



**KEEP BERMUDA BEAUTIFUL**

After a storm and all year 'round, the island relies on residents to help keep the island clean

**REDUCING TRAUMA**

First responders are everyday superheroes, but supporting the public can be mentally exhausting

**HELPING THE ELDERLY**

Elderly and vulnerable should seek help before a storm arrives

# hurricane

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# Keeping Bermuda Beautiful

AFTER A STORM AND ALL YEAR 'ROUND, THE ISLAND RELIES ON RESIDENTS TO HELP

BY TIM SMITH

**It's not just local debris that needs to be cleaned up after a storm hits Bermuda. Mounds of trash—originating from as far afield as Africa—are dumped on the island's shoreline every time the Atlantic is ravaged by a hurricane.**

The laws of nature mean it will soon be swept back into the ocean unless clean-up crews act quickly. Volunteers from Keep Bermuda Beautiful (KBB) are among those who rise to the occasion.

Traci Burgess, the executive director of KBB, says: "Because of Bermuda's unique location in the Atlantic gyre, we are a massive catchment spot for ocean plastics and ocean pollution."

Bermuda is the only landmass in the middle of the Atlantic, so plastics float in from all over the world—the west coast of Africa, South America, the Caribbean, the Gulf of Mexico and New England. "Their plastics land here," says Burgess. "It's a problem, not only with pollution from other jurisdictions, but also with litter that is generated by local residents. We find stuff every day that comes in with the tides, or has been discarded on the roadsides, in our parks and on our beaches."

When a hurricane hits, the situation worsens. "During a storm, the ocean is churned up so much you can imagine all the stuff that washes up on the shore. If it is not cleaned up in short order, all that potential pollution could be washed back out to sea. It's a small window of opportunity for each of us to make a great contribution to combatting the ocean pollution problem."

KBB, which has more than 2,000 regular volunteers, carries out dozens of clean-ups every year, and removed more than 13 tonnes of trash, recyclables and bulk waste from

public spots in the first half of 2022. Ocean pollution is harmful to the marine environment, sargassum and fish, as well as to humans who eat marine animals that have consumed tiny particles of plastic.

"By doing regular clean-ups, KBB and our volunteers are proactively contributing to lessening the impact of post-storm trash," Burgess says. "The more trash, litter and debris we can remove from the coastline and parks, every single day of the year, the less there's going to be potentially to clean up after a major storm."

After a storm, KBB volunteers participate as individuals and in group clean-ups. Trash found on beaches ranges from small items such as empty bottles and plastic bags to giant mattresses and large fish tanks.

"KBB will typically send a post-storm email to our subscribers, first checking on everyone's safety, then raising a call to action," says Burgess. "We suggest that individuals clean up their own house and help their friends, family and neighbours, especially checking on the elderly and most vulnerable. Start there. In doing that, people are already contributing to cleaning up. Once it is safe to do so, KBB volunteers are asked to check on their adopted spots, parks, beaches and start cleaning up."

In addition to clean-ups, the organization educates and raises awareness on environmental issues and takes on projects such as Beyond Plastics, in partnership with the char-

ity BEST, and the Abandoned Boats Project, a joint initiative with the Bermuda Government.

"Huge kudos to the volunteers, donors, supporters and project partners. That's not just the post-storm clean-up teams, but everyone involved with KBB," Burgess says. "A lot of our volunteers are passionate about caring for the environment, and protecting and preserving our natural surroundings."

Bermuda's eco-system is fragile and delicate. It's part of KBB's mission to help more people understand the negative impact litter is having on Bermuda, both on land and sea. "We see the consequences every single day and we are striving for change."

**KBB provides the following tips to help limit the environmental devastation of a hurricane before a storm:**

- *Do not leave your trash bins and bags out on the curb if the hurricane is going to hit on your designated trash collection day. Bring it back to your house or, if you can, take it to the Tynes Bay Public Drop-Off.*
- *Take a look around your house and make sure to stow away anything that might blow away during a hurricane.*
- *Secure awnings, tarps, patio umbrellas or anything that might fly away in high winds. Not only will you lose these possessions, but they will end up in the ocean potentially causing harm to marine life.*
- *Keep tree branches trimmed near power lines so that you and your neighbours are less likely to lose power during a storm.*
- *Make sure your boat is secure well in advance of approaching high winds and storm surge.*

**After a storm, KBB advises taking quick action to help clean up debris at your house and in your neighbourhood:**

- *Pick up any litter or debris around your house and on your street in front of your house.*
- *Assist others in your neighbourhood.*
- *Volunteer to help clean up a public park, dock or stretch of road.*
- *Be cautious of any live power lines that may be down, and report them to Belco.*
- *Check on your boat.*

You can help KBB by becoming part of its Adopt-a-Spot programme. Spots include public beaches, parks and the Railway Trail. Sign up by visiting KBB's website at [kbb.bm](http://kbb.bm) or calling 799-5142. Even if you're not registered for an event, you can still help.

"It might be your favourite beach or park. Take a few minutes or an hour when it's safe or convenient to do so and conduct your own individual clean-up," Burgess says. "Every little bit, from each person or little group, can contribute to making a significant impact."

KBB can provide clean-up supplies, black trash bags, blue recycling bags, gloves and litter grabbers. Burgess adds: "KBB is grateful for the contributions of all our volunteers and programme partners, including the Bermuda Government, Waste Management and Parks Department, schools, all our corporate partners and donors. "Through all of their contributions, they are helping to Keep Bermuda Beautiful."

## Helping Others During Hurricane Season

BY ERIN SILVER

**VOLUNTEERS ARE AN INVALUABLE PART OF BERMUDIAN LIFE**

**Bermuda is a friendly place, so it's only natural you'll want to help your community before and after a hurricane.**

"We do five days of hurricane preparedness at the beginning of June," explains Steve Cosham, National Disaster Coordinator for the Ministry of National Security with the Government of Bermuda. He is also part of the Disaster Risk Reduction and Mitigation Team. "Day five is devoted to community preparedness."

The most important thing is to know your neighbours and community in advance of hurricane season. "Knock on your neighbour's door," says Cosham. "By doing that, you get to know who's vulnerable. You might find someone who has special needs. Over time you can develop a relationship. Before or after a hurricane, you can help them prepare and see how they are."

In short, it's nice just to check in on people as a regular part of your life. In addition to being neighbourly, Bermuda also has

about 300 charities and a number of churches. Each of these organizations helps people in their own communities and areas of need. "Charities and churches are very active in their community," says Cosham. "They have an active understanding of who needs help and where they are."

If you volunteer for one of these organizations or are an active member, check in with leadership to see how you can be of assistance. Perhaps they need donations of clothes, money, food or just need people to check in on others. Don't be shy or assume it's all under control. Volunteers are always needed, especially in cases of emergency.

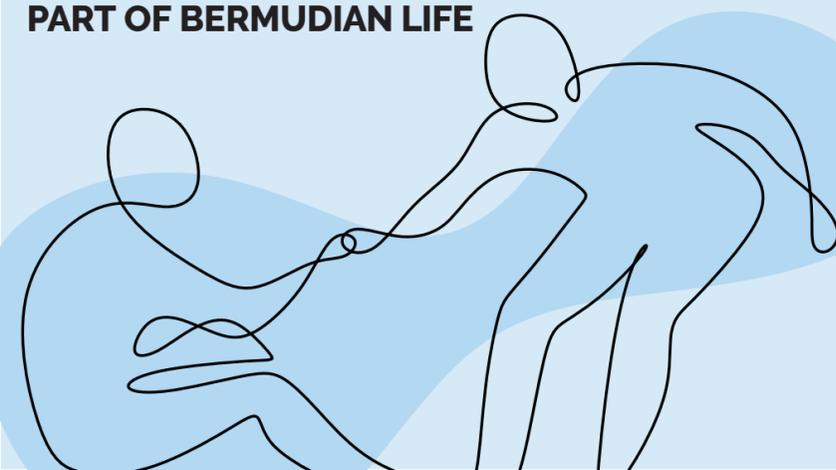
Of course, it's important to care for yourself and your family if you're going to be in a position to help others. Make sure you have the supplies you need to prepare for a hurricane. Stay

fit and healthy and get lots of rest so you can be on your best when you're most needed. After a hurricane, clear up any mess on your property and street when it's safe to do so and according to your level of ability. You can't respond to help others if it isn't safe and you aren't prepared. Pay attention to the news and any alerts to know when the storm has passed.

"We haven't had a category 4 hurricane since the 1950s," Cosham reminds Bermudians, "and we've never been devastated with a category 5. Having only experienced category 3 hurricanes, Bermudians are typically able to get back on our feet afterward."

Still, adds Cosham, it's nice to ask what your community members need, not just during a hurricane season, but every couple of weeks all year.

Go to [gov.bm](http://gov.bm) for information and check your local newspaper for more tips on hurricane preparedness.



