

HOMEOWNER RESOURCES



## Which Type of Siding Best Withstands Hurricanes?



When a hurricane or severe storm is predicted for your area, your first concern is undoubtedly for your loved ones. Second, is often your home. Whether or not you need to evacuate, the condition of your siding—and, ultimately, your home—is important. You want a type of [siding](#) that can withstand hurricanes, freeing up energy for you to worry about what really matters.

Whether your area is prone to hurricanes or severe storms, choosing the right type of siding for your home can save you money and protect you from severe damage. In fact, many homeowners do not question their existing siding ahead of a storm. In a March 2021 survey of 694 homeowners living in hurricane-prone areas, only 5 percent said they were concerned with the integrity of their home's siding.

From the [Texas Gulf Coast](#) to Florida, and all over the east coast, many homeowners know that there are necessary steps to take in order to protect their homes against storms in the long run. Choosing siding that is strong enough to stand up to hurricanes—and all the wind and rain that comes with such extreme weather—is essential to keeping your home safe and secure.

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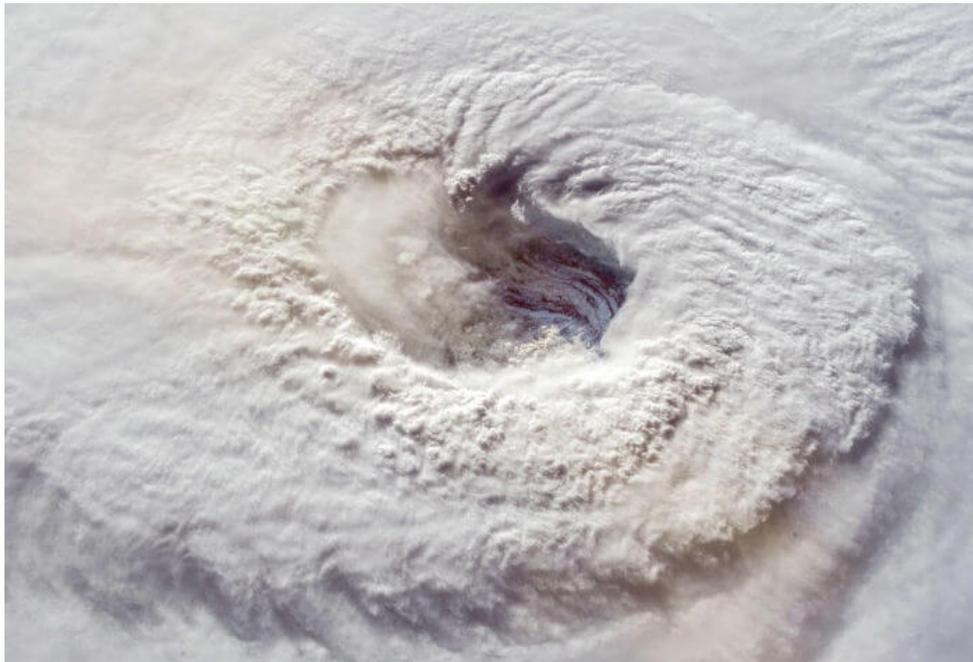
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## Wind and Water Resistant Paints for Siding

If you are in the planning stages of building a home, talk with your contractors about the bones of your house—in other words, the framing—before you discuss siding. Contractors in hurricane-prone areas usually suggest steel reinforced masonry walls instead of wooden framing for increased durability and protection against water damage.

In addition to using masonry walls reinforced with steel to frame your home, properly installed house wrap is vital to maintaining a strong moisture barrier. This is perhaps one of the best ways to prevent leaks, assuming the hurricane damage is not so severe that your walls are damaged.

However, it's the siding of your home that faces the brunt of hurricane damage—and this is exactly why you want to choose the best siding for your home. If replacing your siding is not an option for you right now, there are still actions you can take to protect your home. Using a wind- and water-resistant paint on all types of siding will help as a barrier against water damage from the heavy rains. Most paints with wind- and water-resistant properties can be used on all types of siding.



## Prepare Your Siding for Hurricane Season

A month before hurricane season starts, check your home's siding for signs of wear and tear. Are there any loose boards or any cladding not installed properly? Do you see torn or broken siding pieces or any cracks that could let water in? While you may not be able to replace siding completely right then and there, you can fix any holes or loose siding boards, and seal any cracks.

It is not recommended to begin a major remodeling project—like replacing your siding—a month or less before hurricane season starts. You may run out of time, an early storm could hit, or shortcuts might have to be taken in order to finish before the weather turns bad. When it comes to the quality of your [siding installation](#), you do not want to take any shortcuts or rush the process unnecessarily.

## Which Type of Siding Best Withstands Hurricanes?

Most siding manufacturers perform rigorous testing on their products. They look for durability against wind load and impact, such as from trees and other debris. A good contractor can recommend quality siding options that meet hurricane-resistant standards.

**Wood siding**—which is common on older homes—is easily damaged by hurricanes, severe storms, and sea-salt. If you must use wood siding on your home – for instance, because you live in a historic district – make sure to use high-quality wood, metal flash corners, seal the joints well, and use a water-resistant paint.

**Vinyl siding** is a popular siding choice for many homeowners across the country, but it can crack and tear during high winds. According to [FEMA](#), vinyl siding should be able to withstand 110 mph winds in addition to heavy rains to be considered storm-ready. Ask your contractor if the vinyl they use is up to those standards. However, vinyl is best for homes in moderate climates that don't often have severe storms or hurricanes.

If you are committed to using vinyl siding for your home, heavier gauge vinyl does exist for homes within high-wind areas. You can take further steps to protect your home by making sure the cladding is secure. This will ensure the wind can not get under the siding and cause siding planks to come off the home in a wind gust.

## Fiber Cement Siding: The Recommended Option

**Fiber cement siding** is the preferred type of siding in areas that regularly experience hurricanes. Fiber cement siding—also referred to as [Hardie board siding](#)—comes in many colors and lasts for a long time. Made of cement and sand, fiber cement is preferred over wood, vinyl, and even aluminum in storm-prone areas because it is water- and fire-proof. You may not think of fires during a hurricane, but downed power lines can cause fires before rain put them out. This was a major issue during Hurricane Sandy in 2012—there were fires in Breezy Point, Queens that destroyed over 80 homes.

Fiber cement siding is code-compliant for even the strictest counties, such as those in Florida, because they experience so many hurricanes. Be aware that the [initial investment](#) is higher than installing wood or vinyl siding because of the quality. But fiber cement siding has a long lifespan, protects your home effectively, and pays for itself in the long run.

The upcoming hurricane season may be challenging for many homeowners. For the 2021 hurricane season, [experts are predicting an above-normal hurricane season](#), with 17 named tropical storms, eight of which will become hurricanes. Make sure you budget time to evaluate all the core components of your home, so you can stay safe against all elements.

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