



City of Hitchcock

Newsletter May 2021

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

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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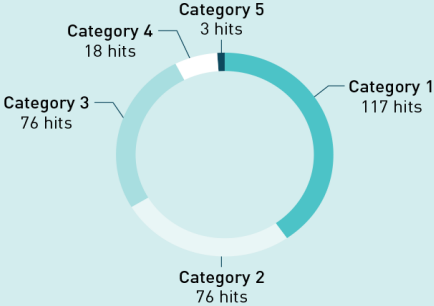


DATES TO REMEMBER


5/31/2021 - City offices will be closed in observance of the Memorial Day Holiday.

FIVE CATEGORIES OF HURRICANES	MAJOR HURRICANES				
	TYPE 1	TYPE 2	TYPE 3	TYPE 4	TYPE 5
					
	74–95 mph 64–82 kt 119–153 km/h	96–110 mph 83–95 kt 154–177 km/h	111–129 mph 96–112 kt 178–208 km/h	130–156 mph 113–136 kt 209–251 km/h	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.




39–73 mph 74+ mph

Hurricanes rotate counter-clockwise.



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



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.

Prepare lists and documentation, Experiencing a flood is very stressful. Preparing an inventory after a flood occurs, and attempting to remember everything you owned is difficult. You should prepare and keep a list of the personal property within your home or business when you purchase personal property coverage. It is advisable to take photos or record videos of your home, your office interior, and your personal property. Remember, it is important to regularly update the list. For each item on the list, include:

- Description
- Date and place of purchase
- Model number
- Serial number (for large appliances) Original purchase cost (with receipt, if possible)
- Include purchase orders and inventory records when you are a business owner

Secure important papers, Keep original copies of important insurance papers in a secure and waterproof location such as a bank safe deposit box. Be sure your papers include your insurance agent or company contact information, your flood insurance policy, important receipts, and documentation of the covered items within your home or business.

Keep copies of these papers in your home or business in a safe, accessible place not subject to flooding and take them with you if you need to evacuate, making sure they are in a waterproof container. Retaining detailed documentation makes filing the claim much easier when you suffer moderate floodwater property damage.

WELCOME NEW MAYOR AND COUNCIL MEMBERS

All positions for the May 1, 2020 election were unopposed. This resulted in the cancellation of the City's May 2021 Election.

On May 11, 2021, the new Mayor and Council Members were sworn in, Chris Armacost as the Mayor, Mary Combs Demby as Councilmember District 1 and Shawn Kadlecek as Councilmember District 2.

We look forward to the continued progress of our growing community through the efforts of our City Council Members.

HITCHCOCK EDC STOREFRONT AND STREETScape IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

The Storefront and Streetscape Improvement Program assists commercial property and/or business owners in rehabilitating their storefronts and the streetscapes located adjacent to their buildings to revitalize neighborhood commercial areas, eliminate blight, and enhance the livability of surrounding neighborhoods. Funding is provided by the Hitchcock Economic Development Corporation (HEDC).

Program Goals:

1. Revitalize and improve the appearance of commercial areas to positively impact the aesthetics, marketability, and perception of Hitchcock;
2. Activate the Hitchcock business environment by improving the pedestrian experience;
3. Stimulate private investment, while at the same time encouraging a higher level of quality and design of retail, commercial and professional storefronts, and streetscapes.

Program Funding and Availability of Funds

The Storefront and Streetscape Improvement Program offers commercial property owners and business tenants up to a 50% matching grant of up to a maximum of \$5,000 per building/retail center, on a reimbursement basis only, for the funding of well-designed improvements in enhancing their storefronts and streetscapes.

Scan the URL Code for the application.

For more information contact Tyler Robert by (409)502-7331 or email hedc@cityofhitchcock.org.



PLEASE BE AWARE...

