

HURRICANE PREPAREDNESS for BEE HIVES

by Dennis (6-18-22 handout)

Be Prepared: Don't wait and panic at last minute... just get it done, relax and chill out.

You may consider **moving hives to new location**. If you do make sure you mark the exact location of each hive you moved so you can put them back in the same spot.

Why would I want to move my hives? Area you may currently have them in will flood in a hurricane and you cannot elevate them above the flood level in advance. Area may contain trees or large limbs that could fall on the hives during the storm. Worse, you could have them under or close to power lines. So moving away from such hazards may be wise and prudent. Think it out... run different possible scenarios through your mind.

If you do decide to move then place them on higher ground (flooding is a huge problem for bee hives during a hurricane). Uh... duh, but don't even think about putting them on roof of shed or your homes roof... and NO! do not take inside your house. Don't think my wife would like that. Don't even put them in your garage if is part of your house. Do you really want to chance all those bees making it into your home when the integrity of your home is compromised by the storm?

Be prepared by already removing supers, feeders... get them down to a compact brood box... or even a nuc if their population/density is not up to par.

Some say close-up screen bottom boards because it can cause updrafts and pressure inside hide to blow it apart. I know there are some that say the opposite and advise to leave them open to let water drain out. I don't think so... make sure you do have them sloped/tilted forward (drains to entrance) to allow water to drain out front entrance. Water has no problem draining out... but updrafts (or wind tunnel effect) scare me... the same thing happens in a house with windows or when attic accesses are opened... you can loose a roof that way!

Some say close the entrances completely. I don't, but I do reduce to smallest entrance. I don't want them air-tight or no ventilation in our hot weather or worse they get trapped inside and have no way to escape the rising water.

If hives are same height it often works to strap over all together or lay long 4 x 4 across the tops of all of them so they act together and help each other keep from toppling. Since this is primarily temporary... you can shove all your have tightly together side-by-side so you can ratchet strap them horizontally (longitudinally) making them like a single unit... and also strap over the tops with one long strap... or even put up post or wind-break structure to tie off to. Make sure your stands are structurally sound and definitely come up with some tie-down or ratchet strap system and some form of anchorage to suit your soil/dirt conditions (which may turn to mud or wash away). Dog stack-out spiral screw anchors... even canopy anchor stakes (auger in ones are nice). If doing it well in advance you can get fancy and pour concrete with eyebolt embeds. There are solutions from \$4 or \$5 per anchor and some that may be \$12 per anchor. I've included some Amazon links on our website for direct purchase of ratchet straps and some auger end loop-eye anchors. Some use rebar or come up with their own anchors.

After pulling supers and reducing the hives to brood boxes, then place something heavy on top. I use a concrete block or 3 or 4 bricks or a patio paver. I've even used barbell weights. I do these even if the hives are strapped and anchored. Just to make them heavier and less likely to shift or move/topple/lean.

It should go without saying that you should clean up and put away all your empty boxes, equipment, tools, or anything that might become a projectile and be tossed around... or just blown away to your neighbors a miles away.

There is a lot to do after the storm also. You need to get on it right away. Drowning, wet hives/bees, dying, dead need quick attention, but only when it is safe for you to do so. You may have a stinky mess to deal with and bees will typically be hungry. Hopefully as part of your preparedness you have made some sugar syrup to feed them... they will be hungry... and maybe a little defensive/upset during the aftermath.

8 Pcs Ground Auger Anchor Metal Anchors 15 Inches Long with loop eye & rope

<http://www.amazon.com/dp/B07ZQ37R8Y/ref=nosim?tag=honeybeeman-20>

Ratchet Tie Down Straps (4 pakc) – 10 Ft, 1500 lb. Break Strength

<http://www.amazon.com/dp/B01N29RG72/ref=nosim?tag=honeybeeman-20>

MORE INFO: <https://www.basfbees.org/hurricane-preparedness.html>