# Reducing Trauma After A Natural Disaster

BY MELISSA FOX

## WHAT TOOLS DO EMERGENCY SERVICE CREWS USE TO THRIVE?

First responders are everyday superheroes, but supporting the public can be as mentally exhausting as physically. This is more so when called upon during a natural disaster. While trauma is an inevitable part of the job, working the muscles in your mind can help mitigate any emotional fallout for our dedicated front-line workers.

“Health professionals can be vulnerable to psychological stress due to the nature of their work,” explains Dr. Kauliss P. Lanthier, a Clinical Psychologist at Patterns Bermuda.

It takes a specific personality to manage the ups and downs that come with being a first responder. Still, even innately altruistic individuals may suffer from burnout—general exhaustion and lack of interest or motivation. You may also present with symptoms like:

- Sleep disturbances
- Angry outbursts
- Irrationality
- Feelings of alienation
- Depression
- Weight gain
- Opioid dependence

Then, there’s compassion fatigue, also known as vicarious trauma. Compassion fatigue can develop after repeated or long-term exposure to traumatized folks. Compassion fatigue presents as a lack of empathy or even negative feelings towards those with whom you are working.

If symptoms persist, you may be dealing with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). “If you are so overwhelmed by the event that mem-

ories don’t resolve, they remain stored in the brain and nervous system in an unhealthy way,” Dr. Lanthier says. “The memory lingers and disrupts everyday life.”

Bermudians are no stranger to natural disasters; many of us have experienced the howling winds, thrashing waves, and torrential rains that accompany hurricanes and tropical storms. Unfortunately, first-hand experience does not make emergency workers exempt from burnout. However, the ability to work through trauma goes a long way to ensuring a strong mindset in the face of catastrophe.

“If you can process and make sense of the event by feeling okay with moving on afterward, you are unlikely to develop PTSD,” Dr. Lanthier says.

First responders should make a point of practicing coping strategies in their downtime to guarantee their mental muscles are ready when the wind speed starts to pick up.

“Emotional distress can happen before and after a disaster,” Dr. Lanthier warns. “But you can make preparations to manage things within your control.” These preparations can include stocking up on necessities, self-care and identifying support systems.

Psychological preparedness can be developed through techniques like mindfulness. The proper psycho-

logical tools can help increase your ability to think clearly and rationally during a natural disaster, which may help reduce the risk of severe injury and loss of life during disasters.

“Understanding one’s own and other’s psychological response in a natural disaster warning situation helps people feel more confident, more in control and better prepared. Remaining cool, calm and mentally collected is a substantial aid to family members and others who may not be as well prepared for what is happening.”

Mitigating the long-term effects of a disaster

It’s common to experience mild to moderate anxiety or stress after a natural disaster, but you can mitigate the long-term effects by preparing in advance. Dr. Lanthier suggests:

- Give yourself time to adjust. Allow yourself to mourn the losses you have experienced and try to be patient with changes in your emotional state.
- Surround yourself with supportive and caring friends and family. Social support is a key component of disaster recovery. There is comfort when sharing with those who have gone through a similar experience. On the other hand, speaking to those not involved may lend greater objectivity and support.
- Attending a support group can be quite beneficial. Groups can help those with limited personal support systems.
- Maintain prior eating and sleep regimens. Eat well-balanced meals at regular times. Get plenty of rest by keeping a regular sleep cycle. Engage in relaxation techniques if sleep difficulties persist. Avoid alcohol and drugs to assist with emotional numbing. Substance use only delays positive actions that will assist with recovery after the disaster.
- Establish or re-establish routines. Maintain your workout schedule. Create new positive outlets such as a new hobby, walking along the beach or reading a book trilogy to offset the distressing days.

- Avoid making major life decisions. Switching careers or jobs and other important decisions tend to be highly stressful endeavours. Such major decisions will be harder to manage when recovering from a disaster.
- Self-Soothing is Important. Stress reduction interventions such as mindfulness, yoga and sports participation have been shown to boost mood and strengthen resilience factors, protecting before trauma and healing after trauma.
- Limit watching the news. News is available 24 hours a day via television, radio and the Internet. There can be a replay of news stories depicting devastation from disasters or traumatic events. Watching disaster news reports can trigger stress and anxiety that lead to reliving negative memories. This can contribute to poor sleep, nightmares and jumpiness.

## Dealing With Trauma Before, During, And After Natural Disasters

Firefighters, police officers, soldiers, EMTs, nurses and even electrical technicians securing downed powerlines are at high risk of trauma when they’re in rescue and recovery mode. Stresses related to the job can be mitigated by stocking your “toolkit” well in advance.

## Prepare Before the Disaster

- Train hard and know your job. “You will perform at peak capacity with more confidence and less stress if you know you are as ready as you can be.”
- Keep a freshly stocked go-kit in your car or at your worksite and include your top choices for stress reducers.
- Know the Incident Command System so you understand the language, the lines of reporting and ways to work effectively with responders from other units.

## During the Disaster

- Activate your disaster plan and include loved ones who may be directly affected by the event.
- Review your communication plan and know where each family member and/or loved one will be located and when you will be checking in.
- Recognize your stress signs and those of your teammates. Create “stress break” opportunities for each other.
- Avoid over-identifying with survivors’ grief and trauma. “For example, remind yourself this is not happening to you or your loved ones.”
- Be aware of “compassion fatigue.” Accept when you need to end direct contact with survivors and alert your team leader for support.

## After the Disaster

In the case of emergency workers, one of the most important pieces of self-care in the aftermath of a natural disaster is to shift focus from supporting the community to supporting yourself.

- Focus on the core components of resilience: adequate sleep, good nutrition (including hydration), regular physical activity, and active relaxation
- Engage with your fellow workers to celebrate successes and mourn sorrows as a group.
- Create space to be alone where you can think, meditate and rest.
- Remove yourself from the disaster area to confirm that not every place is so troubled.
- Find things to look forward to.
- Creating new rituals can bring peace, such as writing down your anger and then burning it as a symbolic goodbye gesture.

# TIPS TO WEATHER THE STORM

BELCO

At BELCO, our top priority is to maintain the safety of our team, our customers and our community while restoring power to the island as quickly as possible when necessary. As such, we keep close watch on the ever-changing weather conditions year-round and ensure our internal emergency procedures are evaluated and updated annually to maintain preparedness. Ensuring our country and community weathers a storm safely requires the efforts of all of us. We must all do our part.

Here are some tips on how you can weather the storm safely:

### AS THE STORM APPROACHES

Once the storm is on its way, unplug any electronic appliances that are not plugged into a surge protector.

Remember to secure any fuels outside and make sure that they are away from electrical panels. If you are planning to leave your home for the duration of the storm, please shut off your electricity at the breaker box and call BELCO prior to doing so.

### DURING THE STORM

During the storm visit BELCO’s website, belco.bm, or social media pages for outage updates.

BELCO restoration crews must wait for hurricane-force winds and storm conditions to subside before we begin to restore power. Please do not report power outages during a storm.

If there is an emergency, however, such as a downed wire or pole fire, please do call BELCO at 955 immediately.

### AFTER THE STORM

Stay off the roads as much as possible to leave them clear for emergency services and utility trucks.

Check your property for any electrical damage, such as frayed wires, downed power lines, sparks or the smell of hot or burned insulation.

BELCO must keep the lines free for emergency calls, so please wait until BELCO issues a public advisory that it can accept outage report calls.

If you must go outside, avoid downed power lines! Never touch a downed power line, even if it does not appear to be live. Stay at least 33 feet away – or three car lengths – and avoid piles of debris or downed foliage that may conceal live power lines.

If you do come across a fallen line, do not run. Instead, keep your legs together and shuffle away with both feet on the ground. Shuffling will prevent your legs from bridging current from higher to lower voltage, resulting in shock.

For more information about hurricane safety, visit [belco.bm/storms](http://belco.bm/storms).



## Downed power lines



Always assume that downed power lines are energised and extremely dangerous. They can also energise other structures – like fences, railings or cars – on contact.

**If a utility pole line falls to the ground, touches a fence or lands on a car:**

## DON'T:

**Don't run from a fallen line**, as running may cause your legs to bridge current from higher to lower voltage, causing you to receive a shock. Instead, keep your legs together and shuffle away with both feet on the ground until you are at least 33 feet – or three car lengths – away from other utility poles.

**Don't try to rescue anyone** who has touched a downed power line. Electrical current can travel through their body, making you the next victim.

## DO:

**Stay at least 33 feet away** – or three car lengths – away from downed power lines.

**Always assume** downed power lines are energised and dangerous.

**Stay clear** of piles of debris or fallen foliage that may conceal live power lines.



# Should You Shelter In Place?

## WHEN TO SEEK PROTECTION FROM A STORM

BY KRYSTAL MCKENZIE

Generally speaking, Bermudians know how to keep themselves safe during a hurricane. Tracking the storm well in advance and making preparations are key to safety. But sometimes, it's hard to know whether to stay home during a storm or seek shelter elsewhere. How do you decide where to go, what to do and how to weigh your evacuation options for this kind of natural disaster? What factors do you have to consider?

