

HARRIS COUNTY OFFICE OF HOMELAND
SECURITY AND EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT



Harris County Judge Ed Emmett



COUNTY JUDGE ED EMMETT
DIRECTOR

HARRIS COUNTY OFFICE OF HOMELAND
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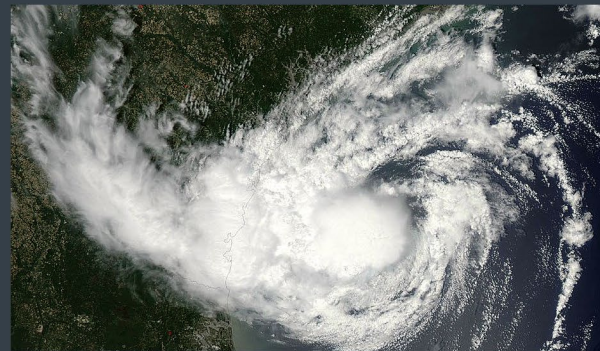
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www.readyharris.org
www.hcoem.org



DISASTER

PREPAREDNESS GUIDE



GET A KIT.
MAKE A PLAN.
STAY INFORMED.
BE INVOLVED.



ED EMMETT
COUNTY JUDGE

Today, we are better prepared for a disaster than any other metropolitan area in the nation.

Harris County is a national model for emergency preparedness and response, but your ability to survive a disaster depends on you doing your part to prepare for the unexpected. Whether a disaster is inconvenient or catastrophic, your emergency plan remains the most dependable tool to keep you safe.

Join me in helping make our community better prepared by taking these four simple steps to be ready for anything from a house fire to a hurricane:

GET A KIT. MAKE A PLAN. STAY INFORMED. GET INVOLVED.

This guide is your starting point. Along with useful information, you will find helpful phone numbers, websites and other resources to build on this common sense approach to disaster preparedness.

An involved community is a well prepared community and your partnership with Harris County is the foundation of our homeland security and emergency management strategy.

KNOWING WHAT TO DO IS YOUR BEST PROTECTION AND YOUR RESPONSIBILITY.

What would you do if basic services – water, gas, electricity or telephones – were cut off? Relief workers can not reach everyone right away. Therefore, prepare before disaster strikes.

DISASTER SUPPLY KIT CHECKLIST

- Water – At least seven day supply (one gallon per person per day)
- Food – At least seven day supply of nonperishable/canned food
- First Aid Kit
- Flashlight with extra batteries
- Battery powered radio
- Medications and special items (pain relievers, diapers, etc.)
- Tools and supplies
- Sanitation (toilet paper, personal hygiene items, etc.)
- Change of clothes and bedding
- Cash
- Important family documents (birth certificates, insurance/bank account information, etc.)
- Food, water and medicine for your pets
- Kennels or crates for pets



- Keep items in airtight plastic bags.
- Change your stored water supply every six months.
- Replace your stored food every six months.
- Re-think your kit and family needs at least once a year.
- Replace batteries, update clothes, etc.
- Ask your physician or pharmacist about storing prescriptions.

HURRICANES

Hurricanes cause catastrophic damage to coastlines and several hundred miles inland. Hurricanes and tropical storms also spawn tornadoes, create storm surges along the coast and cause extensive damage from heavy rainfall.



If you stay in your home during the hurricane, you should:

- Continue to monitor your local TV and radio stations.
- Fill bathtubs and all available containers with water.
- Turn off utilities, if requested.
- Remain indoors in a closet, bathroom or hallway on the lowest level of your house, away from any windows.
- Cover yourself and your family members with a mattress or a dining room table to protect yourself from flying debris.

TROPICAL STORMS AND FLOODS

Floods are Harris County's most common natural hazard.

» IMPORTANT TERMS:

Hurricane Watch: An announcement issued 48 hours in advance to notify that hurricane conditions are possible within the specified area.

Hurricane Warning: An announcement issued 36 hours in advance to notify that hurricane conditions are expected within the specified area.

» IMPORTANT TERMS:

Tropical Storm Watch: Tropical storm conditions are possible within the next 48 hours.

Tropical Storm Warning: Tropical storm conditions are expected within the next 36 hours.

Flood Watch: Conditions are favorable for flooding.

Flood Warning: Flooding is imminent or occurring.

When these alerts are issued by the National Weather Service, you should:

- Monitor your local TV and radio stations.
- Fuel vehicles and generators.
- Check your disaster supply kit.
- Cover windows with plywood.
- Bring in all outdoor furniture, toys and any other items that could become projectiles.
- Take pictures of property and contents for insurance purposes.
- Evacuate immediately, if advised.



Develop a personal emergency plan for floods:

- Determine if your area is a flood risk. If unsure, call the Harris County Permit Office at 713-956-3000.
- Purchase flood insurance (This is not covered under your Homeowners Policy).
- Check your disaster supply kit.
- Develop an evacuation plan for you and your family.

EVACUATION



Recent storms remind Gulf Coast residents about the importance of engaging in staggered, scheduled evacuations that give residents in greatest danger the opportunity to leave first—followed by those in lower risk areas.

