

LAST-RESORT REFUGE FACILITIES

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The American Red Cross affirms that if you are ordered to evacuate, you should do so immediately. The following information is given for those situations where people may be caught by quickly changing or rapidly deteriorating conditions. In such situations, it may become necessary to take refuge wherever you can find it. Buildings and structures used to seek protection from the hazards of a hurricane are called Last-Resort Refuge Facilities. Choosing to go to a last-resort refuge is not condoned or recommended by the American Red Cross as a *planned* response to a hurricane.

Be advised that buildings that are not officially designated as American Red Cross Hurricane Shelters may not be safe havens during the storm. Highrise buildings are subject to wind stress, blowing projectiles, broken glass and undermining of foundations by flood waters. Even if the structure withstands the forces of a hurricane, these refuges may lack electricity, drinking and sanitation water, bedding, meals, security and information about you/your family's whereabouts for search and rescue personnel.

If you find that seeking last-resort refuge is your only option, try to locate a structurally sound building with minimal glass exposure. Where possible, use rooms or corridors away from large windows and above the potential flood level. Remember, though, that the best planned response for a hurricane is early evacuation away from the risk area.