First, it's important to know the difference between a hurricane "watch" and "warning." A hurricane watch means hurricane conditions are possible in a stated area. A hurricane warning is more serious. It means hurricane-force winds are expected in a stated area. Experts issue these warnings as far in advance before tropical-storm-force winds are expected in the area to give people enough time to prepare for the storm.

The Emergency Measures Organization (EMO) will inform the public if they feel certain parts of the island should be evacuated. There's been examples of people whose homes are right on the North or South Shore who have been advised to seek shelter elsewhere (or at least get to the highest point in the structure) to avoid the storm surge.

According to AccuWeather, which provides weather forecasting services worldwide, if severe weather is expected and a person or family has the time and resources to evacuate, they're urged to leave as soon as possible. Take your emergency

go kit and evacuate far out of the path of the storm so that you aren't impacted by high winds, rain, flooding or other dangerous conditions.

There may be times, however, when the EMO or its related affiliates advise people to seek shelter where they are. During those scenarios, experts say the safest location to be is in the interior area of the building that's surrounded by walls and is not close to any windows. That's because glass on most homes can break quickly. Even if the storm isn't severe, winds can turn any object into projectiles. Projectiles can include anything that's laying around outside, like tree branches that have broken off or yard furniture. Areas like bathrooms or closets are typically the best options for sheltering inside a home for avoiding flying debris, which is a major source of injuries during a hurricane.

Whether you decide to evacuate or are able to shelter in place, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention provides the following advice:



### IF YOU NEED TO EVACUATE:

- *In advance, locate the nearest shelter and identify various routes on how you can get there from your home. Then, if you have to evacuate, you'll know where to go and which route to take.*
- *Grab your emergency supply kit, which you will have prepared in advance, and only take what you really need with you.*
- *Unplug your appliances. If you have time, turn off the gas, electricity and water.*
- *Follow the roads and instructions issued by the EMO to safely get to an emergency shelter.*



### IF YOU NEED TO STAY HOME:

- *Keep your emergency supply kit in a place you can easily access.*
- *Listen to the radio or TV for updates on the hurricane.*
- *Stay inside. Even if it looks calm, don't go outside. Wait until you hear or see an official message that the hurricane is over. Sometimes, weather gets calm in the middle of a storm but then quickly gets bad again.*
- *Stay away from windows—you could get hurt by pieces of broken glass or flying debris during a storm. Stay in a room with no windows or go inside a closet.*
- *Be ready to leave. If emergency authorities order you to leave or if your home is damaged, you may need to go to a shelter or a neighbour's house.*



## YOUR DONATIONS MATTER

GIVE WHAT YOU CAN TO GET US ALL THROUGH THE STORM

BY VEJAY STEEDE

Hurricane season can be a busy time for helping services. With so many organizations offering shelter, nutrition and care services during the best of times, it's only natural that hurricane season brings a more intense need for support.

While most local charitable organizations don't always solicit donations, the added urgency of a coming storm makes unsolicited donations that much more appreciated. Organizations like the Salvation Army, Bermuda Red Cross, St. John's Ambulance and Meals on Wheels are always happy to receive support from the general public, as every little bit helps to serve the members of our society who depend on those organizations.

Of course, a hurricane is a natural disaster and the Bermuda Red Cross plays a large role in preparing the community for hurricane season through First Aid, CPR and AED classes, medical rentals and psychosocial first aid training. The Bermuda Red Cross welcomes donations through their Thrift Shop, which is located at 'Charleswood,' 9 Berry Road, Paget. Donations are gratefully accepted on days the thrift shop is open. Items are also donated to needy clients of non-profits, churches and Mid Atlantic Wellness Institute. Donations can be made online at <https://bermudaredcross.com/> as well.

St. John's Ambulance offers similar services. They operate as a registered Bermuda charity and they rely upon volunteer support and donations from the community to operate.

Donations help the organization continue their work in the community, from attending hundreds of events island-wide each year to teaching valuable lifesaving skills to providing PPE to protect volunteers against Covid-19. Go to <http://sjabermuda.org/donate/> for full details on how to donate to St. John's Ambulance Bermuda.

The Salvation Army operates an actual shelter for our less fortunate citizens, which speaks to a clear need for community support during hurricane season. A Bermuda-based registered charity, the Salvation Army provides services and programs to restore dignity and hope in the lives of those in times of need in the community. Serving some 600 meals per week and providing shelter for vulnerable women and men who are homeless, the Salvation Army is a more than worthy organization to support during hurricane season and beyond. Donations can be in the form of groceries for the hungry through one of their three island-wide food banks or through monetary means via [www.ptix.bm/Event/3991/The-Salvation-Army-Donations/](http://www.ptix.bm/Event/3991/The-Salvation-Army-Donations/).

Finally, Meals on Wheels is a service dedicated to getting nutrition to Bermudians who may otherwise struggle to feed themselves. It is a necessary service and becomes quite essential during times of crisis, which the aftermath of a hurricane can very quickly become in Bermuda.

Funded primarily by contributions from individuals and corporations, Meals on Wheels also receives an annual government grant and participates in various fundraising activities throughout the year. In addition to monetary contributions, many in the community donate food, both non-perishables and fresh produce. Others donate needed goods and services. The generosity and concern shown by all donors is greatly appreciated and has enabled Meals on Wheels to deliver meals at no charge to recipients since the start of the COVID-19 crisis." For full details on how to donate to Meals on Wheels, go to: <https://mealsonwheels.bm/donate/>.



Salvation Army community service worker Lionel Cann carries a box of donations past food already sorted for donation.

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# KEEPING THE Homeless Safe In A Storm

BY TIM SMITH

**The homeless population is more vulnerable than anyone else when a hurricane approaches and an all-hands-on-deck approach is required to ensure their safety.**

About 50 people are estimated to sleep rough in Bermuda on a regular basis, with many more living in insecure housing. Many of these find temporary shelter with families in the hours before, during and after a major storm, while charities, churches and the Bermuda government all play a part in ensuring everyone is kept safe.

In recent years, The Salvation Army complex has not been deemed a suitable accommodation during a hurricane, so the emergency shelter at CedarBridge Academy has typically catered to about 60 people during a storm. But as the homeless population has continued to grow in the wake of the Covid-19 pandemic, services providing shelter have upped their game.

The charity Home aims to provide shelter for 24 people at its facility at Boaz Island, while The Salvation Army will be able to accommodate 60 at its new premises being created on North Street.

Steve Cosham, Bermuda's national disaster coordinator, hopes this will mean fewer people need the CedarBridge shelter. "Unsheltered people have traditionally only had available The Salvation Army emergency housing facility located at North Street," Cosham says. "During Covid-19, their capacity to house was reduced from about 40 people to 24 people. There was never enough to house all those

people that looked for housing from The Salvation Army."

He explains that the government granted The Salvation Army a large sum and work is ongoing to build the new facility at North Street. This is a great stride forward. "We also know that Covid-19 has increased the population without shelter. If we see a hurricane this year, The Salvation Army and Home will take 84 people, which is fantastic."

Cosham says nobody knows how many people will show up at the shelter at CedarBridge Academy's gymnasium, but they are not expecting as many as in previous years.

The CedarBridge shelter is advertised across the media in advance of a storm and opens 12 hours before the hurricane is forecast to arrive, but Cosham notes: "There is no power to order people to use it."

The Salvation Army plays a key role in ensuring people take advantage of the shelter. Business manager Chandra-Lee Bascome says: "A lot of homeless people are able to get shelter with their families for the storm even if they can't stay with them permanently. We work to get the other people into the shelter. We are already going around to the known locations to provide people with soup anyway. When it comes to a hurricane, we look out for those who haven't moved to the

emergency housing complex and take them up to CedarBridge."

Bascome explains that Maxwell Assing, their street ministry driver, knows where to find homeless people and says he has a critically important relationship with them. "Maxwell knows his people out there and knows who he needs to look for. The people are also trusting of him so will listen to his advice."

At CedarBridge, beds are set up in the gymnasium, family rooms are provided and measures are made to cater to those with special medical needs or who are oxygen dependent. The Department of Child and Family Services staffs the operation, assisted by voluntary organizations such as The Bermuda Red Cross, churches, St. John Ambulance and the Royal Bermuda Regiment. Private security is provided because many in the homeless community have stated they would not be comfortable with a police presence.

Food is supplied by The Salvation Army and Cosham adds: "There is Wi-Fi at the shelter and the Red Cross donates games to keep people happy. The Red Cross also takes up a large supply of clothes to allow the unsheltered to change clothes where needed."

The shelter stays open until after the Emergency Measures Organization confirms it's safe to go back outside. Bascome says The Sal-

vation Army is looking forward to being able to accommodate people at the new North Street complex, which features refurbished

shipping containers, fortified by the Bermuda

Housing Corporation to ensure they are hurricane-proof.

"At the moment our complex isn't suitable during a hurricane, so all our clients have to go up to the emergency shelter," she says.

