

## Why is hazard mitigation important?

Hazard mitigation is defined as taking action to reduce the loss of life and the damage to property, infrastructure, natural, cultural, and economic resources when faced with disaster. In order to keep Cape Cod beautiful, we must take hazard mitigation seriously.

### Cape Cod is vulnerable\* to:

- Flooding – inland and coastal
- Shoreline change
- Extreme precipitation
- Winter storms
- Extreme wind
- Hurricanes
- Wildfires

*\* as identified by Hazard Mitigation Plans for Barnstable County towns*

## Other Useful Links & Resources:

### MA DEP Checklist for a Hazard Free Home

<https://www.mass.gov/info-details/safely-manage-hazardous-household-products>

### Recyclopedia

<https://recyclesmartma.org/>

### Guide to Safely Managing Household Hazardous Waste Products

<https://www.capecodextension.org/hazardouswaste/disposal/>

### Department of Homeland Security Emergency Preparedness Plans

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

### Barnstable County Regional Emergency Preparedness Committee

<https://www.bcrepc.org/>

### Prepare Your Home

<https://www.bcrepc.org/prepare/preparedness-steps/>

### OTA Less Toxic Alternatives List

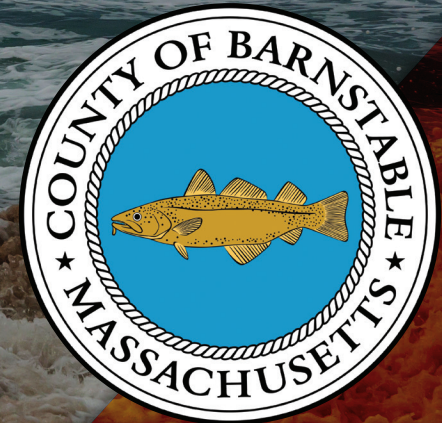
[https://www.mass.gov/files/less\\_toxic\\_alternatives.pdf](https://www.mass.gov/files/less_toxic_alternatives.pdf)

## IMPORTANT CONTACTS:

- **Shannon Jarbeau, Floodplain Specialist & Community Rating System Coordinator /**  
508-375-6952, [shannon.jarbeau@barnstablecounty.org](mailto:shannon.jarbeau@barnstablecounty.org)
- **Kalliope Chute, HazMat Environmental Specialist /**  
800-319-2783, [kalliope.chute@barnstablecounty.org](mailto:kalliope.chute@barnstablecounty.org),  
Barnstable County Hazardous Materials Program
- **Barnstable County** ([BarnstableCounty.org](http://BarnstableCounty.org))
- **Woods Hole Sea Grant** ([web.whoi.edu/seagrant](http://web.whoi.edu/seagrant))
- **Love Your Local Water** ([loveyourlocalwater.org](http://loveyourlocalwater.org))

**Cape Cod Cooperative Extension**  
[CAPECODEXTENSION.ORG](http://CAPECODEXTENSION.ORG)

## Hazard Mitigation Tips for **FAMILIES**



**Cape Cod Cooperative Extension**  
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# First Things First:

Determine your household risk tolerance and risk acceptance in the event that you do not plan on taking any measures to mitigate hazards

Example of risk tolerance: If you do not take any mitigation measures, can you and your family survive the potential consequences?

## Enhancing Residential Resiliency

- Brace hot water heaters to keep them from toppling and rupturing gas lines
- Strengthen walls, foundations, and chimneys to limit damage
- Bring inside or secure (ground anchors or straps) all outdoor objects such as: securing air conditioning units, bringing in tables and chairs, and much more
- Secure propane and other tanks and containers to limit spills and reduce the risk of fire
- Place sandbags around structures to help divert debris and water
- Remove dead or diseased trees and trim limbs away from buildings and water pipes
- Cover and secure windows and doors (with protective shutters)
- Use fire-safe landscaping and fire-resistant building materials
- All components of the electrical system, including the wiring, should be raised above minimum requirements for an added level of safety
- Install sewer backflow valves to protect your home from sewage backup during flooding

## Safe Natural Gas Shut Off

Locate your main gas service shut off valve. This is usually the first fitting on the natural gas supply pipe coming out of the ground next to the meter.

In the open position, the lever is in line with the pipe and the two holes are opposite each other.

Using an adjustable wrench, turn the lever 90 degrees so the two holes line up and now the gas flow is off.

## Safe Propane Shut Off

Extinguish all smoking materials and any other open flames or sources of ignition. Everyone should vacate the building, vehicle or area.

Close the gas shutoff valve on the propane tank or cylinder by turning it clockwise

Call your propane supplier and/or your local fire department from a cellular telephone or a neighbors telephone.

Even if you do not continue to smell propane, do not open or turn on the propane supply valve. Do not re-enter the building, vehicle or area. Let a qualified propane service technician and/or emergency personnel check for escaped propane.

Have a properly trained propane service technician repair the leak.

## Chemical Resiliency:

Use, store, and dispose of chemicals safely! Store in bins, on shelves, or install overflow containment systems for large quantities. Replace strong household chemicals with less toxic alternatives (*see OTA link on back of brochure*).

### A GREAT RESOURCE!

#### Office of Technical Assistance

Free analysis of chemical hazards, less toxic alternatives, grants

<https://www.mass.gov/orgs/office-of-technical-assistance-and-technology-ota>

### ANOTHER GREAT RESOURCE!

#### UMass Lowell Toxics Use Reduction Institute



Training Events, Company Case Studies, Chemical Fact Sheets, Policy Analyses, Technical Research Reports

Library: <http://guides.turi.org/beyondmsds>

Cleaner Solutions Database: [cleanersolutions.org](http://cleanersolutions.org)  
*Assists in the search for safer cleaning processes by identifying, developing and promoting safer alternatives to hazardous solvents*

### A NOTE ABOUT FLOOD INSURANCE:

Flood insurance is not included in most homeowner insurance policies. Flooding caused by storm surge or rainfall will only be covered under a flood policy. You can get a flood policy no matter where you live, and if your property is outside of the floodplain it will cost you less.

Visit [floodsmart.gov](http://floodsmart.gov) for more information, or talk to your insurance agent about obtaining a flood insurance policy.