible and remain outdoors. Never return inside a burning building.

The State Fire Marshal's Office, the Fire Academy, and Emergency Response make up the Division of Fire and Life Safety, which is a division of the S.C. Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation.