



City of Hitchcock

Newsletter June 2020

How to Prepare for a Hurricane

Hurricanes are massive storm systems that form over ocean water and often move toward land. Threats from hurricanes include high winds, heavy rainfall, storm surge, coastal and inland flooding, rip currents, and tornadoes. The heavy winds of hurricanes can cause damage or destroy homes, buildings, and roads, as well as cause power, water, and gas outages. These effects can injure or kill people, disrupt transportation, and pollute drinking water. Hurricanes cause deaths and injuries primarily from drowning, wind, and wind-borne debris. The impact from hurricanes can extend from the coast to several hundred miles inland. To find your risk, visit FEMA's "Know Your Risk Map." Be better prepared for this hurricane season, and learn more at ready.gov/prepare.

Before

Sign up for local alerts and warnings. Monitor local news and weather reports. Prepare to evacuate by testing your emergency communication plan, learning evacuation routes, having a place to stay, and packing a "go bag." Stock emergency supplies. Protect your property by installing sewer backflow valves, anchoring fuel tanks, reviewing insurance policies, and cataloging belongings. Collect and safeguard critical financial, medical, educational, and legal documents and records.

During

Follow guidance from local authorities. If advised to evacuate, grab your "go bag" and leave immediately. For protection from high winds, stay away from windows and seek shelter on the lowest level in an interior room. Move to higher ground if there is flooding or a flood warning. Turn Around Don't Drown.® Never walk or drive on flooded roads or through water. Call 9-1-1 if you are in life-threatening danger.

After

Return to the area only after authorities say it is safe to do so. Do not enter damaged buildings until they are inspected by qualified professionals. Never walk or drive on flooded roads or through floodwaters. Look out for downed or unstable trees, poles, and power lines. Do not remove heavy debris by yourself. Wear gloves and sturdy, thick-soled shoes to protect your hands and feet. Do not drink tap water unless authorities say it is safe.

STAY INFORMED: EMERGENCY NOTIFICATIONS

You can receive alerts directly from the City of Hitchcock by signing up for Emergency Alerts at <https://www.cityofhitchcock.org/alerts/index.php>. You can also receive alerts and warnings directly from the National Weather Service for all hazards with a NOAA Weather Radio (NWR). Some radio receivers are designed to work with external notification devices for people who are deaf or hard of hearing. For more information on NWR receivers, visit [nws.noaa.gov/nwr/info/nwrrcvr.html](https://www.nws.noaa.gov/nwr/info/nwrrcvr.html).

Create a Hurricane Evacuation Plan for Your Family

As a family, have a strategy to reconnect in case you are separated.

- Choose an out-of-state friend or family member you can call when you are able to give updates.
- Agree on a couple of potential meeting places. One should be near the neighborhood, such as a school or park. The other should be farther from home, preferably in the next town.

Plan Alternate Routes

Flooding, downed trees and washed-out bridges can force you to improvise your evacuation route. Be aware of other roads and highways that can take you to safety.

Have a Plan for Your Pets

If your family has to stay in a public shelter, chances are good that your pet will not be permitted to accompany you. However, many communities don't want pets to be a barrier to keeping people safe. Review your city or county's evacuation plan to learn which local agencies and facilities might be housing pets during an emergency, and stay tuned for instructions during the event.

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DATES TO REMEMBER

6/15/2020- City Commission Regular Meeting at 6:00 p.m.



NATURAL DISASTERS: HURRICANES

The ingredients for a hurricane include a pre-existing weather disturbance, warm tropical oceans, moisture, and relatively light winds aloft.

FIVE CATEGORIES OF HURRICANES

TYPE 1



74–95 mph
64–82 kt
119–153 km/h

TYPE 2



96–110 mph
83–95 kt
154–177 km/h

TYPE 3



111–129 mph
96–112 kt
178–208 km/h

MAJOR HURRICANES

TYPE 4



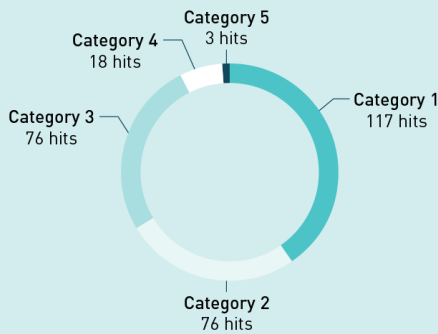
130–156 mph
113–136 kt
209–251 km/h

TYPE 5



157+ mph
137+ kt
252+ km/h

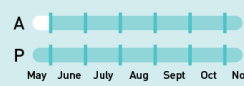
DIRECT HITS BY HURRICANES TO U.S. MAINLAND 1851-2015



Hurricanes can pack wind speeds of over 160 mph and unleash more than 2.4 trillion gallons of rain a day.



In the Atlantic, hurricane season starts June 1st. In the Pacific, it starts May 15th. Both end on November 30th.



40% of the hurricanes that occur in the US hit Florida.



The difference between a tropical storm and a hurricane is wind speed.



Hurricanes rotate counter-clockwise.



The costliest hurricane in US history was Katrina, which caused an estimated \$108 billion in damage.



Sources:
<http://www.nhc.noaa.gov/aboutsshws.php>
<http://www.cnn.com/2013/05/31/world/americas/hurricane-statistics-fast-facts>
<https://www.dosomething.org/us/facts/11-facts-about-hurricanes>

DEPLOYED RESOURCES

DEPLOYEDRESOURCES.COM
(315) 281-0039

FLOOD

There are steps that you or your property owner can take now to make your home or business more flood resistant. Some improvements are simple and inexpensive; others require more of an investment. As your budget allows, take these steps to protect your property from flood damage and manage your risks.

- Keep gutters and drains free of debris.
- Install “check valves” in sewer lines to prevent floodwater from backing up into your drains.
- Stockpile emergency protective materials such as plywood, plastic sheeting, and sandbags.
- Elevate the AC/Heating system, water heater, and electric panel if susceptible to flooding.
- In areas with repetitive flooding, consider elevating the building.

Stay Safe

Do not wade in floodwaters, which can contain dangerous debris like broken glass, metal, dead animals, sewage, gasoline, oil, and downed power lines.

Do not enter a building until it has been inspected for damage to the electrical system, gas lines, septic systems, and water lines or wells.

Wear appropriate protective equipment such as gloves, safety glasses, rubber boots, and masks to protect you from debris and airborne particles, e.g., mold and dust.

Do not use electrical equipment if it is wet or if you are standing in water.

Protect your pet following a hurricane. To learn more, visit ready.gov/animals.

FLOOD INSURANCE

Most property insurance policies do not cover flood losses, so you will need to purchase separate flood insurance if your property is at risk for flooding. Talk to your insurance agent about buying flood insurance. Flood insurance is available for homeowners, renters, and business owners through the National Flood Insurance Program in participating communities. Keep in mind that a policy purchased today will take 30 days to go into effect, so act now! Learn how to financially protect yourself from flood damage by visiting FloodSmart.gov. Find your flood risk at msc.fema.gov/portal.

Operation Roll ‘Em Out



The City of Hitchcock Police Department started **Operation Roll ‘Em Out** where our police officers aided our Code Enforcement Officer with actively seeking and identifying inoperable/unregistered vehicles throughout residences in the city.

There have been discussions regarding the appearance and the upkeep of residences and properties throughout the City. Violations, such as junk and/or unregistered vehicles in yards, high grass, debris, trash, and dilapidated exterior structures have been noted and brought to the attention of the homeowners. These verbal discussions have resulted in limited enforcement action to address the violations.

Non-compliant properties have a negative impact on property values and the City, and we have been working diligently to update our City ordinances to address what has been viewed as shortcomings in our codes. Our plan is to utilize state statutes and existing codes as our guide for compliance. As we move forward, there will be a heightened sense of urgency in addressing these code violations as our assistance is necessary to help remove these public nuisances.

Junk/Inoperable Vehicles have been deemed detrimental to the safety and welfare of the general public by:

**Reducing the value of private property.*

**Inviting crime, such as vandalism.*

**Creating fire hazards.*

**Constitutes an attractive nuisance creating a hazard to the health and safety of minors.*

**Is detrimental to the economic welfare of the city by producing urban blight.*

Under the direct supervision of the City Administrator and Chief of Police, the Code Enforcement Officer and other designees assigned to assist, will cite those who are in violation. While on patrol, officers will seek to identify the locations of junk/inoperable vehicles and serve warnings to the homeowners.

