

Matagorda County News Advisory

Hurricane Ike News Advisory 3

Additional Hurricane Ike Information For Matagorda County Residents

Supplement to NA-1 and NA-2

September 11, 2008

5:00 PM

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Latest information from the National Hurricane Center indicates Matagorda County is the strike zone for Hurricane Ike, which may hit as a weak Category 4 hurricane. This is a catastrophic, serious hurricane, and immediate action is requested by county officials for all citizens of Matagorda County.

In addition to the previous mandatory evacuation of areas of Matagorda County south of Highway 35 and the Blessing area, Matagorda County Officials are recommending a voluntary evacuation of residents north of Highway 35 and in Bay City and Van Vleck for those living in low lying areas and manufactured homes that are not properly tied down. You need to understand that if Hurricane Ike strikes Matagorda County, living conditions may be challenging for a while.

If you have no means of transportation to evacuate and are unable to evacuate by yourself, you should call family or friends and ask them to assist you. If you cannot find anyone to help you evacuate, you should come to:

- Bay City Service Center Thursday beginning at 9:00 AM.

OR

- **KC Hall** in Palacios at **9:00 AM on Thursday, September 11. *Note that this is a change from the previous location.*** Busses will leave from the KC hall **NOT** City Hall as previously reported.

Busses will be available to take you to a shelter in Austin. If you do not have the resources to leave and return on your own, then you need to take one of the busses being provided.

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All roads in Matagorda County are open for evacuation. The designated evacuation routes for Matagorda County are:

- Residents east of the Colorado River evacuate using Highway 60 to Wharton, then Highway 59 to Highway 71, then to Austin.
- Residents west of the Colorado River should evacuate using Highway 35 to Highway 71, then to Austin.

This does not mean you have to evacuate to Austin; however, this route will be available to us for purposes of evacuation. Expect travel delays on evacuation routes. Be sure your car is full of gas. People evacuating on busses will go to shelters in Austin.

In preparing to evacuate, you should assemble the following emergency supplies and complete these actions:

- Refer to our public information in the front section of the ypOne telephone directory and take this phone book with you
- Clothing for your family for 3 days
- Bedding, pillows, and towels
- Prescription medicine and spare eyeglasses
- Soap and toiletries
- Baby food and diapers
- Your address book or list of important telephone numbers
- Your checkbook, credit cards, and cash
- Valuable papers
- Your driver's license and identification cards
- Proof of address such as an electric bill
- A portable radio, flashlight, and batteries
- Prepare your home before you depart – turn off all appliances except your refrigerator and freezer; lock your doors and windows
- Ensure your car is in good shape and that you have adequate fuel
- Take ready-to-eat food and drinks in your car.
- Limit your use of the telephone to important calls only

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- Decide where you will go and make arrangements with family, friends, or hotels
- Check on other family members or friends or neighbors who may need assistance evacuating
- Check the Texas Department of Transportation website for information about road conditions – www.txdot.gov

It is recommended that you evacuate with your pets. Be sure to take a pet carrier, leash, vaccination records, and food for your pet. If you evacuate to a shelter, your pets will be boarded at a separate facility.

If you remain in the area, be sure to have:

- Plenty of ready to eat or canned food
- All medications filled for each family member
- Fuel for generators
- Have 1 gallon of water available per day per person, enough for at least 7 days
- Battery powered portable radio or television, and batteries
- Personnel sanitary supplies
- Manual can opener
- First aid supplies
- Important documents in a water proof bag
- Special needs items for each family member – infant formula, eyeglasses, etc.
- Change of clothing for each person for 3 days, readily available
- Water proof matches
- Flashlights and batteries
- Toys, books, and games for children
- Extra car keys and house keys readily available
- Contact names and phone numbers readily available
- Fuel for cooking

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- Sanitation supplies – bleach, detergent, soap
- Tools for household needs – shovels, axes, etc.

Members of the media or public who have questions about the evacuation, may call 979-244-5318 or 979-245-8051.

The city of Palacios is also issuing a curfew that will take effect Thursday, September 11 at 7:00 PM. The curfew will be in force until further notice from 7:00 PM to 7:00 AM.

Matagorda General Hospital will not be accepting any additional patients, effective immediately. Existing patients are being transferred out of the county. The Emergency Department will remain open until further notice.

High profile vehicles must be off the roads in Matagorda County by noon on Thursday, September 12. Vehicles such as boats, 18 wheelers, campers, RVs, and trailers are considered high profile vehicles. These and second cars or other personal property may be parked at Matagorda County Fairgrounds. If you place your property there, please be aware that it is at your own risk. Matagorda County is not responsible for damage or loss if you choose to place property there.

The decision to do a mandatory evacuation of areas south of Highway 35 and the Blessing area are based on government studies of areas that may be dramatically affected by major hurricanes.

If you evacuate from an area that is not under mandatory evacuation and wish to return, you may not be able to get through road blocks or maneuver contraflow lanes. You may not return to mandatory evacuation areas until the County opens those areas, post event.

Tropical storm force winds are expected to hit Matagorda County Thursday at 7:00 PM at about noon, plus or minus several hours. All evacuations should be complete before that time.

News advisories being issued by Matagorda County officials are available to review on the Matagorda County website at www.co.matagorda.tx.us.

#####END#####

County Judge: Nate McDonald Date: 9-10-08 Time: 5:25 P.M.