

After Thoughts

AfterThoughts is an occasional publication of After Hours Macintosh Consulting. An independent Apple Macintosh™ service firm in North Carolina's Triangle (Raleigh, Durham, Chapel Hill). For subscription information via email: AfterHoursConsulting@att.net <http://home.att.net/~afterhoursconsulting/> (919-271-7479 voice, 810-816-6707 fax)

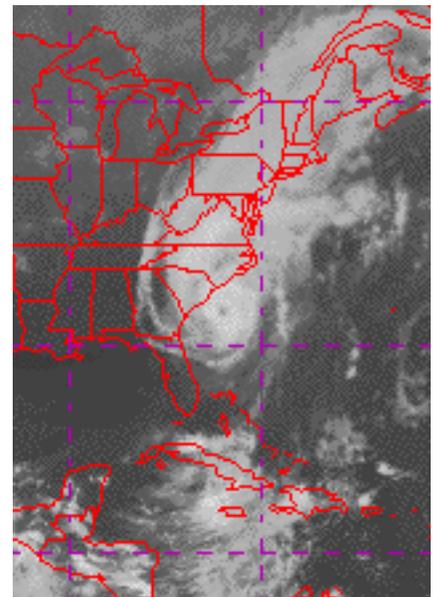
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NEWS

As if we have to tell you: it's Hurricane Season! But just in case you haven't noticed, let's get the word out: From June until December, hurricanes can come visiting at the most inconvenient times. I had the pleasure of calling Wilmington, NC home for four years, during which we saw a half-dozen direct hits including storms such as Bertha and Fran. Now, with the season kicking in full gear and four storms lined up in the Atlantic and Dennis likely to make landfall off Hatteras if it ever makes up it's mind, maybe a little reminder of some preventive measures is in order.

In Wilmington on Middle Sound, Fran brought the storm surge within a foot of entering the marina house. We watched it creeping up the bank from the lagoon. We were without power for over a week, and without phone service for nine days. While the power and phones were being restored, we had frequent brown outs and jolts. This isn't healthy for any electronic equipment. So consider protecting your sensitive electronics (stereos, fax machines, answering machines, televisions, etc.) by unplugging them from their wall jacks. By the way, brownouts are also really hard on refrigerators and heat pumps -- so while the power crews are doing their work, you may want to turn these appliances off -- maybe just flip the breakers ahead of time for most of your outlets, along with your hot water heater. It'll protect your home and cause fewer transformers to blow on the utility poles when they test rewired lines. The guys rewiring the street will thank you, too.



So, once you've secured your loved ones and the pets are safe, and your home is ready with emergency supplies, to protect your computer:

- Make a backup copy of any important documents and move that copy to another location (or take it with you), also record serial numbers and model numbers of your equipment and software.
- Turn off and unplug everything... power cords and phone lines disconnected from the wall.
- Move your Mac away from windows and external doors, and off of the first floor if there is a risk of flooding. Also protect your master copies of your software.
- Wrap and seal all equipment and software in hefty bags.
- If you have to evacuate, consider tossing the computer in the car. Leave the monitor, keyboard, mouse, modem, cords, etc if you don't have room or time. Just save the CPU (and external hard drives) so you can protect the data. Everything else can be replaced.

If you have to evacuate to a public shelter, remember that pets are not permitted there. You must find a safe home for your pet (a safe staffed kennel or friend, not your car in a parking lot!!!). A pet will not mentally or physically survive the storm any better than we can, so don't forget to provide for them, too.