The state of Texas has since revised contra-flow, fuel and re-entry plans to make the new staggered evacuation plan more efficient and safer for all communities that will need to evacuate.

The decision to evacuate is based on information from the National Weather Service and local offices of emergency management. Once local officials order an evacuation, follow instructions on when to evacuate, what to do and where to go.

» To view an evacuation map by zip code and learn how you can be a part of an improved evacuation, please visit www.readyharris.org.

Brazoria, Chambers, Galveston, Harris and Matagorda Hurricane Evacuation Zip-Zones Coastal, A, B, C

ZIP ZONE COASTAL				
77434a	77435	77422a	77428	77457
77465	77483	77534a	77541	77550
77551	77546a	77563	77577a	77617
77621	77650			
ZIP ZONE A				
77098a	77510	77514a	77518	77539
77544a	77563	77565	77568	77573
77580	77590	77591		
ZIP ZONE B				
77058a	77059	77062	77414a	77415
77418a	77422a	77440	77456a	77469a
77507	77511	77534a	77515	77517
77520	77523	77531	77534a	77541
77546a	77546a	77560	77566	77573
77577a	77580	77597	77598	77665
ZIP ZONE C				
77011	77012	77013	77015	77017
77023	77029	77034	77049	77063
77075	77087	77088	77413a	77436
77440	77444	77480	77486	77503
77503	77504	77505	77506	77521
77530	77535	77536	77547	77562
77578	77581	77583	77584	77587

Route Designation
 Evacuation Corridors
 Evacuation Connections
 Other Roads
 County Boundary



If officials indicate an evacuation is necessary:

- Leave as soon as possible and avoid flooded roads.
- Secure your home by unplugging appliances and turning off the electricity and the main water valve.
- If time permits, and you live in an identified surge zone, elevate furniture to protect it from flooding or better yet, move it to a higher floor.
- Bring pre-assembled emergency supplies and warm protective clothing.
- Tune in to your local emergency radio or television station.
- People traveling with young children, elderly family members or people with functional and access needs should leave early. If you wait to leave until the general evacuation is recommended, traffic will be heavier and the weather may be worse, lengthening the time you may have to spend in your car.
- Return home only after authorities advise that it is safe to do so.

EVACUATION MAP



ACCESS AND FUNCTIONAL NEEDS

People living in surge/evacuation zones without adequate transportation may require assistance. Those needing assistance in evacuating should contact their local office of emergency management each year before the beginning of hurricane season to make evacuation arrangements before an emergency occurs.

If you know you will need assistance evacuating during a disaster, please register by dialing 2-1-1.



PREPAREDNESS TIPS:

- **Create a “buddy system” with friends, family or neighbors.** Make sure they know your capabilities and your needs along with any important details in your emergency plan.
- **Have a contact list:** emergency out-of-town contacts, doctors and those in your “buddy system.”
- **Have a medical information list:** copy of current insurance card, medications, allergies, medical provider and pharmacist.



REGIONAL JOINT INFORMATION CENTER



Tune in to your local media for up-to-date information.

Visit readyharris.org and sign up for local emergency alerts.

PREPARING YOUR PETS

When preparing for a disaster, it is imperative that you make preparations for your pets as well.

Checklist for your pets should include:

- Food and water (seven day supply)
- Crate
- Bowls for food and water
- Leash and/or harness
- Medications and identification tags
- Toys and pet beds

Plan in advance for options that will work for both you and your pets.

In the event of an evacuation, the single most important thing you can do to protect your pets is to take them with you. If you need to find a safe place for them ahead of time, check with your local animal care agency to help identify a pet-friendly evacuation shelter in your area.



For more information about disaster preparedness for your pets call 202-452-1100 or visit www.humanesociety.org/disastertips.



PREPAREDNESS TIPS:

- **ID your pet.** Make sure that your cat or dog is wearing a collar and identification that is up-to-date and visible at all times. You'll increase your chances of being reunited with a lost pet by having him or her microchipped. If your pet is adopted from a shelter or rescue organization, make sure the registration has been transferred to you and is not still with the adoption group.

HAZARDOUS MATERIAL INCIDENTS

Chemicals are part of our everyday lives. They are used daily at home and in the industry. Therefore, hazardous material incidents can occur nearly anywhere chemicals are used, stored or transported from one place to another. The best way to protect yourself when an accident happens is to be prepared.

During a hazardous material incident, you may be asked by local officials to “shelter-in-place” instead of evacuating. Staying indoors until the emergency is over may be much safer than going outside where the air may be unsafe to breathe. In the event that there is an incident involving a chemical release (i.e. industrial accidents) make sure to turn off your A/C and close all doors, windows and vents to prevent chemical vapors from entering.

