

# Emergency Preparedness Guide



Harris County  
Precinct 2

Jan 2001

Dear Resident,

Due to our Diverse landscape and weather we are vulnerable to many types of disaster in this area. This guide will help you prepare for all disasters, especially hurricanes which may be our biggest disaster threat.

Every year we must prepare for a hurricane, just like if we lived up North we would prepare for a snow storm. The year 2008 reminded us that although some years we do not have a tropical storm event we are not immune. Hurricane Ike caused 8.5 billion dollars of damage to homes in Harris County and many Precinct 2 residents were affected, some are still recovering. It is important that each year we take steps to make sure our families are ready to weather a storm.

Every Family should follow these three steps set to prepare for any type of disaster: Make a Plan, Build a Kit, and stay informed. More details on these steps can be found at [www.ready.gov](http://www.ready.gov) or [www.listo.gov](http://www.listo.gov)

The employees of Precinct 2 can assist in you in preparing for and recovering from the storm. If you need help registering for transportation assistance to evacuate, our community center staff will be happy to help you register. Immediately before and after the storm our Road & Bridge crews will be hard at work clearing roads and picking up debris.

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# Make a Plan

Disasters can strike at anytime. Create a basic plan that you can follow in most disasters and discuss this plan with your family. Hurricane Season begins June 1st and last until November 30th. It is important you have a plan in place before the situation arises. The Following Steps will help you make your personal plan.

- Determine if you would stay or where you would go if an evacuation is ordered.
- Figure out how you would get there, remember roads may be blocked.
- Where would you stay, if you evacuate
- Review your insurance policies and coverage.
- Take photos of your property and valuable, store this information in a safe place. (ex. Safety deposit box.)
-

- Make any repairs that make the structure of your vulnerable.
- and place them in a safe place.
- Purchase plywood and cut it for your windows.
- Make a list of important phone numbers, establish an out of town contact for your family
- Keep your vehicle fueled
- Make sure all family members are aware of the plan.
- Prepare an emergency supply kit.
- Make copies of important documents



# Build a Kit

You will need two separate supply kits one for when you evacuate and another for when you return or while you are at home during the disaster.

## At-Home Kit

- Two flashlights, extra batteries and bulbs
- A battery operated radio
- Extra batteries for everything battery operated in your kit
- Frozen ice to keep food cold. ( Freezing large bottles of water works well)
- A cooler
- Matches and a lighter, beware of broken gas lines after the storm.
- A camping stove or gill and charcoal
- A fire extinguisher and a box of baking soda for a grease fire
- Two week supply of prescription and over-the-counter medicine
- If there is a baby in the house have a two week supply of diapers, formula, ect.





A hurricane is one of nature's most deadliest storms. It is a tropical cyclone with winds speeds above 74 mph. Hurricanes develop over warm ocean waters. First it gathers heat and energy and then it adds evaporated moisture from the sea followed a by formation of a circular wind pattern. The center of the hurricane is called the eye. In general the eye is calm, however the eye wall is the most violent area of the storm. Hurricanes produce high winds, storm surge, flooding and tornadoes.

# Hurricane Classification

- Tropical Disturbance— a rotary system of clouds and thunderstorms in the upper atmosphere that has no effect on the surface.
- Tropical Depression— a low pressure area that produces rotary action on the ocean surface and has winds less than 39 mph.
- Tropical Storm— a low pressure area with a distinct rotation and winds between 40 and 73 mph.
- Hurricane— An intense tropical weather system with a well defined circulation and sustained winds of 74 mph or more.

# CHANGES TO THE HURRICANE SCALE

*Prior to this year, the Saffir-Simpson Hurricane Scale included central pressure and projected storm surge in each category. Hurricane Ike, an enormous Category 2 storm that produced a Category 4 storm surge, finally convinced the National Hurricane Center to modify the scale to focus solely on the destructive potential of sustained winds.*

## Category 1



### Sustained winds 74-95 mph.

- Some damage to buildings and trees; power outages possible with downed poles.

## Category 2



### Sustained winds 96-110 mph.

- Widespread damage to buildings and trees. Windows in high rise buildings blown out. Loose outdoor items become projectiles. Many trees uprooted or snapped. Widespread power outages.

## Category 3



### Sustained winds 111-130 mph.

- Extensive damage to houses and buildings, with a minor amount of wall failures. Older mobile homes and poorly constructed signs are destroyed. Downed trees block roads. Near total power loss.

