



Pre-Hurricane Mitigation

FIRST, let's define mitigation The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) defines mitigation as activities that prevent an emergency, reduce the chances of an emergency happening and lessening the damaging effects of unavoidable emergencies. Mitigation can take place before or after an emergency. What we are focusing on now before hurricane season is pre-hurricane mitigation.

DURING a hurricane, homes may be damaged or destroyed by high winds and high waves. Debris can break windows and doors, allowing high winds inside the home. In extreme storms, such as Hurricane Andrew, the force of the wind alone can cause weak places in your home to fail.

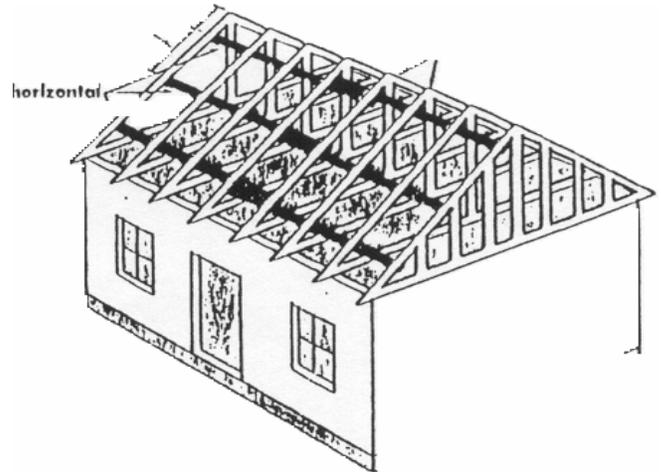
AFTER Hurricane Andrew, a team of experts examined home's that had failed and ones that had survived. They found four areas that should be checked for weakness -the roof, windows, doors and if you have one, garage door. Here are some tips on things you can do to help make your home stronger *before the* next hurricane strikes.

You may need to make some improvements or install temporary wind protection. It is important **that** you do these projects *now*, before a hurricane threatens.

TRUSS BRACING

In gabled roofs, truss bracing usually consists of 2x4s that run the length of the roof. If you do not have truss bracing, it should be installed. You can do this yourself or hire a professional. Install 2x4s the length of your roof overlapping the ends of the 2x4s across two trusses. Braces should be installed 18 inches from the ridge, in the center

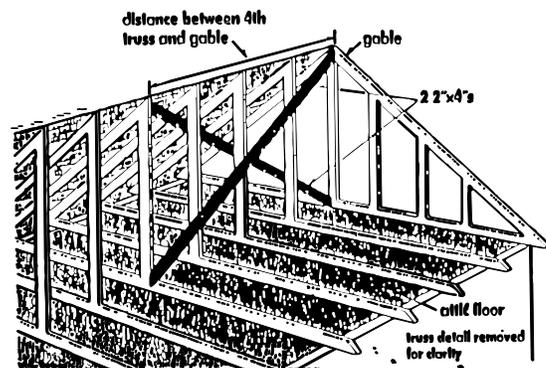
span, and at the base, with 8 to 10 feet between the braces. Use two 3-inch, 14- gauge wood screws or two 16d (16 penny) galvanized common nails at each truss. Because space in attics is generally limited, screws may easier to install.



Truss Bracing

GABLE END BRACING

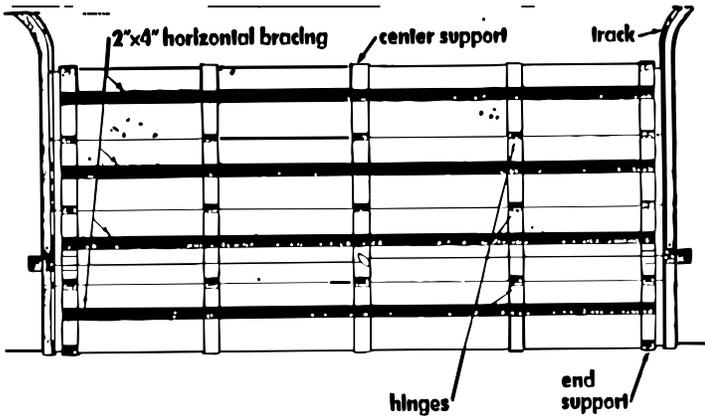
Gable end bracing consists of 2x4s placed in an 'X' pattern from the top center of the gable to the bottom center brace of the fourth truss. Use two 3-inch, 14- gauge wood screws or two 16d galvanized common nails to attach the 2x4s to the gable and to each of the four trusses.



Gable End Bracing

DOUBLE-WIDE GARAGE DOORS

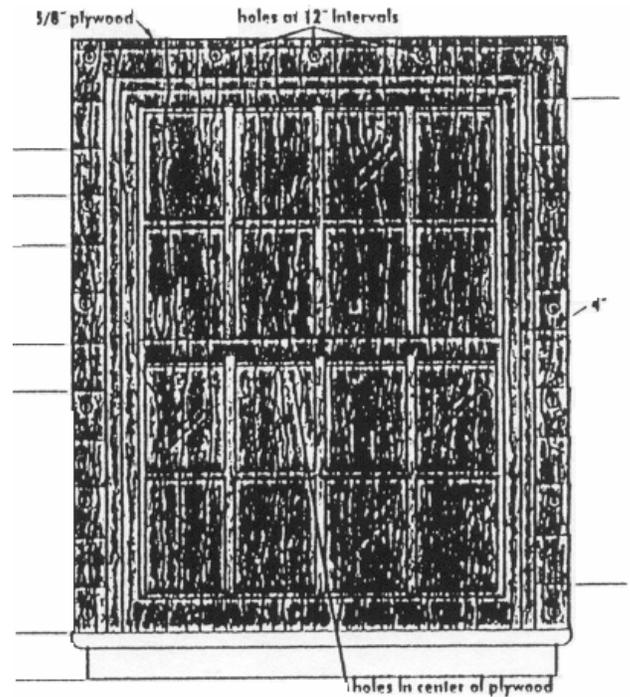
Double-wide (two-car) garage doors can pose a problem during hurricanes because they are so large that they wobble as the high winds blow and can pull out of their tracks or collapse from wind pressure. If garage doors fail, high winds can enter your home through the garage and blow out doors, windows, walls, and even the roof. Many garage doors can be reinforced at their weakest points. Retrofitting your garage doors involves installing horizontal bracing onto each panel. This horizontal bracing can be part of a kit from the garage door manufacturer. You may also need heavier hinges and stronger center and end supports for your door.



STORM SHUTTERS

Cut the plywood to the measurements for each opening.
Drill holes 2-1/2 inches from the outside edge of the plywood at each corner and at 12-inch intervals.
Drill four holes in the center area of the plywood to relieve pressure during a hurricane.

Place the plywood over the opening and mark each hold position on the outside wall. Drill holes with the appropriate size and type of bit for the anchors. Install the anchors, the plywood, and the bolts to make sure they fit properly. On wood-frame houses, make sure the anchors are secured into the solid wood that frames the door or window and not into the siding or trim. Mark each shutter so you will know where it is to be installed and store them and the bolts in an accessible place.



While these projects, if done correctly, can make your home safer during a hurricane, they are no guarantee that your home won't be damaged or even destroyed. If you are told by authorities to evacuate, do so immediately, even if you have taken these precautions.

For additional information on hurricanes and tropical storms, contact your unit Emergency Preparedness representative, Hurricane Coordinator, or the Emergency Preparedness Office at 853-6861.