

Hurricane Evacuation 2006

Notes from the Houston
Hurricane Conference
May 30 ,2006

Hurricane Evacuation 2006

- **Contraflow**

- No contraflow within Harris county except for HWY 290.
- I-45 North contraflow will start after the San Jacinto bridge to Corsicana.
- I-10 will be east of Brookshire going west to loop 1604 in San Antonio.
- Hwy 59 will not have any contraflow and is discouraged as an evacuation route
- Contraflow is not automatic with an evacuation
 - Activation will be based on traffic flow
 - Opened in phases starting with 1 or 2 highways
- Needs to unwind somewhere – that is where the real bottleneck will occur
- Some southbound lanes will still be needed for emergency traffic
- To be used on highways with feeder roads
- Will use a pace car or DPS patrol car ahead of everyone
- Expected to improve flow not necessarily speed
- Contraflow is a dangerous operation

- **Toll roads**

- West side of BW8 will be closed until Galveston/Brazoria counties are empty.
- Tolls will not be collected.

- **HOV lanes will be for emergency traffic only**

- **Safeclear wreckers will move cars and take people to designated shelters**

- **Access from Loop 610 to major highways will be limited until other areas are clear**

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- **Fuel stops**

- Approximately every 50 miles
- Will have EMT\EMS medical personnel and supplies for minor emergencies
- Free gas
 - Only if you are on empty
 - Will give only a limited amount to get you to a safe location down the road
 - If your tank is half empty or fuller then you will be asked to go to a pay for gas station
- Comfort stations at fuel stops (porta-potties)

- **Gas stations**

- Will be required to have their supply tanks full
- Mobile, Valero, Shell, Marathon, and Exxon company owned stations will have gas 120 to 90 hours before tropical storm winds arrive.
- Better plans for fuel truck supplies have been made.

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- **Special Needs people**

- Defined as Nursing Homes, Hospitals, persons with **no** transportation, non-English speaking, homeless
- Need to ID people in your neighborhood who may qualify as being classified as Special Needs
- Contact 2-1-1 **now** to register as Special Needs
 - State vehicles will be used to take you to a state designated shelter
 - Will have a formal tracking system that may include wristbands
 - Busses will be tracked by GPS\phones
 - System will be a statewide city to shelter coordination
- People are being encouraged to take more responsibility for their neighbors
 - Know who they are
 - Learn how to take care of them

- **Shelters**

- No shelters in any of the storm surge zones
- None south of I-10
- State shelters will be general public and special needs people, including pets.

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- **Pets**

- State policy is “No pet left behind”
- Owners need to prepare pets for travel
- Use cages
- Some pets may have to be separated from their owners
 - An ID tracking system would be used

- **Evacuations**

- 3 levels: Voluntary, Recommended, and Mandatory
- Voluntary and Recommended evacuation periods allow you to leave whenever and go to wherever
- Mandatory evacuations may be ordered by the county judge or major city mayor
 - Used for category 4 or 5 hurricanes
 - Evacuation routes will be controlled by police
 - Leave ASAP or when directed
 - You will be directed to specific evacuation routes
 - If you want to determine your own course of travel then leave early before a mandatory evacuation order is given
- Priority is given to persons in storm surge zones
- Everyone needs to consider the need to leave in phases

- **Hwy 146 will be routed to I-10 west**

- **All metropolitan areas in Texas will have shelters**

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- **How to decide if you need to leave**
 - You are in a storm surge designated zone
 - You know that your property will be adversely impacted by wind
 - Take into consideration trees and windows
 - Flooding is a distinct problem in your area
 - Otherwise consider evacuating after the hurricane passes
- **Pine trees were broken and oak trees uprooted all the way to Woodville during hurricane Rita**
- **The 48 hour landfall forecast for hurricane Rita was Pensacola Florida. Actual landfall was 300 miles west.**
- **There is no “silver bullet” solution**
- **Expect to be in your car for 15 to 20 hours**
- **May not have 7 to 10 days to watch a storm develop and move toward the US**
 - Conditions are favorable for storms to form close to the US shoreline.
- **Why so many storms?**
 - Average water temperature is up 4°C
 - The same wind pattern exists as was last year

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- **Preparation for a hurricane**
 - Unplug all sensitive electronics
 - Do not cut off natural gas
 - Generators
 - Read the instructions
 - Know how to operate
 - You could injure or kill a lineman if your generator is not connected properly
- **Calling the power company**
 - When your neighbors have lights and you don't
 - Do not call if lights are out in the entire neighborhood.
 - Check to see if your weatherhead is damaged
 - If so it will need to be repaired by you before electricity will be connected
- **Being without electricity**
 - Category 1 hurricane: expect to be without electricity for 2 – 3 days
 - Category 3 hurricane: expect to be without electricity for 2 weeks
 - Category 5 hurricane: expect to be without electricity for 2 months
- **Important web sites**
 - www.txdps.state.tx.us/dem
 - www.weking.net
 - http://www.progress-energy.com/aboutenergy/stormcentral/stormbook_eng.pdf
 - For info about what is a weatherhead