## Category 4



### Sustained winds 131-155 mph.

- Devastating damage, including wall and roof structure failures. All signs blown down. Most trees will be snapped or uprooted. Electricity will be unavailable for weeks after the hurricane passes.

## Category 5



### Sustained winds over 155 mph.

- Catastrophic damage, including complete building failures and small buildings blown over or away. Most windows in high rise buildings blown out. Nearly all trees snapped or uprooted. Power outages last for weeks or months.

# Understand Advisories



## Watches and Warnings

- **Tropical Storm Watch**– Wind Speeds of 39-73 mph are expected within 48 hours
- **Tropical Storm Warning** – Wind Speeds of 39-73 mph are expected within 36 hours
- **Hurricane Watch**– Wind Speeds of 74 mph or greater are expected within 48 hours
- **Hurricane Warning**– Wind Speed of 74 mph or greater are expected within 36 hours.

# Storing Food and Water



Whether you are staying during the storm or returning afterwards you will need a 14 day supply of food and water.

If you are at home and power is off eat cold foods first. Only open the refrigerator and Freezer doors when necessary. If the fridge or freezer loose cool remove food and place it in coolers with ice. Have 14 day supply of non-perishable foods on hand. If you have a generator use it. Most generators will run lights and a refrigerator. Place generators in well ventilated areas and connect device directly to generator.

Water is also very important to have. The local water supply may become contaminated during a hurricane. You will need 14 gallons per person to last two weeks. After the storm boiling water will help kill most bacteria.



# Protect Your Home



Inspect your home for any weak points that make your home vulnerable. Follow this list:

- **Start at the Top:** Check your roof for loose shingles, weak spots, are gables securely fastened and braced. Make sure gutters are tightly hinged and drain freely. Make sure storm drains aren't clogged.
- **Work your way down:** Check all windows and doors are they sufficiently caulked, are shutters properly installed, is ply wood precut?
- **Don't Forget the Garage:** Garage doors are a weak point of entry for damaging winds.
- **Get Grounded:** If you have blow able objects on the lawn secure them. This includes landscaping, bird feeders, toys, bicycle, and lawn furniture.

## If you live in an evacuation zone . . .

When the order is given to evacuate Don't Panic.

- Pack your emergency supply kits.
- Gather important documents
- Turn off the gas, water and electric supply to your house. (Gas will have to be turned back on by a professional after the storm)
- Lock all windows and doors
- Notify your destination
- Pack games and books
- Keep your vehicle fueled while under threat.
- Be patient and drive carefully
- To find out which evacuation zone you live in the best routes view the map on the next page or visit <http://www.hcoem.org/HCMap.aspx?P=Evacuation>

### **Mobile Home Residents**

It is extremely important you evacuate. Before the storm arrives make sure your home is well anchored with tie downs. When evacuating follow the same directions listed above.

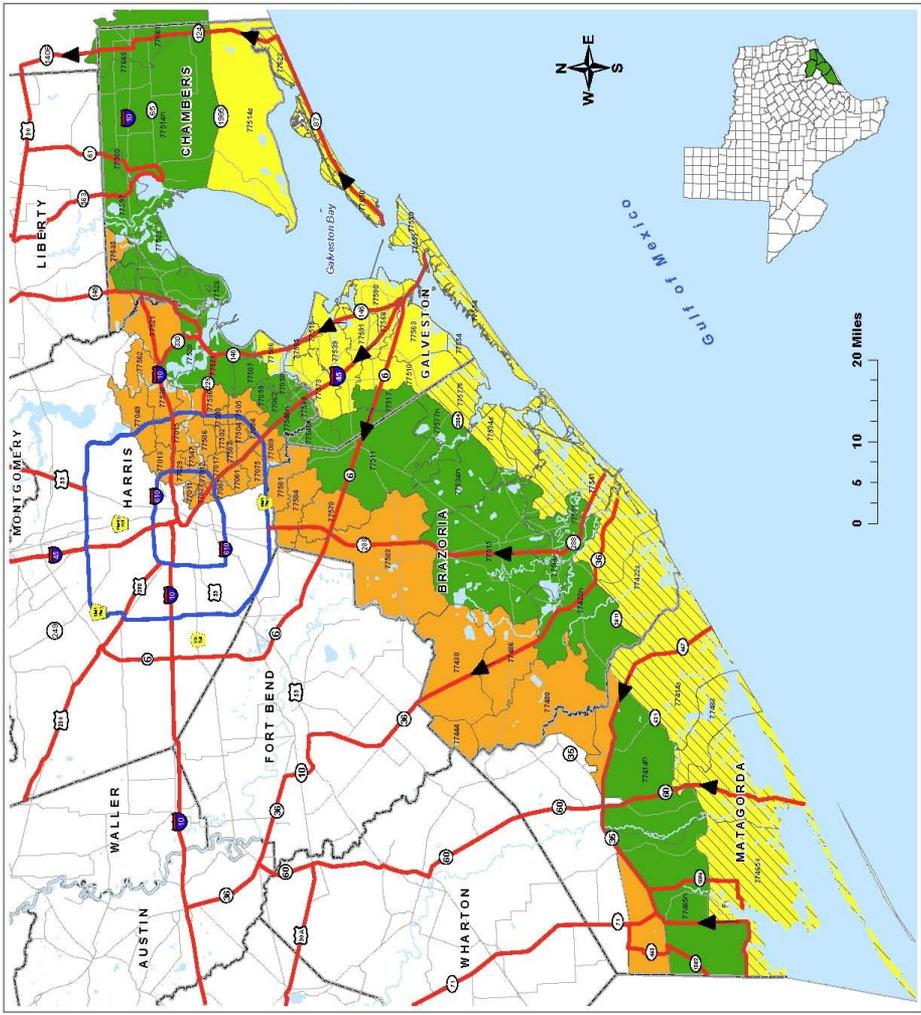
# Brazoria, Chambers, Galveston, Harris and Matagorda

