

August 31, 2017

**WASHINGTON** – As remnants of Harvey continue to affect Texas and Louisiana, the U.S. Department of Homeland Security's Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and its federal partners continue to mobilize thousands of personnel and resources to support state, local and tribal efforts throughout the region.

More than 230 shelters are open across the affected and surrounding areas and housed tens of thousands of people last night. Emergency management officials caution that residents of Texas and Louisiana are still not out of harm's way. Download the [FEMA mobile app](#) (in English and Spanish) get directions to open shelters.

Residents and business owners should apply for assistance by registering through the [FEMA mobile app](#) or online at [www.DisasterAssistance.gov](http://www.DisasterAssistance.gov). More than **90,000** of your neighbors have already been approved for **\$57 million** in assistance with FEMA and we want to help you.

[Short-term housing assistance and other immediate funding](#) is available to survivors that register. Survivors whose homes are uninhabitable or inaccessible may have access to short-term lodging at eligible hotels. We can also provide up to two months of expedited rental assistance to those eligible to get funds quickly and begin making decisions regarding their temporary housing solutions. When survivors register, they will also receive information on other resources in their area, including available services from other federal agencies.

The **U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA)** has received **1,210** disaster loan applications; of which the majority are home disaster loan applications. The SBA's disaster customer service center has handled **2,280** calls from residents and businesses in the areas impacted by Hurricane Harvey. To date, **171** damage inspections have been completed.

For survivors that have suffered damage and have federal flood insurance, the [National Flood Insurance Program](#) is issuing advance payments of up to \$5,000 for building and contents damages prior to an adjuster's inspection to help get funds into the hands of survivors as soon as possible. If a policyholder has photos and receipts of out-of-pocket expenses, they may receive an advance payment of up to \$10,000. As of 2:30 pm EDT yesterday, over **37,000** claims have been submitted in Texas.

To help people affected by this disaster, FEMA has created a webpage with [resources](#) and additional information for People with Disabilities and Others with Access & Functional Needs. Information is available in the following languages: [Arabic](#), [Chinese](#), [Korean](#), [Spanish](#), [Tagalog](#), [Urdu](#), and [Vietnamese](#).

FEMA and its federal partners established Incident Support Bases (ISB) near Seguin, Texas, Camp Beauregard, Louisiana, and Baton Rouge, Louisiana to ensure supplies including water, meals, blankets and other resources are closer to affected areas and are available for state, tribal, and local officials to distribute to the community. The following commodities have been provided to the states at their request:

- Texas:

- More than 1,900,000 meals;
- More than 1,960,000 million liters of water;
- More than 4,700 blankets; and
- More than 1,400 cots

- Louisiana:

- More than 416,000 meals;
- More than 414,000 liters of water

Residents that evacuated should not attempt to return home until local officials say it is safe to do so. Use social media sites like Facebook or Twitter to reconnect with loved ones; the American Red Cross's [Safe and Well](#) program is available to let family members know survivors are safe, or individuals are looking for loved ones.

### ***Ongoing Support and Preparedness Efforts:***

The **American Red Cross (Red Cross)** continues to mobilize massive relief efforts and is partnering with the U.S. Coast Guard and the Texas National Guard to move supplies and volunteers to where they are needed most. The Red Cross priorities are sheltering and feeding. More than 32,000 people stayed in more than 230 Red Cross and community shelters in Texas Tuesday night. In Louisiana, shelters are open as the storm continues to move across the state. Red Cross is directing people in need of shelter to call 1-800-REDCROSS (1-800-733-2767), visit <http://www.redcross.org> or download the [Red Cross App](#). Local officials can also provide information on shelters. Working with partners, more than 180,000 meals and snacks have been served to date. With

blood products prepositioned in Houston and Dallas ahead of the storm, the Red Cross continues to work closely with local, state and federal authorities to deliver blood and platelets to our hospital partners in flood affected areas.

The **U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE)** has received FEMA Mission Assignments for temporary power, regional activation, subject matter experts, and debris removal and technical assistance. Liaison Officers are assisting the state Emergency Operations Centers and team leaders are providing technical assistance to FEMA response nodes. USACE is closely coordinating with the Coast Guard on plans to clear and open the federal navigation channels once weather permits. USACE is surveying portions of the Texas Gulf Intracoastal Waterway (GIWW) in the Corpus Christi area. USACE Districts in affected areas are conducting flood-fighting activities such as stockpiling and issuing flood-fighting materials (sandbags and materials/fabrics that keep soil in place) to local government entities. In an effort to mitigate the effects of flooding in the area, USACE Districts are monitoring flood risk reduction projects, and these projects are performing as designed.

