



Robert Eckels
County Judge

OFFICE OF HOMELAND SECURITY & EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

FACT SHEET

Saturday
September 24, 2005
5:00 PM

Gloria Roemer, PIO (713) 881-3132 * TranStar * 6922 Old Katy Rd. * Houston, Texas 77024

HURRICANE RITA **Location** **~50 miles south/southeast of Shreveport, LA n**
Winds **~50 mph (max.)**

The staging of resources at Reliant Park is proving to be a key asset in the response to Hurricane Rita. As the head of the region's director of homeland security and emergency management, Harris County Judge Robert Eckels visited privately with federal authorities to maintain the Houston area presence of organizations like FEMA and other federal capabilities as the Hurricane Katrina Unified Area Command center at Reliant City demobilized last Wednesday.

Harris County Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Management officials have worked in conjunction with the management of Reliant Park, the Governor's Department of Emergency Management, and the Office of Homeland Security to facilitate the access of emergency personnel to Reliant Park to house large and substantial resources that have been deployed throughout the day to where they are needed most.

THE RECOVERY

Harris County officials have swept the county to assess damage and are operating at full strength to make repairs, close off dangerous areas and work with state emergency management officials to implement plans to return Houston area residents home.

Harris County expects to be fully prepared to help facilitate the state's plan to get Harris County area residents back home that begins tomorrow. Harris County commissioners have activated crews in their precincts to normalize operations of private and public sectors.

HCOEM is also working with authorities in the hardest hit areas to deploy life-saving resources to communities being devastated by Hurricane Rita.

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THE RETURN HOME

Harris County Judge Robert Eckels will announce at a 5:00 p.m. briefing that Harris County will be prepared to coordinate the welcome home of Harris County residents tomorrow in accordance with state plans. Officials still urge persons to not return early for their own safety, and that of others.

THE STATE OF TEXAS PLAN

SUNDAY: Those living west of Interstate-45 and north of Interstate-10, including Tomball, The Woodlands, Waller, Hockley, Katy and Brookshire.

• **MONDAY:** West of State Highway 35 and south of I-10, including Richmond, Stafford, Rosenberg, Sugar Land, Pearland and those living inside Loop 610.

• **TUESDAY:** East of I-45 and north of I-10, including Liberty and Chambers counties.

Officials warn that if residents do not heed the plan that the potential for a crisis exists if gasoline, food and medical services are stretched by congested freeways and communities who become overwhelmed in the midst of their recovery operations.

TxDOT messaging signs continue to communicate with travelers about evacuation accommodations and services. For State roadway information call 1-800-452-9292.

For Harris County roadway information visit www.HoustonTranStar.org

DEVELOPMENTS

Galveston residents returning are warned that they will be turned back.

Harris County is working with Baytown, TX to help ensure long-term capacity of its water supply.

Energy companies, medical professionals, transportation infrastructure and other critical industries are encouraged to help their employees return to Harris County to aid the response to Hurricane Rita.

www.hcoem.org/rita

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