



# FEMA

U.S. Department of Homeland Security  
Federal Emergency Management Agency  
Office of Legislative Affairs

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## **Hurricane Ike Congressional Advisory #13 September 17, 2008**

### **AFTER IKE: FEDERAL SUPPORT FOR THE 'LONG HAUL'**

The Department of Homeland Security's Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) is coordinating the joint efforts of federal, tribal, state and local partners as they continue search and rescue operations, to distribute assistance to those in immediate need, and begin to rebuild.

President George W. Bush visited the area yesterday with FEMA Administrator David Paulison to see how agencies across all levels of government are working together, to assure the community that federal support will continue for the 'long haul' and to meet face-to-face with those dealing with the effects of this devastating storm. President Bush previously declared major disasters in Texas and Louisiana, making available federal funds to assist individuals and communities in their recovery. Individuals can register for assistance by calling 1-800-621-FEMA or at [www.fema.gov](http://www.fema.gov). FEMA staff at shelters are also helping residents to register.

Federal assets were on the ground long before landfall, are there now, and will remain as long as necessary. Federal agencies are supporting the Points of Distribution (PODS) – with FEMA managing more than a dozen in Harris County – but PODs are generally established and managed by state and local government. The federal government is also supporting a transitional sheltering initiative to allow eligible Ike evacuees from Texas, who cannot return to their homes, to stay in hotels or motels until it is safe for them to go home. FEMA and its federal partners are also supporting 280 shelter operations with a total population of 35,000.

People will be anxious to return home, but everyone needs to be patient and to wait for local officials to indicate it is safe to do so. Residents in the affected areas are reminded that power, water, sewage and medical assistance may be limited in the aftermath of a storm; evacuees should wait to return until essential services are restored.

Anyone can help with the relief and recovery efforts. Companies and individuals can offer their support through the Aidmatrix Foundation's online portal, which is designed to make it as easy as possible to offer financial support, product donations, or to donate skills and time to nonprofit organizations active in disaster relief. To make a contribution or to volunteer, visit [www.aidmatrixnetwork.org](http://www.aidmatrixnetwork.org). You can also support the efforts through other charities, such as the American Red Cross at [www.RedCross.org](http://www.RedCross.org).

## **U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)**

- FEMA is supporting search and rescue operations and other life-saving and life-preserving activities.
- More than 7 million meals and 24 million liters of water are currently being distributed in East Texas. Supplies and equipment will continue to move into the hardest hit areas as quickly as possible, especially water, meals, generators, tents and tarps. As local communities identify their critical needs and each state prioritizes those needs, federal partners will provide the additional personnel, equipment and supplies to meet those needs.
- Contracts have been activated to supplement existing resources without shifting resources from other disaster operations. FEMA is also working with the private sector and voluntary agencies to enhance their abilities to provide resources and support to communities before and after a storm.
- FEMA activated the National Emergency Family Registry and Locator System to help reunite families that have become separated as a result of Hurricane Ike. It can be accessed online at [www.fema.gov](http://www.fema.gov). People may also call in at 1-800-588-9822, 24-hours a day.

## **U.S. Coast Guard (USCG)**

- USCG's top priorities are search and rescue operations and the protection and safety of life at sea, both for mariners and residents of the Texas coast. USCG has 9 fixed-wing and 35 rotary-wing air assets onsite, and 5 cutters positioned offshore for post-hurricane response.
- USCG has aircraft conducting search and rescue, port assessments, infrastructure damage assessments and prepared to respond to any oil spill/hazardous material pollution incidents.
- USCG is working to restore navigational and port operations. The ports of Houston, Galveston, Port Arthur/Beaumont, Lake Charles and Orange are open to shallow draft traffic with some restrictions.

## **Customs and Border Protection (CBP)**

- CBP has more than 580 people deployed or standing by to support hurricane recovery missions, including CBP Agents, Officers, and technical support personnel.
- [CBP.gov](http://CBP.gov) has a regularly updated status of port of entry facilities. Travelers and businesses are encouraged to check the site for the latest updates.

## **U.S. Customs and Immigration Service (USCIS)**

- USCIS continues to contact community organizations and the media to inform them that USCIS will reschedule all appointments in closed offices. USCIS is advising customers to take all necessary actions to protect their documents and inform them that if they have evacuated, or a USCIS office is closed, they can temporarily make an appointment in another USCIS office.