This only applies to vehicles seen from the front yard.

For unregistered vehicles, per the Governor’s proclamation, residents will have 60 days after the pandemic is over to register the vehicle. Inoperable vehicles must be removed or repaired.

We are seeking voluntary compliance to address these issues, so that we can continue to set a positive example for our community.

During the next 90-day period we will focus our attention in the areas listed below:

Residents with high grass, debris, trash, and dilapidated exterior structures will be given 14 days to become compliant.

For any questions or concerns, you can contact our Code Enforcement Officer Candie Serna at 409-986-5559.

NEW CITY ORDINANCE

ORDINANCE NO. 2020-007

Establishing regulations of construction standards for the use and development of residential and commercial fences, walls, screenings and buffers.

FENCE ETIQUETTE

When you get a new fence, consider your surrounding neighbors and City Ordinances.

MAKE SURE YOUR PROPERTY LINES ARE DEFINED

It’s a good idea to check your house’s plat. You can also hire a land surveyor to clarify the borders of your property.

TALK TO YOUR NEIGHBOR

Provided your fence is definitely within your property lines and complies with City Ordinance, you may not actually be required to talk to your neighbors about it. Still, it’s common courtesy to ask—and it could save you future legal trouble if it turns out your neighbor wants to dispute your fence. Besides, if it’s going to be a divider between your yards, that could actually be something your neighbor is considering, too! You might find that you and your neighbor can collaborate on the project—and split the cost.

FACE THE FINISHED SIDE OF THE FENCE TOWARD YOUR NEIGHBOR

Certain kinds of fences have a finished side or a “good” side that looks smoother and more polished than the side with the rails and posts showing. In particular, the solid panel fences often used for privacy are generally constructed like this. The finished side should face toward your neighbor.

CONTINUALLY MAINTAIN YOUR FENCE

Of course, you want your fence to look the best it can—you don’t want the paint to fade or chip, you want to keep your fence clean, and you don’t want your wood to rot. However, this really isn’t only for your own benefit—if your fence becomes an eyesore, your surrounding neighbors won’t be very happy. It could even affect their property value if they decide to sell. Only get a fence that you can keep looking great.

If you follow these guidelines for fence etiquette, you’ll ultimately deal with a lot less stress and will find it easier to enjoy having a fence. Communicate with your immediate neighbors as you work on the project—don’t let it be an unpleasant surprise. You may discover that you’re surprised by how eager your neighbors are to cooperate and help you out.

DRAINAGE PROJECTS

The City of Hitchcock has been hard at work on upgrading the drainage system through out the city. Several portions have been completed and more are underway.

Completed drainage work:

Neville – 2nd St. to Cow Gully, both side, point to point.

Jackson – Prairie to FM 519, both sides, point to point.

Hacker – 2nd St. to Caldwell St., both sides, point to point.

Burns – Hacker Rd. to last driveway on right, both sides, point to point.

South Railroad(Renaud) Mike St. to east of Beiring, Southside only, point to point.

Underway:

Jay Road Drainage Project – Reshoot grade on north side of the street and replace undersized culverts to 30”.

