



Storm

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which equipment recorded gusts ranging from 30 to 70 miles per hour from mid-afternoon to late Saturday. The only incident was a barrel falling off a truck on the bridge and RITBA staff helped reload it without damage or further incident.

Fire department

The Jamestown Fire Department had few calls related to the storm, according to Fire Chief James Bryer. He reported that firefighters responded to calls about three downed electrical wires. He said the department also was called to investigate a report of one flare, but found none and no situation needing attention.

Your garden probably looked quite nice last Friday, but on Saturday the storm came through and wrecked it. I know that's what happened in my yard. I found leaves in the house gutters well above the highest trees. Pots that I had left sitting, rather than put away, found any number of new places to hide. Trees that had a few apples left soon dumped them on the lawn. So, now the cleanup begins. Here are a few things that you might want to think about to get rid of last weekend's debris and to help your garden in the future.

First, pick up all the branches, twigs, and garbage that blew across your yard. Don't toss it over your neighbor's fence, but instead, shred them and add them to your compost pile. In a few months you'll have nice compost for your plants and you will have saved landfill space.

Second, mow your lawn. Yup, that's right, mow the lawn. If you have a mulching mower, you'll chop leaves into tiny pieces as well as cut the grass. Put the freshly mown clippings and leaves on your vegetable garden. Don't use weed killer sprayed grass clippings for mulch. The mulch will help retain nutrients over the winter and keep any garlic and shallots well mulched. You did plant garlic,



The Island Garden

By Roger Marshall

didn't you? If you didn't, there's still some time. Get yours planted soon though, before the ground freezes. Then mulch it so that frost doesn't heave it out of the soil.

Third, clean out your perennial beds and dispose of any annuals that got blown to shreds. Put all the plant residue into your compost pile after you've shredded it. Again it will make terrific compost.

If you have any favorite plants that got damaged, clip off the damaged branches and then snip off the green growing tips. Dip the tip, provided it has at least two leaves and is still green, in propagating hormone powder and put it in a pot with a mix of half potting soil and half sand. Keep it in a warm place until it starts to grow and you will have another plant for your collection.

While you are walking around your yard, check your trees. This

time of year many trees still have a lot of leaves in their canopy and high winds can cause them to topple or at the very least high winds can loosen their roots. A sign of loose roots is large cracks in the soil around the tree. These cracks indicate that the tree swayed in the wind and might have fallen had there been more rain to loosen the soil. If you find a tree near your home with loose roots call a tree expert to take a look. The expert might want to remove the tree or prune the treetop so that it doesn't get blown onto your house in the next storm. Also check the tree canopy for broken or damaged branches. Damaged branches can allow disease to get into the tree and might cause large limbs to fall. Again, check with your tree expert if you see damage.

Finally, take a look around your home. Pieces of shingle on the deck or lawn might indicate that a new roof is needed. Damaged gutters might show that the gutter is clogged and needs to be cleaned before the next heavy rain or snow. Make sure that all your storm windows and doors close properly and will not blow open during a future storm. Check, too, that you have candles, flashlights, or a generator should a winter storm take down a power line near your home.

How to make a home fire escape plan

Only 23 percent of American households have developed a home fire escape plan to ensure they can escape quickly and safely.

The experts at the nonprofit National Fire Protection Association are offering advice on making your own such plan:

Gather everyone and walk through your home, inspecting all possible exits and escape routes. Develop a plan identifying two ways out of each room.

Install smoke alarms in every sleeping room, outside each sleeping area and on every level of the home.

When walking through your plan, check that escape routes are clear, and doors and windows can be opened easily.

Choose an outside meeting place (i.e. neighbor's house, a light post, mailbox, or stop sign) a safe distance in front of your home where everyone can meet after escaping.

Have everyone memorize the fire department's emergency phone number so they can call it from outside.

If there are infants, older adults, or family members with mobility

limitations, assign someone to assist them. Assign a backup person in case the designee isn't home during the emergency.

Make sure window or door security bars have emergency release devices inside so they can be opened immediately.

If a smoke alarm sounds, get out

immediately. Residents of high-rise and apartment buildings may be safer "defending in place."

Never go back into a burning building. If someone is missing, inform the fire department dispatcher when you call.

For more fire safety tips, visit www.nfpa.org.

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