It has come to our attention that a company known as Doxo, Inc., accepts payments intended for the City. This company is NOT affiliated with the City of Hitchcock. A link to their website appears during a web search for the City of Hitchcock Utilities online bill payment. We are NOT in partnership with this company and have NOT authorized their use of our logo or materials. We do not recommend the use of this third party payment site. Payments made in this manner are NOT paid directly to the City and are NOT immediately transferred to the City. This causes payment delays which could cause service interruptions. Late fees and other fees may also be charged to the customer. If you enjoy the convenience of secure online bill pay please visit the City of Hitchcock website at www.cityofhitchcock.org, other payment options include automatic bank draft and direct pay. Gain access to our payment portal by visiting our website and clicking on the "Make Payments" link.

GET INVOLVED

Hitchcock is Accepting Boards and Commissions Applications.

Economic Development Board: Meetings are the third Thursday of each month at 5:30pm at the EDC Building.

Planning & Zoning Commission: Meetings are the third Tuesday of each month (or less often depending on need) at 5:00pm at City Hall.

Board of Adjustments: Meeting are scheduled on an as needed basis at City Hall.

Serving on a City board or commission is an excellent way to serve your community. If you are interested in serving on a board or commission, please complete the on-line application and return to the City or email to the City Manager at mgelles@cityofhitchcock.org. You may attach your resume and any additional material you would like considered with your application.

http://www.cityofhitchcock.org/departments/city_secretary/index.php

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

The City of Hitchcock is looking for volunteers with knowledge of home construction. In order to meet FEMA requirements, after a disaster such as a hurricane, the City must inspect damaged homes to determine the level of damage to each residence.

This is a time consuming task and requires more people than are available on the City of Hitchcock staff.

If you are interested in becoming a volunteer in the event of a disaster please contact Heather Hebert in the Permits Department at (409)986-5591 or by email at hebert@cityofhitchcock.org.



ROAD RAGE STATISTICS

Over the years, cars have become safer and traffic laws more stringent. Yet, we remain as vulnerable to road rage related incidents as before. These road rage statistics will show you the dangers of recklessness as well as being behind the wheel while angry.

Unfortunately, this is probably not going to change unless we understand the nature of the beast — *road rage begets road rage*.

Aggressive driving behavior is nobody's friend. It puts everybody in danger — the aggressor, the victim, and other road users. So, the responsibility is on each of us to do our part to kill road rage (instead of letting it harm us and others).

MOST DISTURBING ROAD RAGE STATISTICS:

- Road rage is the leading cause of accidents.
- Over one-third of road rage cases involve firearms.
- 30 murders are attributed to road rage every year.
- Eight in 10 drivers experience road rage.
- Two out of three traffic fatalities occur due to aggressive driving.
- Men are more prone to road rage than women.
- Teenage boys are most likely to exhibit signs of road rage.
- Mississippi is the number one state with the worst drivers.



CONCLUSION:

While these facts are disturbing, the purpose behind sharing them was not to scare you but to make you more aware. Maintain a safe distance from other vehicles on the road and do not engage with other drivers. Seek help in case you find it hard to control your anger. As the above-mentioned road rage statistics show, safe driving behavior and good anger management and coping skills can help save not only your life but also the lives of others around you. The best way to reduce unsafe driving is to increase traffic policing. The City of Hitchcock Police Department asks that you obey all traffic laws, remain vigilant and most importantly... DRIVE SAFE. Our Officers remain on the lookout for violators and will prosecute to the fullest extent necessary to keep us all safe.

Credits: CARSURANCE article published February 2021. National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), Safe Motorists and DriversEd.

HOW TO CONTACT US

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FIRE MARSHALL	DARRON RAY	fire@cityofhitchcock.org	(409) 457-6258
ANIMAL CONTROL			(409) 948-2485
MOSQUITO CONTROL			(281) 337-4289
GARBAGE COLLECTION	AMERIWASTE		(281) 331-8400
AFTER HOUR WATER/ SEWER/WWTP			(409)795-7595
NON EMERGENCY POLICE			(409)986-5559