"With our new complex, our people should be able to remain at the emergency complex. Everybody wants to be in their own place during a hurricane, where they can protect their own belongings no matter what may come. I don't want to leave my belongings behind and I'm sure they all feel the same."

Cosham suggests more shelters could be set up across the island in the future. "There are discussions in place to have more shelters, utilizing

the churches, so we have them at more locations around the island," he says. "At present, the demand is just for CedarBridge. If we saw a bigger demand, then we would look at opening more shelters."

Bascome pays tribute to the volunteers who step up and reminds the public that we all have a part to play in helping our fellow brothers and sisters. "We have some families who have volunteered in this role for years," she says. "Some of those people get lead roles in planning the menu for three or four days. We are very grateful for their help."

She says she always finds that those who have experienced hardship themselves tend to be the more compassionate and generous. "I would ask the general public to consider the possibility that it could happen to any of you. None of us knows what the future might hold."

She says the everyday person came for support during the pandemic when pretty much everyone had stopped working.



Steve Cosham



Cots fill the gym at Cedarbridge Academy which was used as a shelter during the passing of Hurricane Humberto.

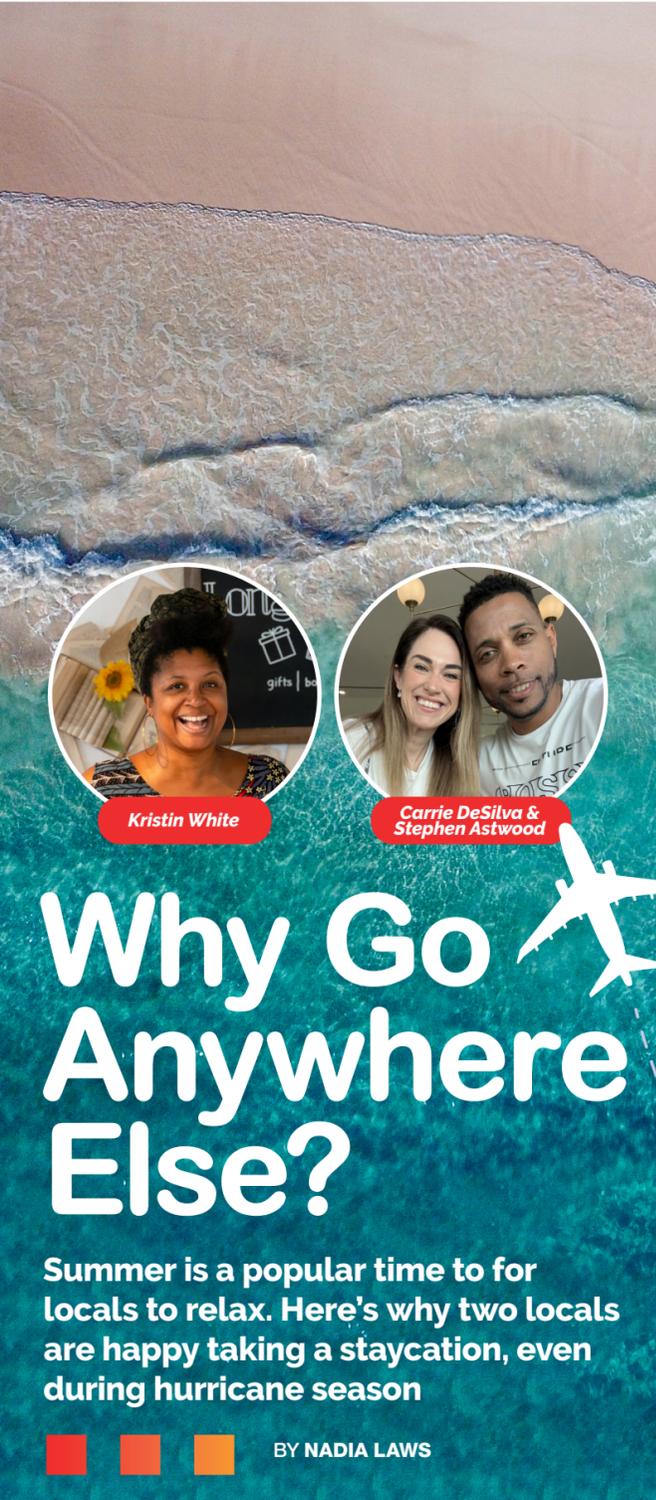
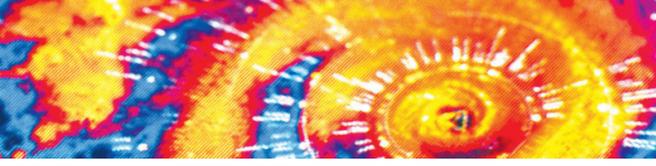
# 1 in 10

Bermudian homes are damaged when a hurricane hits\*

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\* Based on 2019 Argus Humberto data.



**Turquoise waters.  
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Luxury resorts.**

Taking a “staycation” in Bermuda may be just what the doctor ordered, suggest locals Kristin White and Carrie DeSilva. Both women have opted for local holidays over international vacations over the past two years. Here, they share their top reasons for taking a staycation on the island. Even though it’s hurricane season, it can still be the perfect time to enjoy a much-needed break.

**1. To relax and unwind.** Let’s face it: the last couple of years have been stressful as we all adjusted to the ‘new normal’ brought about by COVID-19. For health and fitness coach Carrie DeSilva, of Carrie Lee Fitness, it became even more important to take time out from the stress and uncertainty of the pandemic to relax, have fun and recharge. “Oftentimes we really needed that staycation,” says DeSilva, who says she took five or six local breaks since the pandemic started in 2020. “Working for yourself, you want to do it all and wear all the hats in your business, but I’ve had to learn to set boundaries and separate work from my personal life. Staycating in Bermuda gives me the chance to leave my laptop behind, switch off my phone and be present. We get to the hotel reeling from the busyness of the week, but when we leave we feel so much more refreshed.” Same goes for local blogger and entrepreneur Kristin White. For her, the pandemic lockdown period had a huge impact on business, forcing her to pivot and think of new ideas and ways to generate income. “For the most part, I wasn’t as busy as I typically am when tourism is booming,” says White. “My husband’s workload stayed the same, but

he wasn’t taking any time off. When we go on staycation, he puts an Out Of Office response on his email and we commit to not picking up any work.”

**2. To experience local hospitality.** When you’re born and raised in Bermuda you don’t always get to experience the island’s hospitality industry for yourself. White, owner of St. George’s-based gift shop and tour business, Long Story Short, says the pandemic gave her the chance to fall even deeper in love with the Bermuda’s beauty, culture and local hospitality. “We live in a bucket-list paradise and typically when we have a chance to unplug we do it overseas in a different country,” White says. “Whether it’s a night, a weekend or a full week, taking a staycation allows you to witness Bermuda’s hospitality and tourism up close. You get to see exactly what our tourists experience when they come to Bermuda.” White and her husband Dueane didn’t feel comfortable travelling during the pandemic lockdown period. If ever they started to feel claustrophobic from being on ‘the rock’ for too long, that’s when they made it a priority to book a short stay at one of their favourite hotels.

**3. To take advantage of the local deals and discounts.** When you factor in the savings from not having to pay for a flight, plus the fact that many hotels offer great deals for local guests, particularly in the off season, a staycation doesn’t have to break the bank. Over the past few years, DeSilva has stayed at hotels including The Reefs, Hamilton Princess, Grotto Bay, Tucker’s Point and The Loren. Though each of the hotels offer slightly different environments and amenities, she gets to decide whether to spend her weekend ‘playing tourist’ and sightseeing around

the island or just enjoy laying on the beach, catching up on rest and dining at different restaurants. “You get to decide the pace of your holiday and can do as much or as little as you like,” she says.

**4. To connect with the ones you love.** White has found staycations to be a great way to celebrate special moments and milestones with the people she loves. From wedding anniversaries and birthdays to a special New Year’s Eve with her family, she recommends staycations as the perfect way to reconnect and make new memories with others. “Especially in the last couple of years we have had so much stress and depressing, sad, anxiety-ridden moments,” White says. “Just giving ourselves some time to disconnect from that has been really important.”

**5. To invest in your romantic relationship.** While staycations can be done solo or with the whole family, newlywed DeSilva also recommends using them as a chance to have alone time with the special someone in your life. Thanks to family support, she’s able to leave her son Arlo with grandparents, while she and partner Stephen Astwood intentionally go on dates to nurture their close bond. “With relationships, I believe the ones that are the best are the ones you put work into building and strengthening,” DeSilva says. “You can’t not water your relationship and expect it to grow. That’s why staycations are such a good option to pour back into yourself and give your spouse some undivided attention as well. By taking time for myself and my relationship, I feel like I can show up better in other areas of my life. Even if it’s not a staycation, make sure you have small pockets of time to fill your own cup.”



Kristin White



Carrie DeSilva & Stephen Astwood

## Why Go Anywhere Else?

Summer is a popular time to for locals to relax. Here’s why two locals are happy taking a staycation, even during hurricane season

BY NADIA LAWS

## How Are Hurricanes Named?

BY ERIN SILVER

It’s hard to choose the perfect name for a child, but when it comes to hurricanes, it’s all planned out long in advance by the World Meteorological Organization.