The **U.S. Coast Guard (USCG)** continues with life-saving operations throughout Texas and Louisiana in flood-impacted areas. As of last night, Coast Guard search and rescue teams have saved 4,771 people and 1,003 pets. The Coast Guard Captain of the Port for Corpus Christi, Texas, has begun opening certain waterways within the Captain of the Port zone.

The **Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS)** deployed more than 250 AmeriCorps members to the region to support American Red Cross shelter and feeding operations, and FEMA's disaster damage assessments and logistics. AmeriCorps members are also working to stand up a Volunteer Reception Center. Additional requests for AmeriCorps disaster response teams are in development. These teams are trained to provide expert manpower for shelter operations, debris removal, and volunteer and donations management.

The **Department of Defense (DoD) Defense Logistics Agency (DLA)** is supporting FEMA's Incident Support Base (ISB) near Sequin, Texas. DOD is providing Air Force and Navy helicopters which have assisted with 450 rescues. The DoD Defense Logistics Agency provided Logistics Management and Resource Support to include 11 generators (Sequin), 14,500 sandbags (San Antonio) and Meals Ready to Eat (Fort Worth). DoD is providing strategic air assets in order to transport personnel (non-medical patients) and/or cargo in support of FEMA response operations. DoD is providing medium and heavy lift rotary wing assets, along with ground transportation, to move personnel, commodities and equipment in the state of Texas.

The **Department of Labor** has approved an initial \$10 million National Dislocated Worker Grant to assist with cleanup and recovery efforts. The grant is being awarded to the Texas Workforce Commission.

The **Department of Energy (DOE)** responders remain active at its sites in Washington D.C. and Texas. DOE is continuing to assess the situation, impact and needs in affected areas, and is continuing to provide situation reports at <https://www.energy.gov>. Government and industry coordination is happening at the highest levels. The electric industry has reported that industry mutual assistance crews from at least 21 states are responding, including more than 10,000 workers dedicated to the response and recovery effort. In addition, the U.S. Secretary of Energy has authorized the Strategic Petroleum Reserve (SPR) to negotiate and execute an emergency exchange agreement with the Phillips 66 Lake Charles Refinery. This decision will authorize 200,000 barrels of sweet crude oil and 300,000 barrels of sour crude oil to be drawn down from SPR's West Hackberry site and delivered via pipeline to the Phillips 66 refinery. The Department will continue to provide assistance as deemed necessary, and will continue to review incoming requests for SPR crude oil. Should the Secretary decide to approve additional requests for an emergency exchange of crude oil from the SPR, the public will be notified.

The **Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)** assisted in assessing conditions at the Arkema facility in Crosby, Harris County, including conducting an aerial assessment and plume modeling to provide to local responders. In addition, two National Priorities List (NPL) Superfund sites in Corpus Christi have been inspected to assess impacts from the hurricane. In addition, EPA's aerial assessment aircraft conducted aerial reconnaissance over the Corpus Christi area. The EPA, Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ), Texas General Land Office (TGLO) and US Coast Guard are operating in Unified Command (UC) with seven teams in the field conducting reconnaissance. EPA has completed a plan for sampling surface and flood waters to address public health concerns regarding possible contaminants found in storm water. EPA continues to support TCEQ in contacting drinking water and waste water systems and will visit two systems based on information garnered.

The **Federal Communications Commission (FCC)** continues to monitor the status of communications networks and is coordinating with providers and government partners on communications status and restoration in the affected areas. Visit [www.fcc.gov/harvey](http://www.fcc.gov/harvey) for a daily communications status report for areas impacted by this storm.

The **Federal Trade Commission (FTC)** has information for people who want to help Hurricane Harvey victims, and for those who are dealing with and recovering from, its long-term effects. The FTC warns consumers to be cautious of charity scams and do some research to ensure that your donation will go to a reputable organization that will use the donation as promised. For [survivors](#), the FTC provides a few points to consider in a personal disaster recovery plan.

The **U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA)** is advising people that food, medicine, and medical devices should be thrown out if they have come in contact with flood water or were stored improperly during a power outage. The FDA is also identifying regulated facilities affected by the storm to assess any risk.

