



# State of Connecticut

## *Insurance Department*

THOMAS R. SULLIVAN  
COMMISSIONER

### **OFFICIAL NEWS RELEASE**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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#### **ARE CONNECTICUT CONSUMERS PREPARED FOR DISASTERS?**

*What You Need to Know About Insurance Before Disaster Strikes*

**Hartford, CT** —Summer weather can bring an increased risk for natural disasters. With a history of summer tornados, especially in Litchfield and Hartford counties, and the hurricane season peaking on September 10th, it is time for consumers to be prepared.

According to new research by the Connecticut Insurance Department and the National Association of Insurance Commissioners (NAIC) nearly half – 48 percent – of Americans said they did not have an inventory of their possessions. Of those consumers who reported having a checklist, 32 percent had not taken any pictures and 58 percent had no receipts validating the cost of their possessions. In addition, 44 percent of respondents acknowledged that they had not stored their inventory checklist in a remote location.

“A comprehensive list of your belongings and their value will ensure adequate coverage and help when filing an insurance claim after a disaster,” said Insurance Commissioner Thomas R. Sullivan.

To assist consumers, the Connecticut Insurance Department offers a downloadable, Home Inventory Checklist at [www.ct.gov/cid](http://www.ct.gov/cid), site search: **Inventory**. Consumers can obtain additional disaster preparedness information by calling the toll-free consumer hotline at 800-203-3447 or locally at 860-297-3900.

“Creating an inventory and storing it in a safe location away from home is one of the most basic — and most effective — disaster preparedness steps anyone can take to help protect themselves and their financial future.” Commissioner Sullivan said, “This small investment of time will reap many benefits in the aftermath of a disaster.”

## Three ways to prepare for a disaster

### 1. Understand your insurance policy.

- Know what is and is not covered in your policy.
- You might need additional protection such as flood insurance. For more information on flood insurance visit [www.floodsmart.gov](http://www.floodsmart.gov). It is important to note that flooding is generally *not* covered under your homeowner's policy, and it takes 30 days for flood policies to become effective.
- Find out if your policy covers additional living expenses for a temporary residence if you are unable to live in your home due to damage from a disaster.
- Find out if your possessions are insured for the actual cash value or the replacement cost. **Actual cash value** is the amount it would take to repair or replace damage to a home and its contents *after depreciation*. **Replacement cost** is the amount it would take to replace or rebuild a home or repair damages with materials of like kind and quality, without deducting for depreciation.

### 2. Ensure your coverage is adequate.

- Appraise your home periodically to make sure your insurance policy reflects home improvements or renovations.
- As you acquire more valuables such as jewelry, family heirlooms, antiques, and art, consider purchasing an additional "floater" or "rider" to your policy to cover those special items.
- Contact your insurance company/agent annually to review and update your insurance policy as needed.

### 3. Inventory of your valuables and belongings

- This should include taking photographs or a video of each room.
- This documentation will provide your insurance company with proof of your belongings and help to process claims more quickly in the event of disaster.
- To enable filing claims more quickly, keep sales receipts and/or canceled checks. Also, note the model and serial numbers of the items in your home inventory.
- Remember to include in your home inventory those items you rarely use (e.g., holiday decorations, sports equipment, tools, etc.).
- Store copies of all your insurance policies in a safe location away from your home that is easily accessible in case of disaster. You may want to store your policies and inventory checklist in a waterproof, fireproof box or in a safe, remote location such as a bank safe deposit box. Consider leaving a copy of your inventory checklist with relatives, friends, or your insurance company/agent and store digital pictures in your e-mail or on a Web site for easy retrieval.

View the [Disaster Preparedness](#) podcast on the Connecticut Insurance Department Web site. Or, call our toll-free consumer hotline at 800-203-3447 or locally at 860-297-3900.

## **ABOUT THE CONNECTICUT INSURANCE DEPARTMENT**

The mission of the Connecticut Insurance Department is to serve consumers in a professional and timely manner by providing assistance and information to the public and to policy makers, by regulating the insurance industry in a fair and efficient manner which promotes a competitive and financially sound insurance market for consumers, and by enforcing the insurance laws to ensure that consumers are treated fairly and are protected from unfair practices. For more information, visit the Connecticut Insurance Department at [www.ct.gov/cid](http://www.ct.gov/cid).

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