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**THE MASTER LOCK COMPANY HELPS FAMILIES PREPARE FOR EXTREME WEATHER**

*Trusted security leader partners with disaster preparedness expert to offer top tips and insights*

**MILWAUKEE** (May 8, 2019) Natural disasters cost Americans \$91 billion in damages in 2018, and already this year, two weather and climate catastrophes caused \$2 billion in losses alone\*. As parts of the country approach tornado, hurricane and flooding seasons, experts underscore the importance of safeguarding assets, especially those irreplaceable personal and financial documents.

"Whether you live in an area that's susceptible to natural disasters, or just looking to put an emergency plan in place, preparing your family and your assets for the unexpected can go a long way towards ensuring their safety," said Justin Matuszek, director of product marketing at The Master Lock Company.

A trusted name in security for nearly 100 years, Master Lock offers a full suite of security solutions and tests its products under severe conditions, including extreme fire and water scenarios, corrosive environments and physical attacks. These rigorous testing facilities allow Master Lock to develop products that offer enhanced durability, reliability and security in myriad circumstances caused by natural disasters.

Importantly, Master Lock wants to be a resource for families and homeowners establishing their own disaster preparedness plans. That's why they're partnering with meteorologist and disaster preparedness expert, Cheryl Nelson, to share expert insights and tips for how to prepare for extreme weather. Nelson is a certified instructor at FEMA's National Preparedness Training Center and has 10 years of experience preparing people for all types of weather.

"Current weather trends show that the number of extreme storms in the U.S. is on the rise, yet many families don't have an emergency plan in place," said Nelson. "While we can't always predict exactly when natural disasters will strike, there are proactive steps we can take now to better prepare ourselves for the future."

**10 Tips for Preparing for Extreme Weather**

- 1. Know What Disasters Could Affect Your Area:** Staying attuned to current weather trends is an important first step. For example, flooding can occur even outside of FEMA-designated flood zones. There is a 30-day waiting period for flood insurance to take effect after purchasing, so don't wait until a storm is approaching.
- 2. Protect Key Documents & Belongings:** Losing important documents like wills, passports, Social Security cards and birth certificates can be significant losses and time consuming to replace. Not to mention, many valuables like jewelry, family photos and heirlooms hold strong sentimental value. Securing these belongings in a fire and water-protected safe, like the durable [SentrySafe Combination Fire/Water Safe](#) or portable [SentrySafe Fire/Water Chest](#), can help keep your precious valuables secure in extreme conditions caused by natural disasters.
- 3. Create Digital Copies:** Do safeguard original versions of key documents and photos, but also create digital copies and store them to the cloud for easy remote access.
- 4. Develop a Home Inventory:** If needed, you can expedite insurance claims after storms by creating a home inventory now. Start by listing and taking photos of your possessions, along with each item's worth, receipts and appraisals, and get into the habit of recording new purchases.

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Property. People. Life.

5. **Protect Your Windows:** In the case of extreme winds, make sure your windows and sliding doors are covered to prevent shattering. Hurricane film, metal shutters or even plywood can help protect your windows against flying debris.
6. **Prepare Your Home and Yard:** Make sure your trees are properly trimmed and ensure your yard is clear of lawn furniture, landscaping equipment and other loose items. Strong winds can also open doors to storage areas and sheds if not properly locked. Master Lock's Laminated Padlocks are "Now Even Stronger," providing users with best-in-class security upgrades to keep storage areas secure.
7. **Consider Investing in a Portable or Home Standby Generator:** Storms can knock out power for days, weeks or longer, but a backup generator can keep important amenities functioning, including the sump pump, refrigerator and heat/air conditioning
8. **Ensure Family and Friends Have Access to Your Home:** In the event that you're trapped inside your home – or want to check on a secondary property remotely – using a lock box can provide property access to those who need it. Options like the durable [Master Lock Portable Lock Box](#) and easy-to-use [Bluetooth Lock Box](#) allow homeowners to access house keys via combination or smartphone.
9. **Develop a Family-Communicated Plan and an Evacuation Plan:** Resources like [Ready.gov](#) provide helpful information on what to do before, during and after each type of natural disaster. Understanding basic guidelines and local evacuation procedures for hurricanes, tornadoes, wildfires and other disasters is step one. Step two? Practice various scenarios with friends and family members, including a plan for your children, special needs family members and pets.
10. **Create an Emergency Kit:** Keep a disaster kit at home and in your vehicle. Key items to store in a kit include:
  - Battery-powered cell phone charger
  - Flashlights and batteries
  - First aid kit
  - Battery-operated NOAA weather radio
  - Non-perishable food
  - Bottled water
  - Cash

For more information on The Master Lock Company's security solutions, visit [www.masterlock.com](http://www.masterlock.com).

\*According to National Oceanic Atmospheric Administration report; April 2019

## About The Master Lock Company

The Master Lock Company provides peace of mind and protection where people live, work and play. Founded in 1921, Master Lock is the leading global manufacturer of padlocks and related security products, providing a broad portfolio of innovative mechanical and electro-mechanical security and safety products for consumer, commercial and industrial end users. The Master Lock Company LLC is an operating unit of Fortune Brands Home & Security, Inc., a leading consumers brands company. For more information, visit [www.masterlock.com](http://www.masterlock.com).

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