The **General Services Administration's** top priority is protecting the life and safety of those in impacted areas. While several federal buildings affected by Hurricane Harvey have been closed on a temporary basis, GSA remains fully operational. Information on the status of federal buildings can be found [here](#).

The **U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS)** Secretary Tom Price declared a public health emergency for Texas on Monday to allow health care facilities to provide care unimpeded. In addition, HHS has more than 500 personnel on the ground in Texas and Louisiana and more than 1,000 on standby. HHS provided approximately 53,000 pounds of medical equipment and supplies to support medical and public health needs in the affected areas. HHS has activated the AABB Blood Disaster Task Force in order to evaluate the need for nation-wide blood donations to replenish cancelled blood drives in the impacted area. An Emergency Medical Services (EMS) contract managed by HHS is being utilized to evacuate patients by ambulances to three hospitals in Victoria, Texas.

The **Department of the Interior (DOI)** is expanding its support activities through six mission assignments, including the **U.S. Geological Survey** providing advance support, real-time field measurements, and daily reporting of water heights via deployed storm-tide sensors to help public officials assess storm damage, discern between wind and flood damage, and improve computer models used to forecast future floods. USGS is also supporting collection of remote-sensed imagery, updating coastal change forecasts based on storm surge forecasts, and liaising with the Texas State Emergency Operations Center. The **National Park Service (NPS)** and **Office of Aviation Services** are expanding search and rescue activities, including use of Unmanned Aerial Systems (drones) for search and rescue operations and to provide imagery for identifying high priority search areas.

The **National Protection and Programs Directorate (NPPD)** is coordinating with federal partners about the need for critical infrastructure partners restoration, particularly in the health care sector and the life line sectors such as power, water/wastewater, as part of overall protection of life and life safety messaging. NPPD has posted a [US-CERT alert](#) on Potential Hurricane Harvey Phishing Scams attempting to take advantage of efforts to provide humanitarian assistance to hurricane survivors. As response efforts continue, NPPD is working to understand and characterize state and national level industry concerns and impacts, as well as to identify sector-specific and cross-sector priorities, concerns and requirements for federal support or mutual aid. NPPD employees are also supporting efforts to prioritize re-entry of residents into impacted areas once it is safe to do so. Deployed NPPD workers are helping to maintain or establish coordination with owners and operators of priority facilities to determine their facility status.

The **Internal Revenue Service (IRS)** issued a warning about possible fake charity scams emerging due to Hurricane Harvey and encourages taxpayers to seek out recognized charitable groups for their donations. Visit [www.irs.gov](http://www.irs.gov) for additional information about tax relief in disaster situations.

The **National Guard Bureau (NGB)** have rescued or assisted more than 4,400 residents by ground and air in the affected areas. The NGB has over 14,000 service members in the region helping in various assessment, search and rescue, and recovery missions. NGB is closely coordinating with the Texas and Louisiana National Guard to ensure all requirements are met for forces and equipment. Guard members in Texas supporting civil authorities by saving lives, preventing injuries and protecting property.

The **Office for Civil Rights and Civil Liberties (CRCL)** worked with FEMA to develop guidance for impacted states, localities, and other federal recipients on how to effectively communicate with the whole community and carry out their disaster-related activities in a non-discriminatory manner. The guidance is available at: <https://www.dhs.gov/publication/tips-effectively-communicating-protected-populations-during-preparedness-response-and>.

The **U.S. Office of Personnel Management** has approved a [special solicitation](#) of Federal employees at the workplace to support the victims of Hurricane Harvey. This special solicitation, which ends September 29, 2017, will allow Federal employees and military personnel to assist the disaster relief efforts with cash or check donations outside the normal Combined Federal Campaign. Additional information can be found

at: <https://www.opm.gov/news/releases/2017/08/opm-approves-special-solicitation-to-support-harvey-victims/>

The **U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS)** has emailed the options available to USCIS customers affected by natural disasters and other extreme situations. This information is available on the USCIS Special Situations web page <https://www.uscis.gov/humanitarian/special-situations> and details how natural events can affect USCIS applications, petitions or immigration status. The USCIS recommends that volunteers print this web page and include in any information packets they are handing out to those affected by Hurricane Harvey. For information about USCIS office closures, visit [www.uscis.gov](http://www.uscis.gov) or call our National Customer Service Center line at 1-800-375-5283 for further information or assistance with rescheduling appointments.