Since these storms occur every year, some at the same time, weather experts agreed that having human names for each one would avoid confusion and enable everyone to better communicate. Each season, 21 names are chosen according to the Greek alphabet. Names are chosen in chronological order, so Albert would be before Bob. There are six lists of names that rotate every six years. The names of very bad storms are retired. In 2017, Harvey, Irma, Maria and Nate were removed from the list. They were replaced with Harold, Idalia, Margot and Nigel. Names starting with Q,

U, X, Y and Z aren’t used. You know it’s a bad storm season when you run out of names and have to start at the beginning. That happened in 2005, when the season ended with a tropical storm named Alpha.

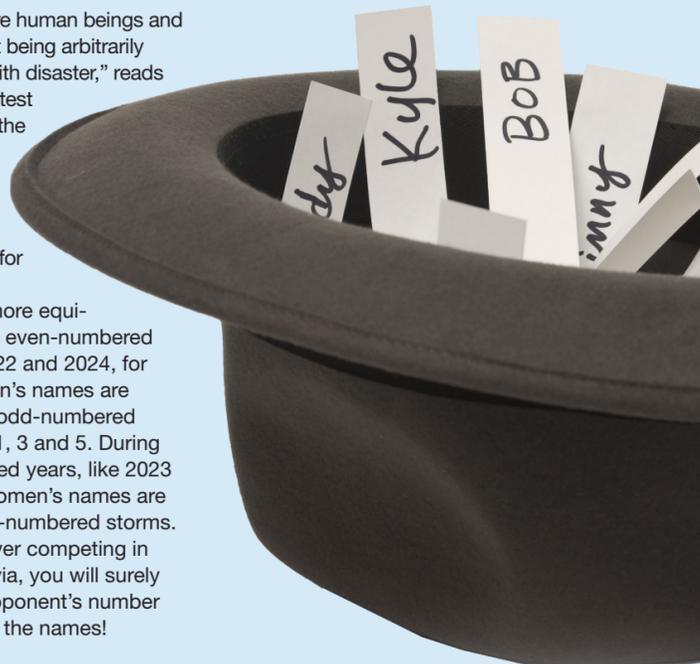
Interestingly, the names chosen have to be simple and easy for the people of the affected area to pronounce. That’s why Atlantic storm names include names familiar to Caribbean people, such as Cristobal and Edouard. Storms that affect Hawaii, for instance, will have Hawaiian names like Moke and Walaka.

When hurricanes were first named in the Atlantic, a practice that began several hundred years ago, they were named after Roman Catholic saints. If there were two hurricanes, they could be named Hurricane San Filipe the First and Hurricane San Felipe the Second. When meteorology was new in the United States, storms were named according to the longitude and latitude coordinates where they began. These were impossible to remember and errors were made. During the Second World War, military meteorologists began to use women’s names. The system was easy and adopted in 1953 by the National Hurricane Centre for stories originating over the Atlantic ocean. This continued until the women’s movement, when men’s names were finally added to the list by 1979.

“Women are human beings and deeply resent being arbitrarily associated with disaster,” reads one 1970 protest letter sent to the U.S. National Weather Service by the National Organization for Women.

Now, it’s more equitable. During even-numbered years, so 2022 and 2024, for instance, men’s names are given to the odd-numbered storms, like 1, 3 and 5. During odd-numbered years, like 2023 and 2025, women’s names are given to odd-numbered storms.

If you’re ever competing in hurricane trivia, you will surely have your opponent’s number and know all the names!



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## BEFORE



### Check your policies

Make sure your insurance policies are up-to-date.



### Prepare an emergency kit

Check supplies including a battery-operated radio, flashlights, extra batteries, first aid kit and medications.



### Have a family plan

Develop an emergency plan for your home, property and pets.



### Stock up on food and water

Have a three-day supply of drinking water and non-perishable food. Fill bathtub and buckets with water.



### Charge up

Make sure to charge your mobile device and save all emergency phone numbers.



### Protect your property

Board up windows. Clear yard of loose objects. Move your vehicle, bike and/or boat to a secure location.

## DURING



### Remain indoors

Stay in the structurally strongest part of the house, and away from windows and doors.



### Secure important documents

Store valuables and personal papers (e.g. insurance, medical records, passports, etc.) in a waterproof container.



### Follow official instructions

Do not go outside unless local authorities announce an evacuation or if it is safe to step outside.



### Monitor the news

Stay tuned to the Government Emergency Broadcast Station on FM 100.1.

## AFTER



### Check everyone's safety

Ensure all family members, friends and neighbours are safe, especially senior citizens.



### Stay alert

Continue to monitor local news for the latest updates. Keep the roads clear for emergency vehicles.



### Discard perishable food

Get rid of perishable food (such as meat, poultry, fish, eggs and leftovers) that have been above 40°F for 2 hours or more.



### Inspect your property

Secure your house and property against the possibility of further damage. If you hire anyone for repairs, keep receipts.



### Note the damages

List and photograph all damages sustained. Get two written quotes for repairs.



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**BF&M**

# No Electricity? Eat In A Restaurant!

BY TIM SMITH



Philip Barnett



Rick Olson

**There's no place like home—unless, of course, your home has no electricity, the roof has come off or the garden has been turned upside down by a hurricane.**

In times like those, there's no place like your favourite bar. Pubs and restaurants in Bermuda serve a vital role as community hubs during the days after a major storm, providing air conditioning and cooked meals to those without power and a chance for people to share their disaster stories.

"We all know what it's like after a hurricane," says Philip Barnett, President of Island Restaurant Group, which includes bars such as The Pickled Onion and Hog Penny in Hamilton and The Frog and Onion in Dockyard. "It's hot, you're swimming in humidity and you have no air conditioning at home. People are able to come here, see their family and friends and relax."

He says the restaurants and bars become people's living rooms, the places where people can hang out in air-conditioned bliss. "It's a fantastic thing. That's what fills all our buckets. It's that ability to help people. It harks back to the reason people in hospitality enjoy being in the industry so much. We love to give hospitality and we love to make people feel at home."

The aftermath of one of Bermuda's worst storms, Hurricane Fabian in 2003, also provided one of Barnett's strongest hospitality-related memories. "I reflect back to

Hurricane Fabian, where power was just devastated across the island," he says. "Usually after a hurricane, people's power comes back after three or four days, a week at the most. After Fabian, there was a significant number of people who had no power for three, four or five weeks," he remembers. "People were literally coming in every day as they had no power. They would go home, try to shower at their office, and then come into us for lunch and dinner."

The hurricane meant that the traditionally quiet post-Labour Day period became unusually busy.

People came for three things, Barnett recalls. "Firstly, the camaraderie; then the respite from all the challenges at home after the storm; but also because it was pleasurable to be in the conditions we could provide."

He remembers how people traded their stories about which window got blown in, how their roof had come off, and all the other things that happened during that storm.

"Those are the things that bring us together after a hurricane. The first thing you do after the storm is make sure your neighbour is safe. Neighbours will all bind together and help clear the road—it's all about being part of the community and doing your bit to help

each other. That creates a community camaraderie that we love."

Being at the workplace also has its perks for staff, who might also be without power at home.

"We do the best we can. We have a single shower at our head office available for our staff to traipse in one by one to get fresh," Barnett says. "Once you are in the air-conditioned premises, even if you've not been able to have a shower, you can wash up in the staff bathroom. That at least makes you feel half-human, and then you are able to get on and do your work."

Bermuda Bistro at the Beach on Front Street has gained a reputation as one of the first places to reopen after a storm. Owner Rick Olson says: "I feel we have an obligation to feed the community in disaster-like situations, especially if you have a bunch of tourists on the island and they have no power."

It's important for residents, too. If you have no power and your refrigerator isn't working, how else are you going to eat? "It's just the nature when you are in hospitality—your human nature. We are kind of lucky where we are in town. We don't lose power very often, and when we do it is always back on again within a few minutes," says Olson. "Town always gets cleared up quite quickly so we are able to open as soon as it's safe to travel on the roads for our staff to get in."

Olson recalls one storm when homes in St. George's lost power for a week. "We were flat

out all day long," he says. "The whole island was out of power for three or four days. It's nice because you get all walks of life in at the same time. For the first day or two, it's more of a big party—a relief to get through the storm for a lot of people. Then reality sets in and it's 'oh no, we have got a lot of work to do'."

The aftermath of a hurricane is a hectic time for bar staff. Olson says: "I think staff really like to come in. It's one of the busier times, so they will make more money themselves. They look forward to it. A hurricane can be one of the best things that happens to us as we can be extremely busy and we don't get that too often these days."

Staffing levels can be hit if some are dealing with storm-related damage at their homes, meaning Olson is often required to get behind the bar himself. "That's the thing I love to do more than anything—be behind the bar myself, socializing with people, meeting new people. That's the fun of the business."

