



NEWS

R E L E A S E

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HUDGENS OFFERS INSURANCE TIPS

Atlanta – After some severe weather passed through parts of Georgia over Labor Day weekend, Insurance and Safety Fire Commissioner Ralph T. Hudgens wants to remind homeowners of some important insurance tips to protect their property from tornadoes, flooding and other weather-related hazards.

“We want all Georgia consumers to be familiar with steps they should take to minimize property damage and financial hardship caused by storms,” Hudgens said.

Hudgens offers these reminders and tips for severe weather preparedness:

- * Make a list of all valuables, furniture, electronics, etc., and photograph or videotape your possessions. Keep copies of the list, photographs and videotape in a safe place outside your home. If your home is damaged or destroyed in a natural disaster, it may be difficult for you to tell your insurance agent what you lost without proof.

- * While a standard homeowner's insurance policy covers damage from high winds and tornadoes, it does not cover damage from flooding. A separate policy must be purchased through the National Flood Insurance Program, and can only be purchased if your community participates in the national program. However, a standard mobile home policy can cover damage caused by floods. Check your policy.

- * Protect your property from further damage. For example, if your roof is damaged, cover it with a tarp to prevent water damage from subsequent rain. Most policies will not cover such damage.

- * Make sure you understand the difference between actual cash value and replacement cost coverage for your contents, and obtain the coverage that best suits your needs. With actual cash value, you will receive the current value of an item when you file a claim. In other words, you'll get only "used" prices for your furniture, TV, etc. With replacement cost coverage, your claim amount will be enough to purchase new items.

* Keep your insurance policy numbers and your agent's phone number in a safe place as well.

* If disaster strikes, contact your agent or insurance company immediately.

If you have questions about property insurance, you can call a representative of Commissioner Hudgens' Consumer Services Division at 404-656-2070 or toll-free at 1-800-656-2298. Calls are taken from 8 a.m. to 7 p.m. Monday through Friday. You may also visit the Commissioner's Web site, www.oci.ga.gov for more information.

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