

Hurricane Ready

The Atlantic Hurricane season, which opened on June 1st, 2009 thru November 30th has now been extremely inactive for the past two months. However we are now in the throes of the potentially most active time of the season for those of us here on the Texas gulf coast. Some of the hurricane models suggest that Atlantic activity is about to pick up.

The month of August begins the traditional runup to the historical September 10th peak date of Atlantic Basin tropical storm/hurricane strike time. With the sea surface temperature (SST) in the 29 degree range; the African and Saharan dust levels receding from their high levels of the previous months; and the traditional annual retreat of the high level jet stream to more northerly climes reducing the upper level wind shear below 20 Kts.; conditions are increasingly getting favorable for an increase in storm activity.

While disaster takes many forms, some without prior warning or notice, hurricanes seem to give us at least a few days in which to finalize preparations.

Certainly you have made your family plan with current information updated for this year. If your home is impacted by the event, you should have both an alternate assembly point and a distant backup as a contingency. Be sure to reduce your plan to a written format and make sure that each family member has a copy.

You have designated a safe room in the house in the event that you have to shelter in place. All of the necessary supplies have been taken care of to insure that you have duct tape and plastic sheeting to render it air tight if needed.

Your out of area contact person to notify in the event that you are forced to evacuate has been assured.

Your survival kit for a three to seven day period is in place. You have at least one gallon of potable water per person along with non perishable packaged and canned food. You know where to find your manual can opener and have planned for a gas or charcoal grill to heat to heat and warm your food supply. You have medications, personal toiletries, insect repellent, a portable radio, flashlight, batteries and extra clothing packed. In addition, each of your family members have their own personal kit.

You are able to stay informed during an actual emergency with your accessible source of information. Both AM radio KTRH 740 and KUHF 99.7 FM, as the area's primary emergency alert system stations are available, along with NOAA weather radio and our local designated VHF 147.000 + (Pl 103.5) repeater.

If directed to evacuate, you know where and how to turn off water and electricity at their main switch point. You have your evacuation route mapped out with your plan for a designated destination.

"Be Prepared" -- "Have a Plan" -- "Keep Informed" -- "Be Ready to Take Action"b