



## How to Protect Your Home from a Wind Storm

By Brian Kearney, Owner of Neponset Valley Construction

Hurricanes and tropical storms can wreak havoc for homeowners. Many insurance policies that include hurricane damage do not include most flood damage. Just one inch of flood water can cost several thousand dollars to clean up.

Windows and doors are especially vulnerable to wind damage and water can easily enter the home if they are breached. Protecting windows and doors will help prevent injuries from flying glass and lessen a home's flood risk. Wind entering a home through compromised openings can even cause dangerous air pressure that may damage walls and the roof.

Hurricane film is helpful to protect windows and can be left in place year round. An added bonus is that it also blocks ultraviolet light that fades fabrics and carpets and it costs about \$25/linear foot. Plywood is an effective and inexpensive option for window cover. You'll spend about \$2/foot if you do it yourself. Ideally boards should be at least 5/8 of an inch thick and approximately eight inches larger on each side of the door or window. Be sure to attach them to the home's walls, not window frames, with heavy-duty anchors and screws. A drawback of plywood is that it can be hard to get right before the storm and if you put it up, and lose power, the home will be very dark.

Garage doors can be flimsy and are extremely vulnerable to wind gusts. You can brace your garage with vertical and horizontal two by four boards anchored to the surrounding wall. Retrofit wind guards for garage doors are available but will run several hundred dollars.

Those of us lucky enough to have basements should be probably ride out the storm there, as long as it isn't flooding. In the lowest level of your home will be safest from broken tree limbs and falling trees. Make sure you have water, flashlights, some snacks, and a couple of your favorite board games.