SHELTER-IN-PLACE

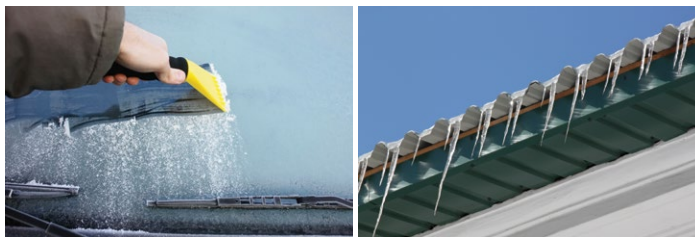
Potential hazardous events that may occur in Harris County requiring residents to shelter in place include:

- Hurricanes
- Chemical/hazardous material release
- Wildfires

General planning:

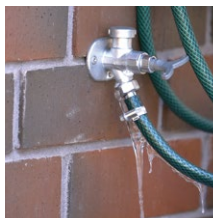
- Sign up for Harris County Alerts at www.readyharris.org to receive notice when an event is occurring in your area.
- Go inside and stay calm. Make sure all family members and pets are inside.
- Have your emergency supply kit.
- Choose a room in which to shelter. It should be an interior room with few or no windows, doors or vents. If possible, choose a room with a water supply.
- Stay off the phone. Do not call police, fire or 9-1-1 unless you are reporting a police, fire or medical emergency at your location. Overloaded telephone circuits may keep actual emergency calls from getting through.
- Stay indoors until local officials have given an “all-clear.”

WINTER WEATHER



Occasionally, Harris County will receive a round of freezing temperatures and rain resulting in icy roadways. Prepare your family for these types of events.

Area residents should check on the elderly, take care of pets and livestock and protect their plants and any exposed plumbing.



Remember the four “P’s”

PROTECT PEOPLE

PROTECT PETS

PROTECT PIPES

PROTECT PLANTS

Prepare your car for winter. Have your car serviced and add antifreeze as needed. Avoid slick roadways, if possible.

Finally, keep emergency supplies at hand and stay informed about the weather conditions in your area by visiting www.readyharris.org.



IMPORTANT TERMS:

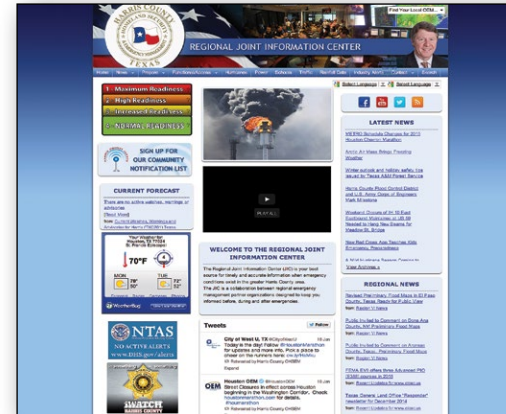
Familiarize yourself with the terms used by the media:

Winter Weather Advisory: A combination of sleet and freezing rain is expected to cause a significant inconvenience. Caution should be exercised.

Freeze Watch: There is a potential for significant, widespread freezing temperatures within the next 24-36 hours.

Freeze Warning: Significant widespread freezing temperatures are expected.

PHONE NUMBERS AND SOCIAL MEDIA



www.readyharris.org



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Like us on Facebook

HELPFUL NUMBERS

**Harris County Office of
Homeland Security &
Emergency Management**

713-881-3100

www.readyharris.org

Follow us on Twitter:
@HCOHSEM

Like us on Facebook:
Harris County Office of
Homeland Security &
Emergency Management

**Evacuation Assistance
Registry**

2-1-1

www.unitedwayhouston.org

3-1-1 (in Houston)

www.houstonx.gov

REMINDER TO PARENTS

In case of hazardous
material incidents or
any other emergencies...

If you have children in school:

DO NOT go to the school to pick
up your child unless you are told
to do so by school officials.

If you go to the school, you may
be putting yourself and your child
in danger.

DO NOT try to call your child's
school. If there is an emergency,
phone lines will be needed for
official business.

Students will be taken into schools
and cared for or evacuated to a
safe location.

**GET A KIT.
MAKE A PLAN.
STAY INFORMED.
BE INVOLVED.**

Knowing what to do protects
you and your family!



HOUSTON TRANSTAR



When emergency situations occur such as hurricanes, floods, industrial explosions or man-made incidents, the Harris County Emergency Operations Center housed at Houston TranStar is activated. Representatives from four partner agencies (the Texas Department of Transportation, Harris County, the Metropolitan Transit Authority of Harris County and the City of Houston) come together to coordinate a quick and efficient response.

Some of the technologies employed to address emergency situations include the Flood Warning Alert System, Doppler Radar Imagery, Satellite Weather Maps, Road Flood Warning Systems, HAM Radio, the Regional Incident Management System and much more. Visit www.houstontranstar.org for more information.



WEBSITES

Harris County

www.co.harris.tx.us

Harris County Homeland Security & Emergency Management

www.readyharris.org

www.hcoem.org

Harris County Citizen Corps

www.harriscountycitizenccorps.com

Houston TranStar

www.houstontranstar.org

National Weather Service

www.srh.noaa.gov/hgx

US Department of Homeland Security

www.dhs.gov

www.ready.gov



Harris County Judge Ed Emmett working with emergency management officials.