The Beach offers special post-storm meal deals to families who cannot cook at home, but many people just like to know there's always somewhere they will be welcome.

"We will probably continue that on. It's kind of our reputation. People think we are always open," Olson says. "It makes me feel proud and makes my staff feel proud. We have a strong work ethic."



## Helping The Elderly

BY TIM SMITH

THERE ARE MANY PEOPLE IN THE COMMUNITY WHO CAN LEND A HAND

**There's one simple piece of advice for vulnerable people as a hurricane approaches: don't try to weather the storm on your own.**

Family, friends, neighbours and local church groups are just some of the people and organizations who can help ensure you stay safe when those fierce winds threaten to turn your world upside down.

Callan Bassett, the business development manager at Age Concern, a non-profit organization in Bermuda with a membership of approximately 5000 persons over the age of 50, says: "Our seniors are particularly vulnerable to the impact of hurricanes due to increased health issues, diminished awareness and mobility or transportation challenges. "We strongly advise older adults, and especially our seniors who are living alone, to either stay with family or have family stay with them during a hurricane."

This is particularly important for those with mobility issues. If there is an emergency once the hurricane hits, it would be very dangerous for family members to attempt to reach their relatives at that point. "Additionally, it is often difficult, if not impossible, to travel across the island in the immediate aftermath, as roads may be closed or obstructed," says Bassett. "If seniors do not have a family member to rely on, it is important to organize their emergency plan ahead of time so that they are not left alone."

He says this may include contacting friends, neighbours or churches for shelter

or, if they have a budget, a local hotel room or AirBnB. Age Concern organizes preparation kits for its members and for its Client Services programme, and sends out tips on handling the storm. Prep kits contain enough essential supplies for two days, including at least one gallon of water a day per person, nonperishable and canned foods with a can opener, flashlight with extra batteries, candles, duct tape, first-aid kit with up-to-date supplies and personal hygiene items.

Seniors may also wish to add a battery-powered radio, blankets or sleeping bags, hand tools such as hammer, screwdriver or saw, pet supplies, battery-powered fan and medical equipment such as hearing aids, glasses, dentures and oxygen tanks, including a spare of each. People should also use a waterproof bag to store legal documents such as advance directives, birth certificate, social insurance card, insurance policies and financial records.

Bassett urges families to help their elderly loved ones by creating a hurricane preparedness plan. It should include establishing a trustworthy network of people in the community to call if a hurricane hits and they need assistance. Keep a designated list of local contacts in the event of an emergency and be sure to check in before, during and after a hurricane. Be aware of local shelters nearby and the best routes to get there. During the storm, people should stay informed and aware of their surroundings.

"Be sure to monitor the TV and radio to remain updated on any new weather patterns," Bassett says. "The Bermuda Weather Service typically issues hurricane advisories

within 48 to 72 hours of a tropical storm threat. Have local emergency contacts and phone numbers easily accessible. Charge your cell phone and fill up your gas tank when hearing an advisory warning."

Storms can be frightening experiences, but there are some methods of relieving anxiety.

"It's no secret that preparing for and anticipating a hurricane can be very distressing, especially for our seniors," he says.

"There may be uncertainty ahead about living arrangements, work, health and safety and other important life factors. Recognizing these common emotional reactions and taking steps to prepare for the hurricane will be helpful in safeguarding the emotional well-being of our seniors."

He gives the following advice on managing hurricane-related fears and anxiety:

- **Close your eyes and work on breathing techniques. One effective technique includes breathing in for four counts, holding for four counts, exhaling for four counts and holding out for four counts. Moving your breath in and out of your body at an even pace helps bring down your anxiety. It will help you feel relaxed and calm.**
- **Do positive visualization of the best possible outcome of the storm. This includes visualizing minimal damage, where everyone will be okay and no one will get hurt. Play a positive scenario out and believe it will come to pass.**

- **Have faith. Many of our older adults are inherently religious or spiritual people. Rituals of faith such as prayers, hymns or meditations can offer great comfort in distressing times.**
- **Read a good book. Getting caught up in a good story can help take your mind off your surroundings. Research books ahead of time to give yourself a few different reading options.**

Steve Cosham, Bermuda's national disaster coordinator, urges families to look out for their elderly relatives. "If they've not got family with the ability to look after them, they should get in touch with the local church. You can also ask people who live nearby to check on them afterwards."

Cosham points out that storms can also be precarious times for families with sick relatives and pregnant women. Ahead of the storm, doctors contact all women in their third semester, and those near their delivery date or with a problem pregnancy. Plans are also in place for people who need dialysis or those with other urgent medical conditions. Some will be advised to get treatment before the storm comes, others will be booked in for treatment immediately afterwards and some will need to ride out the storm in the hospital.

"If people are medically vulnerable, the doctor knows about it and can liaise with the hospital and make the necessary arrangements," Cosham says.

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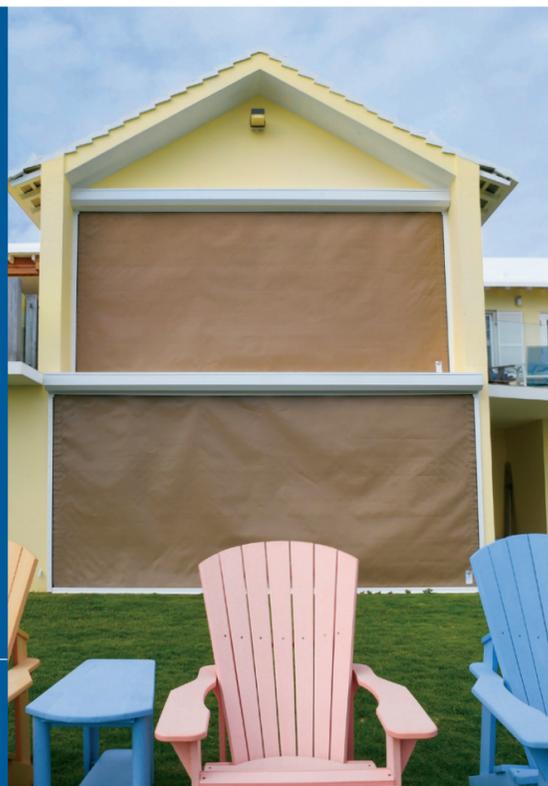


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## Be Prepared this Hurricane Season

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# Fire Safety Tips For Small Business Owners

HOW SEEMINGLY SMALL ACTIONS CAN SAVE YOU BIG IN THE LONG RUN

BY MELISSA FOX

Accidents happen, but accidents are avoidable. In the case of fire, there are many things a small business owner can do to prepare for or mitigate the fallout of a serious disaster in the event of a blaze.

As Fire Prevention Officer Lieutenant Jamal Albouy notes, in the case of fire, we “react, as opposed to being proactive. If you have a plan on what to do in the event of an emergency, it’s a matter of just activating that plan and putting into practice.”

The Bermuda Fire Service follows the recommendations of the National Fire Prevention Association in terms of safety, encouraging that Bermudians employ measures like “not overloading electrical outlets, having portable fire extinguishers and knowing where the exits are” as part of their safety and evacuation planning.

## SETTING YOUR FIRE SAFETY PLAN

Large or small, in an office building or from a store front, the needs of each small business owner will be unique. However, the suggestions below can be used as a stepping stone for anyone looking to “fire proof” their investments.

- Create an evacuation plan. Small or large, every business should have an actionable evacuation plan in place. This should include which exits to use, how to find them and a muster point that is at a safe distance and easily accessible by both staff and emergency personnel.
- Keep all staff, including part-time or seasonal, informed about your procedures by posting easy-to-follow instructions in high-trafficked areas like the break room. Practice drills on a regular basis. Task supervisors,

management and anyone in charge of training to include these safety procedures as part of the new employee basic training.

- Keep stairways and hallways clear of boxes or other supplies. Not only can piles of product or paperwork fuel a fire, but they can also become an obstacle for anyone trying to evacuate.
- Store or dispose of flammable materials in accordance with the manufacturer’s recommendation. Disposing or storing hazardous materials, particularly for a small business, can be a costly expenditure, but it’s necessary to avoid accidents.

### Take precautions with your electrical equipment:

- Overloading an electrical outlet can result in tripping the circuit. Especially true in older buildings, there is the potential that overheating the system can cause the insulation to melt and may result in a fire.
- Don’t break off the third prong on a plug to fit a two-prong outlet. The third prong guarantees the system is properly grounded.
- Avoid using extension cords as a permanent solution, as they are designed for temporary use, and store all power cords away from heat, water and oil. Avoid using staples or nails to attach cords to the wall or floor as they may cause damage to the exterior insulation or integrity of the wire within.
- Keep electronic equipment like computers, printers and kitchen appliances far enough apart so air can circulate to keep them cool. Anyone who has worked in a sever environment will understand how much heat can be generated by a

machine that is in constant operation and the devastating effects of such equipment overheating.