## **National Protection and Programs Directorate**

### *National Communications System (NCS)*

- NCS is coordinating with the communications industry as it continues damage assessment and is working with power crews in coordinating their restoration efforts. Access to affected areas and fuel to support secondary power is not a concern at this time. Numerous communications sites remain on secondary power (battery and generator).
- The NCS received 10 Telecommunication Service Priority (TSP) provisioning requests from Lake Charles, Louisiana. TSP provides priority restoration of registered critical communications circuits. There are now 23 TSP requests recorded for Hurricane Ike.

### **U.S. Department of Energy (DOE)**

- More than 3 million customers are reported without power in five States affected by Ike: Texas, Louisiana, Arkansas, Missouri, Illinois, Ohio, Kentucky and West Virginia. In Texas alone, more than 2 million customers remain without power.
- Colonial pipeline is receiving injects from storage facilities and refineries at Collins, Miss., Baton Rouge, La., Lake Charles, La., and Pasadena, Texas. Portable generators have been installed in Beaumont, Texas where commercial power is at least a week away.
- DOE will deliver an additional 239,000 barrels of emergency exchange oil from the Strategic Petroleum Reserve to Conoco Phillips Company's Wood River refinery along the Capline pipeline system. The oil was requested because of disruptions in supply caused by Hurricanes Gustav and Ike.

### **U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ)**

- DOJ's Disaster Fraud Hotline continues to operate. Members of the public can report fraud, waste, abuse or allegations of mismanagement involving disaster relief operations through the Disaster Fraud Hotline at 866-720-5721, the Disaster Fraud Fax at 225-334-4707 or the Disaster Fraud e-mail at [disaster@leo.gov](mailto:disaster@leo.gov). Individuals can also report criminal activity to the FBI at 1-800-CALL-FBI or [www.fbi.gov](http://www.fbi.gov).

### **U.S. National Guard Bureau (NGB)**

- Equipped with more than 1,000 high-water vehicles and 50 aircraft, The Texas National Guard has rescued more than 3,350 people.
- The Louisiana National Guard has distributed more than 11 million Meals-Ready-to-Eat, 13 million pounds of ice, 495,000 tarps, and more than 14 million bottles of water.
- To improve communications and response times between local, state and federal responders, the Texas National Guard is providing state-of-the art 18 satellite communication packages

### **U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)**

- EPA's Airborne Spectral Photometric Environmental Collection Technology (ASPECT) plane is conducting aerial reconnaissance of 250 locations. ASPECT is the equipment mounted in a small aircraft that can obtain detailed chemical information from a safe distance.
- EPA helicopter reconnaissance identified orphan containers along the storm surge areas.
- The public should report oil spills and hazardous substance releases to the EPA's National Response Center at 1-800-424-8802.

### **National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)**

- NOAA aircraft are flying damage assessment missions. More than 4,000 images were collected during yesterday's missions - imagery will be available online at <http://ngs.woc.noaa.gov/ike/>
- NOAA navigation response crews are working on surveys in Neches River, Texas City Channel, Sabine Pass and Galveston Harbor.
- NOAA hazardous materials scientific support teams have provided trajectory information and maps and continue to help the USCG and EPA as needed.

### **U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS)**

- Medical and support personnel from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services continue active in the Texas theater of operations, following Hurricane Ike. Medical care is provided through the National Disaster Medical System and the U.S. Public Health Service Commissioned Corps. All National Disaster Medical System teams and the entire Public Health Service Commissioned Corps are on alert to assist state and local agencies in Hurricane Ike recovery efforts.
- HHS personnel are in contact with all hospitals and nursing homes in the affected area on a daily basis to identify needs for power, medical supplies and personnel. HHS is working with the local energy company and the state, providing information to help the company prioritize power needs of healthcare facilities.
- An HHS medical team consisting of over 30 personnel has set up a mobile medical unit in Webster, TX, near the Clear Lake Hospital to treat patients with less serious illnesses and refer those in need of more serious medical care to the Hospital's emergency room.
- In Houston, at the George Brown Convention Center, two HHS medical teams, with almost 40 medical specialists provide acute patient care at a casualty collection point for medically fragile patients. From there, the patients are sent, with appropriate medical care, to facilities in non-affected areas.
- In Galveston, approximately 70 medical specialists are working at the University of Texas Medical Branch, staffing the emergency room day and night so that local personnel can return home and help their families with Ike clean-up.
- In College Station, 221 U.S. Public Health Services medical specialists are staffing a 250 bed Federal Medical Station that has been set up in the Texas A&M University arena. They are treating patients around the clock.
- In San Antonio, U.S. Public Health Services and Veterans Administration medical personnel are treating patients at two Federal Medical Stations.
- HHS community assessment teams and case managers are also in Texas. In addition, ten Commissioned Corps officers will deploy to Baton Rouge to assist with case management for returning Louisiana residents.
- HHS Disaster Mortuary (DMORT) are continuing to work with the state of Texas and localities to assess the needs for mortuary services to respectfully handle the remains of disinterred bodies from cemeteries in Orange, Texas and other affected communities.