## Hurricane Evacuation Zip-Zones Coastal, A, B, C

Zip-Zone A		Zip-Zone B		Zip-Zone C	
77414S	77483	77500	77575	77650	
77422S	77534S	77551	77617		
77455S	77541	77554	77623		
77510	77539	77588	77600		
77514S	77563	77573	77591		
77518	77555	77585			
77058	77507	77522	77550	77681	
77059	77511	77523	77556	77655	
77062	77516	77531	77571		
77063	77517	77537	77561		
77064	77517	77546	77587		
77465N	77500	77546S	77598		
77011	77034	77035	77057	77057	
77012	77049	77483	77066	77062	
77013	77081	77480	77500	77078	
77015	77075	77485	77521	77081	
77016	77080	77486	77522	77081	
77023	77489	77503	77535	77584	
77029	77430	77504	77536	77587	

### Route Designation

-  Evacuation Corridors
-  Evacuation Connections
-  Other Roads
-  County Boundary



# If you stay at Home . . .

- Secure all windows and doors with plywood
- Keep updated about the storm by TV or Radio
- Remove all loose items from you yard
- Keep flashlights handy
- Have Emergency Supplies nearby
- Stay away from windows, go to the lower level to avoid winds but be aware of surge and flooding
- If the power goes out turn off water heater and air conditioner
- If flooding occurs safely turn off your breaker box
- Do not use your computer, turn it off
- Do not leave your house until told remember the eye of the storm is calm
- Have cash on hand
- Fuel you vehicle
- Make sure your address is clearly marked



# Keep Your Business Out of the Red

- Secure windows and doors
- Back up all data files and store them in a safe place
- Make provisions to work without electric , sewage, or water for two weeks
- Have your business appraised every 4 years
- Keep a current inventory of all equipment
- Keep copies of your insurance papers handy
- Consider purchasing Business interruption insurance
- Visit your local Office of Emergency Management to receive useful tools for Disaster Preparedness



# Caring for the elderly

It can be difficult for elderly people to evacuate their homes quickly. Some can not evacuate without assistance. The elderly move slowly and are prone to health complication in stressful situations.



If you are the care giver or neighbor of an elderly person make sure the person has adequate evacuation plan or assist them in making these plan. If a person is unable to evacuate on their own they should call **2-1-1** and register for transportation assistance.

# Tips to Keep the Elderly Safe

- When you move into the area register with the local emergency management office
- If you are under a physician's care tell them where you will go during a storm
- If you require a respirator, oxygen, or electronic medical equipment, make arrangements to evacuate with supplies
- When evacuating bring all medicines and proper dosage instructions, a two week supply of medicines is recommended
- Bring special equipment that you use. (ex. Shower chair)
- Don't forget basic emergency supplies



## Ensuring your pet's safety

The most important thing you can do to protect your pets is keep them with you even if you evacuate. Some shelters may not accept pets so make sure you plan ahead. Ask friends or relatives in other areas if you and your animals could stay there during an evacuation. Check hotels in the area you would evacuate to for pet policies. Ask if those that currently don't allow pets would in an emergency. Make sure your pet has proper identification and the phone number on the tag is one you can be reached at.