Depending on the nature of your business, be diligent about regularly inspecting tools, power cords and electrical fittings. Keep equipment well maintained and clean. Repair or replace any damaged equipment before use.

Invest in a solid fire alarm and sprinkler system and keep them in good repair. Equally important, keep your fire extinguisher up to date. Easily one of the most overlooked pieces of equipment, fire extinguishers are vital in keeping small flames from spreading. Make sure you place them in strategic, easily accessible locations, that they are charged and that they are regularly inspected to avoid a misfire in the event of an emergency.

Designate a smoker’s area away from open trash cans or other garbage and provide a safe method to dispose of butts that cannot easily be tipped over.

Reduce your risk of arson. According to the National Fire Prevention Association, arson is one of the leading causes of workplace fires. Ensure that all employees are diligent about locking up, keeping all points of exit clear of obstruction. This is also a case for requiring that garbage be removed every day.

Not mentioned above is the purchase of a comprehensive insurance policy that will cover you in the event of disaster, including fire and other acts of vandalism or the whim of Mother Nature. This will help provide a bit of cushion and may be a little salve in the aftermath, though it will never replace the years of sweat equity you’ve invested in your project. In the same way your unseen labour can bring you financial success, a little investment into safety upfront can save you a lot of woe down the road.

## HOW TO USE A FIRE EXTINGUISHER

BY ERIN SILVER

Do you know how to use a fire extinguisher? Many of us don’t. But it’s important to educate ourselves, as fire extinguishers can save lives and homes. As too many people know, fires can happen unexpectedly and escalate quickly, becoming out of control if we don’t act fast.

While it’s not possible to cover an entire course in one article, it’s helpful to have some tips in the back of your mind as hurricane season approaches. You never know when you might find yourself needing to put out a small fire. They can be caused by things you have in your home—like candles, cooking oil, home heaters or smokers. They can also be caused by things like malfunctioning electrical outlets or even lightning in a storm.

To begin, make sure you have smoke alarms throughout your house. Check them regularly, every six months, so they can do their job in an emergency. Do you have a fire extinguisher in your home or office? Make sure you have one and that it’s in working order. While this piece of equipment doesn’t work for every type of fire and can be used to put out small fires, it’s still a good idea to have one handy.

Let everyone know where the extinguisher is and how to use it. Keep it near an exit so you can make a fast escape. If you don’t know how it works, schedule some training. Call your fire department for more information. Then you can train others or invite them along for training.

In the event of a fire, make sure everyone in your home or office has an escape route and that the exit is clear. Don’t block it with boxes or doors that are locked. If someone is going to use the extinguisher, are they capable? Children should not be left in charge. Call 911 immediately and alert others to leave the building.

If you need to use a fire extinguisher, remember the word PASS. This will help you if you can’t think clearly during an emergency. PASS stands for:

- Pull the pin. Hold the extinguisher with the nozzle pointing away from you and release the locking mechanism. Face the fire, staying six to eight feet away from the flames as you prepare to use the extinguisher.
- Aim low. Point the extinguisher at the base of the fire. Keep your back to the exit so you can leave in a hurry.
- Squeeze the lever slowly and evenly.
- Sweep the nozzle from side-to-side.

# Don’t waste time until there’s no time to waste.

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# Exhausted From Everyday Stress?

YOU'RE NOT ALONE. AN EXPERT SHARES HER ADVICE FOR DEALING WITH BURNOUT



BY NADIA LAWS

**If you're feeling tired, overwhelmed and overburdened, you're not alone.**

According to Latisha Lister-Burgess, Executive Director of the Employee Assistance Programme of Bermuda, burnout is at an all-time high due to the increased demands and stressors faced by parents, caregivers and everyday workers throughout the pandemic.

She shares her tips on how to spot the signs of burnout and stop it in its tracks...

**Royal Gazette:** Experts are always talking about the Great Resignation, where large numbers of professionals are leaving their jobs. Is that partly because of burnout?

**Latisha Lister-Burgess:** Definitely. I think the misunderstanding about the Great Resignation is that people are looking for more job benefits, but really people are looking for better life balance. After having two years of stress brought on by COVID, many are still recovering from the traumatic experience of being isolated, in-and-out of lockdown and in quarantine. The pandemic forced us to live in a very different way than how we function naturally as humans. Then there was the unspoken pressure that many employees felt, like they had to prove that work-from-home was possible, so for some people there was more work and less boundaries. There was this constant pressure to answer another email or

jump on another meeting, even if it was scheduled at 7pm. The question is: did you do that prior to the pandemic? Probably not in some cases, so the lines were definitely blurred. On top of that there were competing pressures added in, like parenting. Before the pandemic, many schools allowed parents to drop off their child before 8am, however support services like that have mostly disappeared. As a result, some people are saying 'I can't do this rat race anymore.'

**RG:** Through your role at EAP, you speak to a large number of employees. How are they coping or not coping with all these additional pressures?

**LLB:** There's very much a sense of 'how do I keep this all together.' For many people they have gotten burnt out from trying to keep all the balls up in the air and are thinking: 'What's the cost to me: my personal life, emotional and physical health and my family.' Some companies have created safe spaces where employees can talk about these issues. However, others have not and the pressures are still there. People are coming to a place where they have to decide for themselves: is this truly working for me?



Latisha Lister-Burgess

**RG:** How would you describe "burnout?"

**LLB:** Burnout is an interesting phenomenon because it feels like stress. People think if they work harder things will smooth out, but we create more pressures for ourselves and we start spinning faster but becoming less productive. The more we fall behind, the more we run to try to catch up. With burnout it's important to stop and assess what's possible. You have to ask: do I still have healthy boundaries? Is this work-life balance something I can manage? Do I have a village of support to help with what we need? People wait until they're completely exhausted before they make necessary changes, but I encourage people to do a life assessment every three to six months to look at what's happening in their life right now, how they feel and whether everything that's on their plate can be carried in this season of life. Can I be a PTA president, a CEO, a working mom and a volunteer? Or which of those roles or commitments cannot sit at this table right now because it's not all possible?

**RG:** Who is burnout most likely to affect?

**LLB:** In my experience people most at risk of burnout are usually high performers. They feel this strong internal pressure to show and prove 'I'm still a star.' They want to go above and beyond

to meet others' expectations. But what we all have to realise is capability and capacity are two different things. Yes, I'm capable of running a company, having children and doing life, but do I have the emotional/physical room and the time to do it all well right now? When we keep getting asked to do things, we think it's a sign we should show our ability. However, the fact that people ask you doesn't mean you are indebted to say yes. You are responsible for assessing: is this a reasonable request for this season of my life?

**RG:** What are some of the physical signs you may be overwhelmed or burnt out?

**LLB:** It really depends on the individual and how their body handles stress. Some people lose weight because they are constantly skipping meals, while others gain weight. The key is to understand the unique signs for when your body is under stress. It could be biting nails, insomnia, tightness in the chest, feeling like your mind is racing or like you can't turn it off, over-productivity or even waking up at 2am. There are individual warning signs that your personal engine light is coming on. Once it starts flashing, you have a choice to make: either stop or keep going and risk burnout.

**RG:** If someone gets to that place where they are burnt out, what are the steps they should take to reverse course?

**LLB:** I encourage people to have real conversations and to find

safe spaces where they can say 'I'm not okay.' Therapy can be very helpful because there's often an emotional component to why people keep saying yes. They may be addicted to people-pleasing or believe subconsciously that their value is tied to their productivity. So the better you can understand 'why' the better positioned you are to do something about it. Another important step is to start creating better boundaries. Look at what's on your plate and what brings you joy versus what makes you feel stressed or burdened. It may mean having those brave conversations at work and saying 'I know I've always functioned this way, but I can't do that anymore.' We often have more agency than we think, but it's only when we feel comfortable saying 'I'm entitled to having a happy, healthy life' that we start making radical decisions.

**RG:** Is there something employers can do to better support their staff with burnout?

**LLB:** I think organisations have to respect people's boundaries. A lot of the time employees feel if they say something they'll get into trouble, but if they feel safe and supported they can speak up before it's too late. I also encourage companies to tell employees what support options are available in their benefits packages, like free counselling or massages through their health insurer. This information is usually tucked away in a handbook somewhere, but not promoted well enough so that employees can use it to their full advantage.

# Vaccines Are A Matter Of Personal Responsibility

STAY ON TOP OF YOUR HEALTH YEAR ROUND BY ERIN SILVER

Vaccinations have been an important topic of discussion over the past two years. As coincidence would have it, this year marked the 20th Anniversary of Vaccination Week in the Americas (VVA). Every year, more than 40 countries and territories in the Americas, including Bermuda, join in raising awareness about the importance of vaccinations. This event has helped ensure that more than 806 million people have been vaccinated against a range of diseases since 2002.

When it comes to discussing hurricanes and hurricane season, it's a good opportunity to understand which vaccines are recommended to ensure you, your family and your community remain as safe and healthy as possible year round and during emergencies.

