



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Suzi Oppenheimer

## Senator Oppenheimer Urges Citizens to Prepare for Hurricane Irene

SUZI OPPENHEIMER August 26, 2011

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*Asks New Yorkers to take all necessary precautions to ensure safety during heavy storms*

State Senator Suzi Oppenheimer (D-Mamaroneck) is encouraging all citizens to take the appropriate precautionary steps to protect their safety, as well as their families and homes.

Senator Oppenheimer advises that, “ Extreme storms present safety risks that can be reduced by taking simple steps to prepare for some of the storm impacts. It is better to anticipate power outages, strong winds, and flooding in advance. I urge everyone to take steps now.”

Hurricane Irene’s current path has weather services predicting the storm will hit Westchester as early as Sunday morning with high winds and heavy rain. Governor Andrew Cuomo has declared a state of emergency, which enables New York to use state resources to assist local governments more effectively and quickly. It also allows the state to activate the national "Emergency Management Assistance Compact" to bring in resources from out of the state, and enables New York to access key federal resources earlier in anticipation of an emergency.

The best way to prepare for an emergency is to create and complete a checklist. Here are some suggestions on how to get ready for the hurricane:

- Get an Emergency Supply Kit, which includes items like non-perishable food, water, a battery-powered or hand-crank radio, extra flashlights and batteries. You may want to prepare a portable kit and keep it in your car in case you are told to evacuate.
- Prepare your family by making a Family Emergency Plan. Your family may not be together when disaster strikes, so it is important to know how you will contact one another, how you will get back together and what you will do in case of an emergency.

- Prepare your home and property. Hurricanes cause heavy rains that can cause extensive flood damage.
- Plan to bring in all outdoor furniture, decorations, garbage cans and anything else that is not tied down.
- Keep all trees and shrubs well trimmed so they are more wind resistant.
- Secure your home by closing shutters, and securing outdoor objects or bringing them inside.
- Turn off utilities as instructed. Otherwise, turn the refrigerator thermostat to its coldest setting and keep its doors closed.
- Turn off propane tanks.
- Reinforce your garage doors; if wind enters a garage, it can cause dangerous and expensive structural damage.
- Ensure a supply of water for sanitary purposes such as cleaning and flushing toilets. Fill the bathtub and other large containers with water.

As a former Mayor of the Village of Mamaroneck and in her work in the Senate, Senator Oppenheimer has experience in disaster planning and mitigation issues.

Senator Oppenheimer concluded, “Your safety in a hurricane can be improved by seeking information and acting now. Please contact your local government for information on local emergency shelters and what you can do to help prepare others in our neighborhood.”

For more information, please visit:

- <http://www.dhses.ny.gov/>
- \* <http://www.ready.gov/america/index.html>
- <http://www.nhc.noaa.gov/outreach/prepare.shtml>
- <http://www.redcross.org/www-files/Documents/pdf/Preparedness/checklists/Hurricane.pdf>
- \* <http://emergencyservices.westchestergov.com>

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