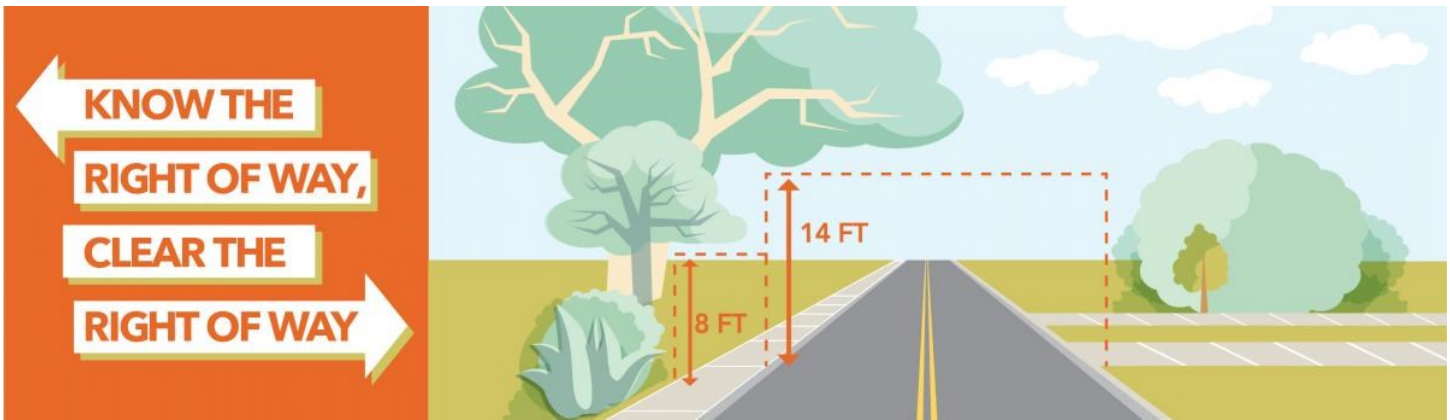
THE SEWER CLEANOUT

A **sewer cleanout** is a common name for all the vertical access points to your sewer system, so there is a chance of you having more than one cleanout on your property. There can be both **inside sewer cleanouts** and **outside sewer cleanouts**, as well.

The main purpose of the existence of these cleanouts is to provide you with an easily accessible spot from where you can clean your sewer line from accumulated dirt, wipes or any other clog that could occur.

In cases of clogging or any other problem with water pressure in your pipeline or sewer line, without knowing the location and access point of your cleanout, you will be forced to call plumbers for servicing and they will possibly have to remove some of your toilet components to access the pipes.

Keep trees trimmed to at least a **8ft. from side walks and 14ft. clearance from the street to allow for passage of school busses and Emergency Vehicles.**



HOW TO CONTACT US

NAME	TITLE	E-MAIL	PHONE NUMBER
RANDY STRICKLIND	MAYOR	rstricklind@cityofhitchcock.org	(409)927-0058
MARY COMBS DEMBY	CITY COMMISSIONER DISTRICT 1	district1@cityofhitchcock.org	(409)986-7171
CHRIS ARMACOST	CITY COMMISSIONER, DISTRICT 2	district2@cityofhitchcock.org	(409)519-9646
Wayne Newton	CITY COMMISSIONER, DISTRICT 3	district3@cityofhitchcock.org	(409)770-3297
MARK COOK	CITY COMMISSIONER, DISTRICT 4	district4@cityofhitchcock.org	(281)782-7656
MARIE GELLES	CITY ADMINISTRATOR	mgelles@cityofhitchcock.org	(409)986-5591
WILMON SMITH	CHIEF OF POLICE	wsmith@hitchcockpd.com	(409)986-5559
NICHOLLE ANDRUS	CITY SECRETARY	nandrus@cityofhitchcock.org	(409)986-5591
CANDIE SERNA	CODE ENFORCEMENT OFFICER	cserna@hitchcockpd.com	(409)986-5559
D. JOE WOOD	COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT SPECIALIST	djwood@cityofhitchcock.org	(409)316-7234
FRED WELCH	INTERIM EXEC. DIRECTOR OF HEDC	hedc@cityofhitchcock.org	(409)502-7331
HENRY DEBORD	BUILDING INSPECTOR	inspector@cityofhitchcock.org	(409) 739-0822
JANIE AVILA	PERMIT CLERK	javila@cityofhitchcock.org	(409) 986-5591
RUTH ANN SORRELL	MUNICIPAL COURT CLERK/ASSISTANT CITY SEC.	rsorrell@cityofhitchcock.org	(409)986-9702
ANDY JENKINS	STREET SUPERVISOR	anthonyjenkins47@icloud.com	(409)986-5591
LEROY THOMAS	WATER/WASTEWATER SUPERINTENDENT	lthomas@cityofhitchcock.org	(409)761-0737
BILL GARVIN	WASTEWATER TREATMENT PLANT OPERATOR	billgarvin@yahoo.com	(409)986-5591
ANIMAL CONTROL			(409) 948-2485
MOSQUITO CONTROL			(281) 337-4289
GARBAGE COLLECTION	AMERIWASTE		(281) 331-8400
AFTER HOUR WATER/ SEWER			(409)986-5559
AFTER HOUR WASTE WATER TREATMENT PLANT / LIFT STATION			(409)986-5559
NON EMERGENCY POLICE			(409)986-5559