

Safety CHALLENGE

Prepared for the 2006 Storm Season?

(NAPSA)—The 2006 hurricane season is expected to be an active one. The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Association (NOAA) predicts 13 to 16 storms including up to six major hurricanes. Accuweather has a similar outlook, predicting one in six Americans could be directly impacted. President Bush and the NOAA are warning people to be prepared following last year's devastating hurricanes.

During a recent news conference at the NOAA National Hurricane Center, Deputy Secretary of Commerce David A. Sampson said, "The impact from these storms extends well beyond coastal areas so it is vital that residents in hurricane-prone areas get ready in advance of the hurricane season."

Three Days Of Supplies

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) says families should have a response plan and an emergency preparedness kit. The Red Cross says a kit should include enough supplies for each family member for three days and it should be checked every six months. Emergency preparedness kits should include water, food, first aid and medical supplies, clothing, blankets, tools, sanitation items and important documents.

Power outages are a real threat during severe storms, so backup power is also an important element of an emergency preparedness kit. Gas generators are a common choice, but they have some drawbacks. First, they need fuel, which can often be in short supply during emergency situations. They are also noisy and produce dangerous fumes, so they can't be used indoors.



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Backup Power Is Important

Another option for backup power without these drawbacks is a high-powered battery pack that can provide portable electricity in an emergency. These are available at major retailers and one popular brand is XPower by Xantrex. XPower offers products that range in power levels depending on your needs. XPower products can also jump-start vehicles, inflate tires and include flashlights or built-in radios. These products are clean, efficient, quiet and fumeless, so they are perfect for use inside the home, where generators are not safe.

Having power during an emergency enables people to contact emergency services, keep in touch with family, and stay informed through news and weather updates. Backup power can also provide light, heat or air-conditioning, keep food and medicine refrigerated, and can even power a sump pump to help keep the house dry.

With the high potential for hurricanes striking the U.S. this year, it's time to be prepared. Look for backup power products, such as the new XPower PowerSource 400, at your local Best Buy or select Staples stores.