

Remove trees and potential windborne missiles

Preparing for a hurricane can mean making changes or improvements to your house and property. You may be able to make some of these changes yourself. Complicated changes or changes that affect your home's structure, electric system or plumbing are best handled only by a professional contractor licensed to work in your state, county or city.

One thing you can usually do on your own is clearing the area around your house to remove trees and materials that can be dangerous during high winds. Remove any limbs on the ground and inspect small trees to see if they need to be trimmed.

If your property has trees, outbuildings, trash cans, yard debris or other materials that can be moved by the wind, your house will be more likely to be damaged during a hurricane. Wind can blow trees onto your house and can pick up smaller objects and drive them through windows and glass doors.

Make sure that trees are far enough away from your house so they can't fall on it. If needed, hire a professional tree trimmer to make sure your trees are properly shaped and ready to stand up in storm force winds.

Securely anchor storage sheds and other outbuildings – either to a permanent foundation or with straps and ground anchors. Put smaller objects, such as trash cans, barbecue grills and outdoor furniture, in your garage or utility room. Clear away any debris, such as fallen tree branches.

Keep these points in mind when you remove trees and potential windborne missiles from around your house:

- Removing large trees near your house can be extremely dangerous, for both you and your home – and therefore is a job for a skilled and licensed contractor. Depending on where you live, there may also be special requirements for tree removal – such as permits and plans.
- The straps and ground anchors used for manufactured homes also can be used to anchor outbuildings, especially small garden sheds, which are usually not placed on a permanent foundation.

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