"Vaccinations are not mandatory," says Diane Gordon, Disaster Manager for the Bermuda Red Cross. Therefore we have never recommended or suggested to our staff, responders or volunteers what they should do or which vaccine they should have. We have always encouraged our teams, along with our at-risk communities, to conduct their own due

diligence and we have monitored and educated them as much as possible regarding the pros and cons concerning Covid vaccinations."

Steve Cosham is the National Disaster Co-ordinator for the Ministry of National Security with the Government of Bermuda. He's also on the Disaster Risk Reduction and Mitigation Team. He agrees this isn't an easy topic. "If I look at the United Kingdom military, they do not have a mandate that soldiers have to be vaccinated against COVID, for example. If they have a force that comes to Bermuda to help after a hurricane, they won't take people off that force if they aren't vaccinated because that would be discrimination."

Instead, Cosham says it's a matter of personal responsibility. "It's a good idea to see your doctor for regular checkups. When you're there, ask what vaccinations you need to protect yourself."

People need a Tetanus shot every 10 years, for example. This shot is especially helpful for anyone who gets cut, especially during recovery efforts. "You should look at your health

record and see what you've been vaccinated against and when," says Cosham. "See what's available or recommended by your general physician as you age or for your own personal circumstances."

Cosham also suggests checking online with the Ministry of Health if you're travelling overseas. Some countries may have a risk of Malaria or Zika. Ministries of Health liaise with each other to ensure everyone has the latest information. Keep in mind that vaccinations take time to work. The Covid vaccine, for instance, offers full protection two weeks after receiving the shot. That's why these things should be thought about in advance.

"Now's a good time to think about you, your spouse, your children and elder people in your family," says Cosham. "It's good to know your vaccination records in general, not just when things happen."

As a rule, it's also a good idea to keep medical details where you keep passport and financial records so you can keep them safe in an emergency.



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# Safety A Top Priority For Clean-Up Crews

WORKERS MUST TAKE CARE WHILE DEALING WITH POST-STORM HAZARDS

BY TIM SMITH

**Bermuda is littered with hazards after a hurricane, from fallen trees in the road and live wires lurking under piles of debris to buildings that could collapse at any moment and cliffsides that could fall into the ocean.**

After a storm, Belco workers hit the streets from sun-up to late at night, repairing infrastructure such as branch lines so that power can be restored to our homes. Safety is paramount for the clean-up teams charged with the responsibility of putting the island back together. Belco staff and soldiers from the Royal Bermuda Regiment are rigorously trained so that they are aware of all the post-storm dangers and can go about their jobs as safely as possible.

"Belco crews face dangers from obstacles in the road and debris that may fall during restoration efforts," says a Belco spokesperson. "Crews also face dangers from generators that may be connected to a home or business's main

electricity panels that can energize a line that workers believe to be de-energized."

The safety of staff is "first and foremost" in Belco's plans. The spokesperson explains that Belco crews are highly trained and follow precise checklists to ensure safety during restoration efforts. They also undergo regular training to ensure they are up to date with all safety protocols.

Step one is to ensure the weather is calm enough for workers to venture outside and check the lay of the land. "Immediately following a storm, and once winds have decreased and it is safe to venture outside, an advance crew goes out to assess damage and any potential obstacles to Belco vehicles

and crews," the spokesperson says. "Once the advance crew has assessed accessibility and damage to infrastructure are repair crews dispatched in a coordinated manner to address damage according to a pre-planned strategy."

Restoration efforts are coordinated from the central dispatch at Belco's headquarters on Serpentine Road. Belco works alongside other members of the Emergency Measures Organization (EMO), which includes the Bermuda Police Service and the Regiment. Police and the Regiment check roads for obstructions following a storm and report back to Belco when they encounter downed power lines and other damaged infrastructure.

Major Duncan Simons of the Regiment says the biggest threats to soldiers are downed power lines and chainsaw accidents. "We conduct annual chainsaw training or refreshers for all chainsaw operators to mitigate this risk, and we organize a yearly brief with Belco to ensure soldiers are cognizant of the risks," Major Simons says.

"In the case of downed lines, we report pole numbers through our operations room and Commander of Operations and wait for the all-clear when the lines have been deactivated."

Workers from the Bermuda Government also play their part in clean-ups, once the EMO has confirmed winds have subsided and it's safe for them to get out and about. A Parks Department spokesperson says staff include instructors who are trained and certified to provide CPR, use

automated external defibrillators (AED) and first aid. They carry fully stocked first aid kits on the trucks that can be used if required. The higher certified staff will also have AEDs and oxygen," he says.

Another group that springs into action after a storm are the volunteers at Keep Bermuda Beautiful (KBB).

Executive director Traci Burgess says teams are strongly encouraged to turn their attention firstly to their own property and neighbourhood, meaning adverse weather conditions have long since subsided by the time they begin clean-up operations at public beaches and parks.

The fierce winds of a hurricane often cause serious damage to Bermuda's landscape, causing beach erosion and areas such as cliffsides to become unstable. "There's debris and damage to roads, there could be cliffsides falling off," says Burgess. "When it's safe to go, our volunteers head up to spots like the Railway Trail, where there are cliffs and rocky areas. We caution them about not overdoing it. They might see some trash tangled up in the trees, but you might have to walk along rocks to get there."

Don't take any risks. "We want to make sure our volunteers are working in the safest way possible. We discourage people from walking along any dangerous routes like cliffs."

Volunteers must also watch out for storm surge as they clear the beach. "We talk about water safety

when they're on the beaches," Burgess says. "We tell our volunteers not to go too far, especially on the South Shore."

KBB also provides neon vests, road signs and eight-foot flutter flags to ensure motorists drive with caution while volunteers clear the roads.

## SHOW YOUR APPRECIATION FOR CLEAN-UP CREWS

We may feel we have enough on our plates dealing with the hurricane aftermath in our own homes, but we should always spare a thought for the teams on the front line. One way to show your appreciation is simply to stay out of the way while they go about their work. "Belco staff work long shifts, often in stifling heat and humidity following a storm," says a spokesperson. "Work carries on from sun-up to sundown until every customer has had power restored. Staff are often away from their families and homes, which may require repairs and clean-up, too. The public can show their appreciation by keeping out of the way of crews as they work and by offering their thanks and encouragement."

"We're thankful to all our volunteers for the great work they do," adds Burgess. "That includes those who volunteer after a storm and all our other volunteers and partners. They have a strong emotional connection to helping keep Bermuda beautiful."



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# Are you ready?

During hurricane season, your emergency plan should include a list of items that you can keep stocked in your home. This hurricane preparedness grocery list should include a first aid kit, water, non-perishable foods and other supplies you may need if you evacuate or stay home during a storm. Check out this emergency supply list to prepare yourself and your family.

## HURRICANE SEASON PREP

### FOOD

Plan on stocking at least a five-day supply of non-perishable food that requires no refrigeration and little preparation. This includes:

- Dry cereal
- Canned goods: fruit, vegetables, juice, soups, meats, pasta, beans
- Nuts, dried fruits
- Peanut butter
- Bread
- Crackers, potato chips
- Granola and energy bars
- Un-refrigerated fruit: bananas, apples, oranges
- Pet food
- Baby food and bottles
- Rice and pasta
- Pasta sauce
- Seasoning
- Granulated sugar, honey
- Oats
- Tea bags, coffee
- Pancake mix

### KEY SUPPLIES

**Water** – 1 gallon per 1 person per day. For a family of 4 for 5 days, you need 20 gallons. Save water in a bathtub for basic sanitation and dishwashing, but do not drink this water.

**First Aid Kit** – Band-Aids, bandages, antibiotic ointment, bleach and a medicine dropper so you can create water disinfectant (6 drops of bleach for every 1 gallon of water), hand sanitizer, any necessary medications, hygiene products, and baby products.

**Flashlight** – 1 flashlight per family member and the correct size of extra batteries.

**Tool Kit** – A basic set of tools: hammer, nails, screws, screwdriver, pliers, and knife.

**Sanitation Products** – Toilet paper, moist towelettes, and plastic garbage bags in different sizes.

### OTHER SUPPLIES

Paper towels • Garbage bags • Aluminum foil • Mosquito repellent • Charcoal Lighter • Lighter fluid • Manual can opener • Large sealable bags to store important documents • Strike anywhere matches • Resealable sandwich bags Hand sanitizer • Dish soap • Paper plates and cups • Plastic utensils • Baby diapers, wipes and rash ointment • Insulated coolers • Ice Packs • Bags of ice.

Rain gear • Plastic sheeting • Rope • Duct Tape • Grill • Cash • At least ONE fully-charged cellular phone • Pet leash, collar, food bowls and carrier.

## Food Safety

IF YOU LOSE POWER, FOLLOW THIS THREE-STEP PROCEDURE

- 1** Eat perishable items in your pantry, refrigerator, etc. as soon as possible, and as long as fridge temperature is below 40°F.
- 2** Eat perishable items in your freezer. As long as food contains ice crystals in the center, that means it's still safe to eat.
- 3** Eat your stock of non-perishable items.

Never taste food to determine its safety!

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