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## **Hurricane Window Protection**

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**Summary:** Hurricane window protection is very important. Window glass must not be allowed to break during a hurricane. If glass breaks, water and wind can severely damage a home and all interior possessions.

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Hurricane window protection is on the mind of just about every homeowner in Florida and all states that touch the Gulf of Mexico. The fierce winds of a hurricane pick up objects which become projectiles. Imagine a piece of 2x4 flying through the air at 130 miles per hour. Think what happens when that 2x4 smashes into an unprotected patio door or window of your home.

Once the glass is shattered, wind-blown rain is driven into the home. This water will cause all sorts of damage to the house and any possessions it saturates. The inside of the home also gets pressurized by the sustained-wind blasts, and this can actually tear a house apart.

For these reasons, you can see why it is vitally important to keep window glass intact during hurricanes. There are several ways to do this. Hurricane shutters, hurricane screens, laminated glass, 7/16-inch thick or thicker plywood, tempered glass, security window films, miscellaneous other window films and annealed glass.

The cost to install these different systems varies, as well as the level of protection each offers. But the security window films are the most intriguing in my opinion. They offer some distinct advantages.

Security window films are crystal clear, and certain types offer great ultraviolet light protection as well as blocking solar heat gain. The films adhere to the inside of the window and are a passive protection system. They allow the glass to shatter, but the window film holds the broken glass in position. The window film continues to work until the storm is over and new glass can be installed. During the storm, however, the window film provides the needed weather barrier so wind and rain stay outdoors.

Another advantage to security window films is their lower cost. They are very affordable when compared to durable and discrete hurricane shutters. Hurricane shutters and other devices that cover over a window often are not as aesthetically pleasing as one might like. Security window films offer invisible protection once installed. You simply do not see them, yet they are protecting your home from storms and even burglars who try to break glass to gain entry into a home.



That is Matt Geiger, former NBA player, striking a window that has been protected with security window film. The photo was taken the instant just after the mallet bounced off the glass. The glass shattered, but did not fall to the ground. It was held in place by the durable and crystal-clear window film. PHOTO CREDIT: Tim Carter