

## 2014 NATIONAL SURVEY IDENTIFIES TOP HURRICANE MYTHS

A survey commissioned by the [Federal Alliance for Safe Homes \(FLASH\)](#)® by Harris Interactive from March 3 - 5 found that three myths about hurricane preparedness and mitigation persist among those most at-risk for storms. [Click here for full survey results.](#)

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**MYTH:** I need to evacuate based on the strength/wind speed of a hurricane.

**FINDING:** 84% incorrectly believe evacuations are based on hurricane wind speed.

**FACT:** Hurricane evacuation zones are defined by the threat of storm surge and inland flooding rather than wind speed or hurricane category because storm surge is the greatest threat to life and property.

**ACTION:** Find out today if you live in a hurricane evacuation zone by contacting your local officials or visiting [www.flash.org/hurricane-season](http://www.flash.org/hurricane-season). Always plan and stay alert for evacuation orders throughout hurricane season and heed the orders when issued.

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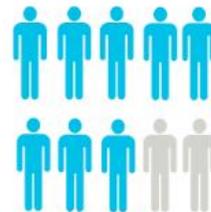
**BACKGROUND:** Storm surge is a large volume of water pushed ashore by winds associated with the storm. Storm surge can cause flood water levels to rise quickly and flood large areas – sometimes in just minutes, posing a significant threat for drowning. Evacuation zones are based on hurricane storm surge zones determined by the National Hurricane Center using ground elevation and an area’s vulnerability to storm surge.

"Most people think of wind with a hurricane, but in recent years, water from storm surge and inland flooding has done the most damage and killed the most people," said Rick Knabb, Ph.D., Director of NOAA's National Hurricane Center (NHC). "Families need to find out if they live in an evacuation zone today, have a plan in a place and immediately follow evacuation orders when issued."

Despite what many believe, tropical storms, Category 1 and 2 hurricanes, post-tropical cyclones and even Nor'easters can all cause life-threatening storm surge. In 2008, Hurricane Ike made landfall as a Category 2 hurricane, bringing storm surges of 15 to 20 feet above normal tide levels. In 2012, Tropical Storm Debby produced storm surge of seven feet in the Florida Panhandle. And, heavy rains from hurricanes and tropical storms often cause flooding well inland from the initial strike zone.

During Superstorm Sandy in 2012, the Sochacki family of Union Beach, N.J. lost their home when it was broken apart and swept out to sea. FLASH documented their story in the face of violent storm surge in its [Tale of Two Homes](#) series in hopes of saving lives and homes in the future.

**84%** think they need to EVACUATE based on strength/wind speed of a hurricane



**FACT:** Storm surge is the greatest threat to life and property from a hurricane regardless of wind speed

Beginning this hurricane season, the NHC will issue an experimental *Potential Storm Surge Flooding Map* for areas along the Gulf and Atlantic coasts of the United States at risk of storm surge and inland flooding from a tropical cyclone. These real-time maps will show areas where storm surge could occur and how high above ground the water could reach in those areas. The interactive map will be available at [www.hurricanes.gov](http://www.hurricanes.gov) when hurricane, or in some cases, tropical storm watches or warnings are in effect.

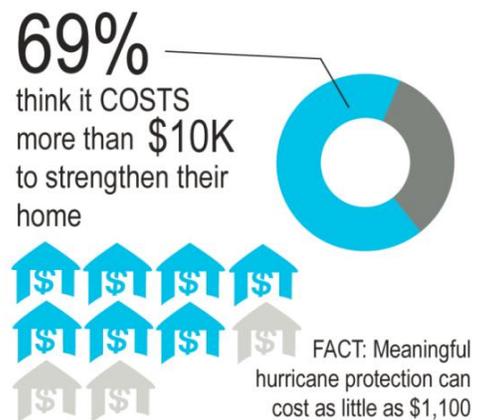
*According to the 2014 FLASH Evacuation Zone Identification Survey, 152 (68%) of 222 coastal communities have evacuation zone maps available online for cities, counties, parishes, and regions from Texas to Maine. [Click here to help families determine if they reside in an evacuation zone.](#)*

**MYTH:** Making my home stronger against severe weather will cost more than \$10,000.

**FINDING:** Seven of 10 Americans believe it costs more than \$10,000 to make homes stronger against hurricanes.

**FACT:** Hurricanes put homes to the test but there are a number of affordable products that can minimize damage and the need for costly repairs. With an investment of \$1,100, homeowners can brace garage doors, install plywood shutters and seal the roof deck to reduce wind uplift.

**ACTION:** Take steps to protect your home today using tested and approved methods and products.



**BACKGROUND:** The nonprofit Federal Alliance for Safe Homes provides current, reliable all-hazard information on family safety and affordable disaster mitigation at [www.flash.org](http://www.flash.org).