## **If You Stay at Home with your Animals**

- Identify a safe area where you can stay together.
- Keep animals in carriers or on leashes.
- Keep several days supply of food and water for your animal.
- If you must leave take your animals with you.
- After the Storm do not allow your pets to roam loose.



### **A Pet Supply Checklist**

- Medications and Medical Records Stored in a watertight container
- Leashes, Harnesses, and Carriers
- Current photos.
- Food and Water for at least 3 days for each pet, bowl, cat litter and litter box, and a manual can opener.
- Number of veterinarian
- Pet beds and toys.

# Keep your boat Afloat

## **At the Marina**

- Check all cleats, ropes, chocks, and winches for strength. Double the rigging lines fore and aft.
- Ensure lines are high enough on the pilings to allow for extreme ebb and flow of the ocean during the storm surges.
- Cover ropes where they rub against the boat and tie points with leather or rubber. This will protect the boat and rigging lines
- Make sure batteries for the bilge pump are fresh
- Use canvas tape to cover any cracks or openings on the craft
- Tie old tires round the boat to protect it from being pushed into other boats or the pier.
- Loose items should be removed or secured inside the craft.



## **For Boats on Land**

- Remove and store the outboard motor, batteries, and electronic units.
- Deflate the trailer tires. Tie down boat and trailer
- If possible move them into a garage.

# After the Storm

Be patient. Re-entry may be controlled by local law enforcement. The area may not have electricity, water, sewer or phone service. Live off emergency kits you prepared before the storm. Below is a few tips to follow:

- Continue to monitor the radio for updates and instructions
- Keep ID handy, incase are you asked to prove residence
- Drive only if necessary, Drive extremely cautiously
- Stay clear of downed power lines, Inspect all fences, trees, and buildings for visibly downed power lines
- Be careful when removing large debris such as plywood, snakes and other animals may have made it a temporary residence. Large Debris removal should be left to the professionals.
- Upon entering your home open all doors and windows to ventilate and dry the area
- After flooding have breaker checked by electrician before turning on
- Do not light matches incase of broken gas lines, use flashlights.
- Keep grills camp stoves, and generators outside in well ventilated areas.
- Before you begin cleaning, photograph and videotape damages to give to your insurance.
- Wear protective clothing, jeans and a long sleeved shirt, to protect against injuries.

# Chemical Awareness

No matter where you live you may be exposed to a chemical emergency. These emergency can happen at anytime.. Small chemical emergencies can happen in your home. Always make sure to read the product label and follow the directions. Large scale chemical emergencies may happen on highways, railways or at fixed facilities.

After a storm it is important to aware of chemicals that may be in the debris. If you see or smell something that doesn't look right report it. If it is an unknown chemical get upwind and call the fire department to investigate. If you smell gas get to a well ventilated area where you can no longer smell the fumes and call Centerpoint to inform them of a leak.

If you see unusual flaring or an odor from a chemical plant you can call **the CAER line at 281-476-CAER** for further information. If there is a large release you will be notified by the outdoor warning sirens in most communities. Should this occur follow the instructions on the following page.

When you are notified of or suspect a chemical release:

1. Go Inside. If possible go into a interior room away from windows.
2. Close all windows and doors. Turn off the A/C or Heat. Close any outside air intake (example fireplace damper.) If necessary use plastic sheeting and duck tape.
3. Do not use the phone unless you have an emergency. Turn on your TV and/or radio and wait for further information.



# Helpful Numbers and Links

Harris County Precinct 2—24 Hour Number 713-455-0062

Harris County Information Line 713-755-5000

CAER Line—for Industry Information 281-476-2237

National Flood Insurance Program 1-888-379-9531

FEMA 1-800-621-3362

Local Road Conditions and Closures 713-802-5074

Center Point Energy 713-207-2222

[www.pct2.hctx.net](http://www.pct2.hctx.net)

[www.ready.gov](http://www.ready.gov)

[www.listo.gov](http://www.listo.gov)

[www.floodsmart.gov](http://www.floodsmart.gov)

[www.hcoem.org](http://www.hcoem.org)

[www.safeschoolalerts.com](http://www.safeschoolalerts.com)



**Call 211 Now**  
**If you will need help**  
**Evacuating from the storm**



If you have questions about this brochure call your Precinct 2 Safety Office  
at  
713-455-0062  
For more preparedness information visit  
[www.hcoem.org](http://www.hcoem.org)