

## **Hurricane Rita Information from Council Member Pam Holm**

In recent weeks, the compassion of Houstonians has been noticed worldwide as we cared for our friends and neighbors who suffered so terribly from the natural disaster of Hurricane Katrina. Now, with Hurricane Rita forecasted to reach the Texas Gulf Coast area by late Friday, September 23rd and Galveston County's mandatory evacuation beginning this evening, we must all ensure that we are prepared as individuals and as a community for what the last weeks of the 2005 hurricane season may hold.

This morning in a news conference from the George R. Brown, Houston Mayor Bill White and Harris County Judge Robert Eckels made procedural announcements as follows:

### **Voluntary evacuation is encouraged:**

- In Storm Surge areas
- Within the 100 Year Floodzone
- From mobile and other less permanent structures
- Mandatory evacuation for Storm Surge areas will begin at 6:00 AM Thursday.

\* All area employers are encouraged to require the employ of only essential personnel beginning Thursday.

\* We await official word from area school districts that they will not be holding school beginning Thursday.

\* All area residents are encouraged to assist in neighbor-to-neighbor efforts to ensure that our citizens are preparing and evacuating as necessary.

\* The City's 311 system: Citizens who need transportation assistance living in areas subject to storm surge and flooding and who do not have plans to receive assistance from family or neighbors should call 311 or 713-837-0311 so the City of Houston and METRO may assist with transportation.

\* Citizens who need to report utility outages or non-life threatening emergency situations reported to 911 should call 311 or 713-837-0311.

I have attached a map identifying Storm Surge and 100 Year Floodzone areas. As you can see, District G is not in an official Evacuation Zone but some areas directly along Buffalo Bayou do lie within the 100 Year Floodzone where the Mayor indicated that voluntary evacuation is encouraged.

I urge you to keep informed with the help of the links listed below and share this information, make preparations, and take simple precautions that can help to alleviate some of the stress that accompanies such storms. No single website is a one-stop-shop for all information but you may find components of various sites helpful to you as you decide upon your own plans.

As you know, official government evacuation preparations cannot predict and provide for every iteration of the challenges associated with storms of great magnitude. Being equipped with information, supplies, and common sense is our best defense and I encourage you to begin such preparations.

**Pam Holm**  
**City Council Member District G**

### **Emergency precautions include:**

\* Monitoring local media for alerts

- KTRH News Radio: [www.ktrh.com](http://www.ktrh.com)
- Houston Chronicle: [www.chron.com](http://www.chron.com)

\* Making arrangements for those with special needs which may include family members or neighbors that need assistance

- \* Bringing in outdoor furniture, tools, and play equipment
- \* Filling prescriptions and obtaining records for yourself, individuals in your care, and pets
- \* Gathering supplies for 3-7 days of conditions without power
  - Non-perishable food, a can opener, and bottled water
  - Radios, flashlights, and extra batteries
  - First Aid kit with medications, maps, keys, and cash in the event that ATMs are not available
  - Clothing, toiletries, and blankets
  - Toys, books, and games for children
- \* Gathering important documents and copying important computer files to a disk
- \* Compiling contact information for your utilities
- \* Familiarizing yourself with evacuation routes and ensuring you have sufficient gas

**Additional emergency information can be obtained at the following websites:**

**City of Houston Office of Emergency Management  
Preparedness tips and some local evacuation routes:**

<http://www.houstontx.gov/oem/hurricane.html>

As you can see from the map, Galveston County evacuation routes generally follow along I-45, Beltway 8 and Hwy 6.

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

<http://www.hcoem.org/>

**National Hurricane Center Hurricane Rita page:**

[http://www.nhc.noaa.gov/refresh/graphics\\_at3+shtml/205128.shtml?5day](http://www.nhc.noaa.gov/refresh/graphics_at3+shtml/205128.shtml?5day)

**Disaster Information:** [http://www.nhc.noaa.gov/HAW2/english/disaster\\_prevention.shtml](http://www.nhc.noaa.gov/HAW2/english/disaster_prevention.shtml)

**American Red Cross  
Red Cross Preparedness Guide**

<http://www.houstonredcross.org/files/News/45image2.pdf>