

# Your Energy Connection



May 2014

## Hurricane Season is Approaching...Are You Ready?

**W**hen you hear names like Hugo, Fran and Floyd, one word probably comes to mind: hurricane. The onset of a hurricane brings the potential for damage due to flooding, strong winds, tornadoes, and flying debris.

The Atlantic hurricane season lasts June 1 to November 30. As the season approaches, Rocky Mount Public Utilities (RMPU) would like to remind customers about the importance of making preparations *before* a hurricane strikes.

### Before a hurricane

- Build an Emergency Kit that includes basic items such as:
  - » Water (one gallon per person per day)
  - » Non-perishable food (at least a three-day supply)
  - » Manual can opener
  - » Flashlight and extra batteries
  - » First aid kit
  - » Local maps
  - » Battery-powered radio
  - » Prescription medication
  - » Moist towelettes and garbage bags (for personal sanitation)
  - » Whistle (to signal for help)
  - » Infant formula and diapers
  - » Pet food
  - » Blankets
  - » Matches in a waterproof container
  - » Important family documents
  - » Cash or traveler's checks
- Fill the car gas tank.
- Bring in anything from outside that can be picked up by the wind (e.g. bicycles, lawn furniture, etc.)

- In case your family is separated, prepare a family communications plan that includes a method for contacting one another. For more information, visit [www.ready.gov/family-communications](http://www.ready.gov/family-communications).
- Learn safe evacuation routes. Determine where you would go and how you would get there.
- Sign up to receive alerts from the CodeRED Emergency Notification System. Rocky Mount's local emergency response team uses CodeRED to notify the community in the event of an emergency situation, such as an evacuation. To sign up, visit [www.rockymountnc.gov/fire](http://www.rockymountnc.gov/fire).
- Keep a wired telephone handset and/or a cell phone available in case of a power outage. (Make sure the cell phone is fully charged and keep a car charger available.)

### Online Resources

#### RMPU Emergency Services:

[www.rockymountnc.gov/utilities/emergency.html](http://www.rockymountnc.gov/utilities/emergency.html)

#### National Hurricane Center:

[www.nhc.noaa.gov/prepare](http://www.nhc.noaa.gov/prepare)

#### Emergency Management:

[www.fema.gov](http://www.fema.gov)  
[www.ready.gov](http://www.ready.gov)

#### American Red Cross:

[www.redcross.org](http://www.redcross.org)  
[www.safeandwell.org](http://www.safeandwell.org)

#### Federal Insurance and Mitigation Administration:

[www.floodsmart.gov](http://www.floodsmart.gov)



## There's an App for that

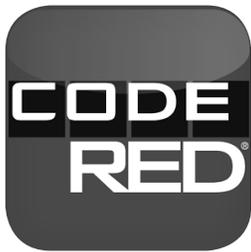
In the event of a hurricane or other emergency, having up-to-date information at your finger tips could be life-saving. Check out these free apps for your smartphone, tablet or other mobile device.



### Red Cross Mobile Apps

The American Red Cross has free apps that offer expert advice on First Aid, Tornadoes, Hurricanes, Floods, and Earthquakes. There are even apps for finding Red Cross shelters and searching for volunteer opportunities.

For more information or to download the apps, visit [www.redcross.org/prepare/mobile-apps](http://www.redcross.org/prepare/mobile-apps).



### CodeRED Mobile Alert App

The CodeRED app provides localized, real-time alerts generated by public safety officials. The notifications range from missing persons, wildfires, evacuations, and alerts on active shooters and severe weather.

For more information or to download the app, visit [www.ecnetwork.com/coderedmobilealert](http://www.ecnetwork.com/coderedmobilealert).

## Billing Credits Available

Through the Load Management Program, billing credits are available to RMPU electric customers. By using Load Management switches, RMPU is able to hold down the cost of providing power. These savings are passed on to you in the form of a monthly credit on your electricity bill. There is no cost to you for the switches or installation.

- Electric Water Heater: \$2.00 credit per month
- Electric Heat Strips: \$15.00 credit per month during three months of winter
- Central Air Conditioner: \$20.00 credit per month during three months of summer

**For more information or to sign up for the load management program, call (252) 467-4803.**

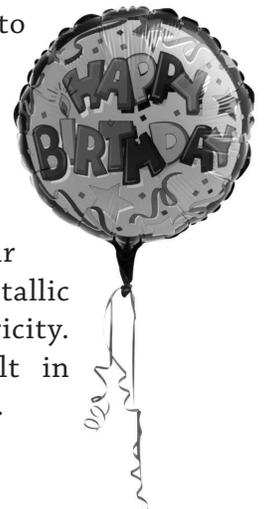


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## Celebrate...Safely!

Mylar balloons are a great way to celebrate birthdays, holidays, and special occasions. However, they can quickly become dangerous if they float away and come into contact with power lines. Mylar balloons are made of a metallic material that conducts electricity. Just one balloon could result in power outages, fires or injuries.



When it comes to Mylar balloons:

- Never release them outdoors
- Always keep them attached to a weight
- Before disposal, puncture the balloon to ensure lingering helium doesn't cause them to float away

If a balloon or other toy does get caught in a power line, never try to remove it. Call RMPU at (252) 467-4800 immediately.

## Portable Generators and Carbon Monoxide Dangers

Portable generators are great resources during a power outage, but they must be used safely. Carbon monoxide from a generator is deadly and can incapacitate you within minutes.



Please follow these guidelines to keep you and your family protected from carbon monoxide poisoning:

- Only use generators outdoors in well-ventilated areas away from doors, windows, vents and other openings. This will prevent exhaust fumes from entering the home.
- Install carbon monoxide detectors (either battery-operated or plug-in with battery backup) inside the home.