### **U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)**

- CDC worked with the insurance industry to distribute health and safety materials to their customers in the region.
- CDC's message focuses on safety and health: follow local advisories about the safety of your water supply; avoid carbon monoxide poisoning; and be prepared to cope with feelings of fear, grief and depression after a traumatic event.

### **U.S. Department of Treasury (Treasury)**

- Treasury's Bureau of the Public Debt is assisting impacted residents in Florida, Louisiana and Texas by expediting the replacement or payment of United States Savings Bonds for owners in affected counties or parishes in those states.

### **The American Red Cross (ARC)**

- In Texas, ARC continues to focus on feeding, sheltering and more to those affected. Currently, ARC has five kitchens and approximately 125 mobile feeding trucks that are providing meals, comfort items, cleanup kits and more.
- In Louisiana, ARC has more than 100 mobile feeding trucks delivering food, water and toiletry items to residents who have returned home.
- ARC mental health professionals from across the country are providing emotional support, psycho-educational information, crisis intervention and referral services for those affected.
- Additional information on ARC activities, service delivery and guidance can be found on our Online Newsroom: <http://hurricaneike.wordpress.com/>

### **Department of Labor (DOL)**

- DOL has income support and employment resources for workers whose jobs may be impacted – temporarily or permanently – by the hurricane.
- Workers who are temporarily or permanently unemployed as a result of the Hurricane can contact the DOL's national toll-free hotline, 1-866-4-USA-DOL, or 1-866-487-2365 to connect with state and local officials in their states that can help them apply for income support and employment benefits.

### **U.S. Department of Interior (DOI)**

- DOI's Minerals Management Service reports that 84.2 % of the natural gas production and 97.2 % of the oil production remains shut in. Production platforms are being re-manned but about 69.5 % of the 717 manned platforms in the Gulf remain evacuated while 71 drilling rigs, about 58.7 % of the 121 rigs operating in the Gulf, remain evacuated. Preliminary reports indicate that at least 10 offshore platforms were destroyed and some pipelines were damaged by Hurricane Ike.
- DOI's U.S. Geological Survey is providing local, state and federal officials and posting to its public websites aerial and satellite imagery of Texas and Louisiana areas damaged by Hurricane Ike as well as flooding data and images and storm surge readings. Flights also support search and rescue operations.
- DOI's National Park Service is supporting search and rescue efforts with 17 boat crews based out of Maxwell Air Force Base in Alabama. An additional 10 boat crews in Louisiana, and 10 boat crews in Texas will be moved into place by Thursday.

### **U.S. Postal Service (USPS)**

- USPS Teams, comprised of Postal Inspectors and Postal Operations employees, fanned out across impacted areas in Texas and Louisiana. While some areas still remain inaccessible due to flood waters, where there is access, the Postal Teams are evaluating potential damage and will attempt to restore facilities and equipment. Service in some areas will begin immediately.
- USPS liaisons are visiting shelters across the region to help residents who need to reroute their mail to a temporary address. Postal customers can also visit [www.usps.com](http://www.usps.com) to check on their post office's status or to make a change of address request.

**U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA)**

- Evacuated veterans with urgent care needs may contact any VA facility across the country by dialing 1-800-507-4571. This telephone number may also be used by families and friends requiring information about patients from those VA facilities affected the hurricane. Veterans may call with questions such as where to access health care, how to receive their prescription drugs, or any other concerns they may have about their care.
- The following VA clinics remain closed at this time: Beaumont VA Outpatient Clinic Conroe VA Outpatient Clinic, Galveston VA Outpatient Clinic, Texas City VA Outpatient Clinic

**U.S. General Services Administration (GSA)**

- A list of Federal Building closures can be found at [www.GSA.gov](http://www.GSA.gov).

*FEMA coordinates the federal government's role in preparing for, preventing, mitigating the effects of, responding to, and recovering from all domestic disasters, whether natural or man-made, including acts of terror. For more information on FEMA activities visit [www.FEMA.gov](http://www.FEMA.gov) and for more information on personal preparedness see [www.Ready.gov](http://www.Ready.gov).*