

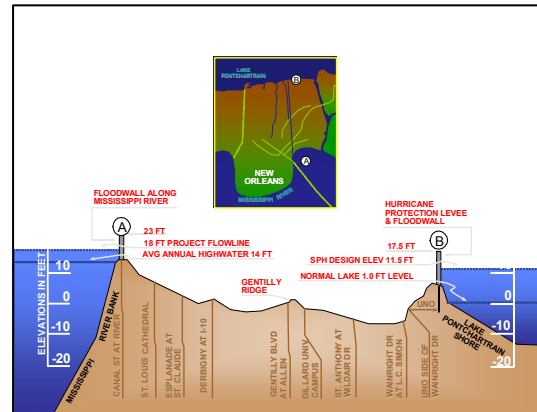
Why you must evacuate New Orleans in a storm

New Orleans is not like any other city in the world. Because of its unusual geography, it is much more likely to take damage during a storm that will result in extreme loss of life, injury and property damage.

The City of New Orleans lies below sea level. It was built on swamp land hundreds of years ago and due to weather, climate changes, and erosion, the city has sunk. This makes New Orleans like a bowl.

The reason New Orleans does not flood every day is because of levees, which are high walls and flood gates that prevent water from entering the City. During normal rainfall, pumps in the sewers remove water from the streets.

During Hurricane Katrina, high winds and rain overwhelmed the pumps and damaged the levees, causing New Orleans' protection to fail. Flood waters entered the City, killing over 1,000 people who stayed behind and leading to billions of dollars in property damage.



One year later, New Orleans is still trying to repair the damage to the pumps and levees. Some parts of the City look clean and safe, others are still devastated. Although much progress has been made, conditions are not safe.

There will be no shelters in the City in a severe storm. Hotels will close, businesses will close and a curfew will be put in place to prevent theft. All people are expected to leave and those who stay may be arrested if they leave their homes.

Make plans to drive out of the danger area when messages on the radio or TV warn of danger from storms. The northern part of the state is above sea level, as are surrounding states such as Texas, Mississippi and Alabama. Make sure you bring your family, your pets, your possessions, and anything of value to you, as it may be destroyed if you leave it behind.

If you have no vehicle, the City has a plan to evacuate people without transportation. This plan, called City-Assisted Evacuation Plan, is open to anyone who needs help, whether a Louisiana resident, a resident of another state, or a foreigner. The CAEP will provide you a bus ride to a shelter outside the danger area. Although it is easier to register you if you have documentation, you will not be turned away or punished if you have no documents or social security number. We will ask only for your name, birthday and address.

Your life is important. Don't stay behind and put yourself at risk. Make plans to evacuate today.