1. Garage doors are often the most vulnerable opening on a home in a hurricane, but they can be braced for as little as \$150.
2. Windows and sliding glass doors can be protected from flying debris with temporary plywood shutters from \$275 to \$750 or with corrugated steel or aluminum shutters from \$7 to \$15 per foot. [Plywood shutters](#) can be measured, cut and labeled in advance and secured in place with nails, screws or anchor bolts and clips before a storm approaches.
3. Water intrusion through the roof deck joints is a common source of damage; however, [peel and stick water barrier](#) can be applied during re-roofing for as little as \$750. In Hurricane Charley in 2004, leakage from roofs caused a majority of water damage inside homes.
4. Strong winds can compromise the integrity of a home's roof. During new construction, install hurricane straps and clips for approximately 50 cents apiece. They are easy to install and help keep a roof from blowing off. For a few hundred dollars, [hurricane straps](#) will securely attach the roof to the walls and walls



to the foundation, creating a rigid support system and continuous load path so the roof is tied to the house.

- 5. Roof uplift resistance is critical in high wind and may be tripled by applying a 1/4 inch bead of [APA AFG-01 certified wood adhesive](#) along the intersection of the roof deck and roof rafter or truss chord on both sides of the beam.



**MYTH:** Taping windows with masking or duct tape helps prevent hurricane damage.

**FINDING:** 54% incorrectly believe taping helps prevent hurricane damage.

**FACT:** Taping windows wastes preparation time, does not stop windows from breaking in a hurricane, and does not make cleanup easier. In fact, taping windows may create larger shards of glass that can cause serious injuries. Masking tape, duct tape, window film and specially marketed “hurricane tape” are insufficient and potentially dangerous.

**ACTION:** Go Tapeless! Protect glass doors and windows with tested and approved hurricane shutters or properly installed emergency plywood shutters.

**BACKGROUND:** Optimal family and home protection follows when all windows and openings (entry doors, garage doors, gable end vents, etc.) are constructed of impact-resistant materials or covered with tested and approved impact-resistant materials.

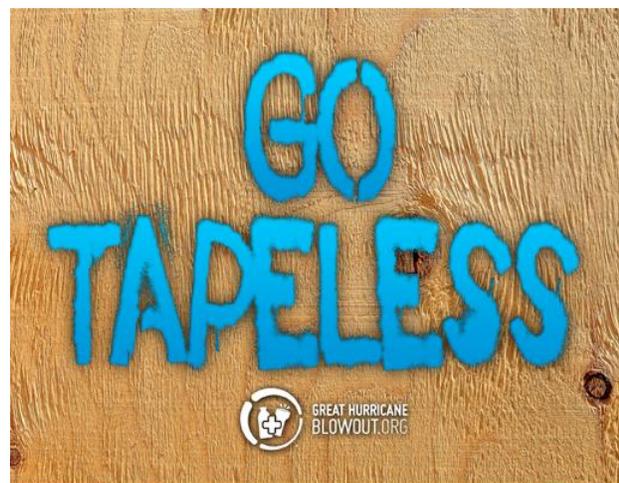
And, installing plywood shutters can be a reliable temporary option in an emergency. But make no mistake – taping is not adequate to provide hurricane protection.



54% say this is true

46% say this is false

FACT: Taping windows wastes time and money, and may be dangerous



## Methodology

*This survey was conducted online within the United States between March 3-5, 2014 among 2,112 adults aged 18 and older by Harris Poll on behalf of Salter Mitchell via its Quick Query omnibus product. Figures for age, sex, race/ethnicity, education, region and household income were weighted where necessary to bring them into line with their actual proportions in the population. Propensity score weighting was used to adjust for respondents' propensity to be online.*

*All sample surveys and polls, whether or not they use probability sampling, are subject to multiple sources of error which are most often not possible to quantify or estimate, including sampling error, coverage error, error associated with nonresponse, error associated with question wording and response options, and post-survey weighting and adjustments. Therefore, the words "margin of error" are avoided as they are misleading. All that can be calculated are different possible sampling errors with different probabilities for pure, unweighted, random samples with 100% response rates. These are only theoretical because no published polls come close to this ideal.*

*Respondents for this survey were selected from among those who have agreed to participate in our surveys. The data have been weighted to reflect the composition of the adult population. Because the sample is based on those who agreed to participate in the online panel, no estimates of theoretical sampling error can be calculated.*

[Click here for full survey results.](#)

### **About FLASH**

Federal Alliance for Safe Homes (FLASH)<sup>®</sup>, a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization, is the country's leading consumer advocate for strengthening homes and safeguarding families from natural and manmade disasters. FLASH collaborates with more than 100 innovative and diverse partners that share its vision of making America a more disaster-resilient nation including: BASF, Federal Emergency Management Agency, Florida Division of Emergency Management, The Home Depot<sup>®</sup>, International Code Council, Kohler<sup>®</sup> Generators, National Weather Service, Portland Cement Association, RenaissanceRe, Simpson Strong-Tie<sup>®</sup>, State Farm<sup>™</sup>, USAA<sup>®</sup> and WeatherPredict Consulting Inc. In 2008, FLASH opened the interactive weather experience StormStruck: A Tale of Two Homes<sup>®</sup> in Lake Buena Vista, FL. Learn more about FLASH and gain access to its free consumer resources by visiting [www.flash.org](http://www.flash.org) or calling (877) 221- SAFE (7233). Also, get timely safety tips to ensure that you and your family are protected from natural and manmade disasters by subscribing to the FLASH blog – Protect Your Home in a FLASH.