

Rockport Transcript

A PUBLICATION OF THE CITY OF ROCKPORT

Rockport Strong – We Will Rebuild

August 24, 2017 – a day when meteorological history was made and our world was turned upside down. Hours before, we were preparing for a tropical storm. In a climactic event, that hasn't been witnessed in modern times, said storm turned into a category 4 hurricane and emergency operations were immediately mobilized.

A CodeRED alert went out to everyone registered with the system. All public safety officers were called in. Employees in the Public Works and Parks departments began securing the infrastructure, water tanks, water treatment plant, buildings and other sites to minimize damages from the impending storms.



Drystack at Cove Harbor in South Rockport. Photo courtesy of the National Weather Service.

The Information Technology (IT) division removed the City's and Appraisal District's servers in preparation for evacuation. Six individuals from the City Secretary's office, Human Resources, Municipal Court, Utility Customer Service and Community Relations departments, along with the IT department, made a six-hour drive to Bastrop to set up a satellite "City Hall" to enable communication with residents and those staying behind in the Emergency Operations Center and Rockport Service Center.

As residents were leaving the area for the Mandatory Evacuation, hundreds of first responders from across Texas and other regions were making their way here to be of service. Fire trucks, ambulances, sheriffs offices and police departments could be seen caravaning toward Rockport to provide much-needed assistance.

Hurricane Harvey challenged us in so many ways. Despite all the emergency plans and drills, we were faced with numerous obstacles and events. Though they compromised communication, shelter, safe passage and initial recovery efforts, they were surmounted.

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Country western star George Strait, Governor Abbott and Mayor Wax were joined by other national and state leaders at a special event announcing that "Rockport is Open for Business." Photo courtesy of The Rockport Pilot.

Office Relocations

Due to hurricane damage to City Hall, these offices have moved to new locations:

City Manager

City Secretary

Finance

Human Resources

Office of the Mayor

Rockport Service Center, 2751 SH Hwy 35 Bypass (on the west side of the access road between Pearl and Market Streets)

Municipal Court

410 E. Bay Street

Parks Department

Utility Customer Service

Former Service Center, 402 E. Laurel Street (corner of Laurel and Gagnon Streets)

We Will Rebuild *(continued from front page)*



Photo courtesy of the National Weather Service.

There is no need to relate what it was like to work/live through the storm. Some people had a choice, others remained due to work and public safety commitments. Regardless of the reason, no one wants to relive that experience. While we mourn the death of two individuals because of the hurricane, we count our blessings as it could have been so many, many more.

Search and relief efforts took to the streets to assist citizens and minimize risks. Experienced recovery teams from the federal and state governments arrived to rebuild, as did the thousands of AEP employees and other electric distribution companies. City employees immediately took to the streets to identify and fix broken

water and gas lines and begin the process of clearing the streets.

From the onset, humanitarian efforts were astounding. Neighbors helped neighbors, out of town family came in to help, social service organizations, local churches and the volunteers



Photo courtesy of the National Weather Service.



arrived from all over the country. And, if there was any doubt of the commonality of mankind, religious groups ranging from Buddhists to Baptists, Sikhs to Latter Day Saints, and Scientologists to non-denominational offered assistance.

So many to thank and the list keeps growing. However, we would be remiss if we didn't recognize the area's "first responders" of humanitarian aid, which

included Church Unlimited, Operation Blessing, Team Rubicon, Samaritan's Purse, the McCrary family and the Rockport Relief Camp, Coastal Oaks Church, Salt Lake Baptist Church, First Baptist Church and the Tzu Chi Foundation.

It's Getting Better Every Day!

Utility Bill Update — Due to the hurricane, the City was unable to send out August bills. A minimum bill went out in early October. Charges for water consumption during the period of 8/15 – 9/14 were waived because of extensive damage caused by the hurricane and service interruption. The next bill will be for the period of 9/15 – 10/14. If you wish to pay in person, Utility Customer Service is now officing at the former service center, located at the intersection of Laurel and Gagnon.

Flood Information for Residents

The City's Building and Development Office provides a comprehensive flood information program that is available to the public. Residents may obtain flood risk information including: basic map information, copies of Elevation Certificates, floodway information, depth of flooding information, lowest floor elevations, historical flood data, information on areas that flood outside of the designated Special Flood Hazard Area, erosion set-back areas, the natural functions of the Special Flood Hazard Areas, and other flood related information by visiting the City's Building and Development Department and meeting with a department representative in person, by phone, by fax, or by accessing the City's website.

Want to know the flood zone of your property to determine your flood risk? The City provides a map information service enabling all residents to determine the flood zone of a specific property. Paper copies of the City's Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRMs) are available for viewing at the City's

Building and Development Office. Current FIRMs can be found at the following link on the City's Website: <http://www.cityofrockport.com/608/Floodplain-Maps>. Electronic maps can also be viewed and printed online for free at the FEMA Flood Map Store at <https://msc.fema.gov/portal>

The Community Development Office can also assist residents in non-technical review of individual properties when requested, as well as provide guidance on flood-proofing, and other mitigation techniques used to help reduce flooding. This can be done either by visiting the Community Development Office or by City staff visiting the actual property to assess the situation in person. Please feel free to contact the City Building Development Department by phone at 361-790-1125; by fax at 361-729-7672; by email communityplanner@cityofrockport.com or in person at 2751 State Highway 35 By-Pass.

IRS and Disaster Assistance

Special tax law provisions may help taxpayers and businesses recover financially from the impact of a disaster. Since Aransas County is a Federally Declared Disaster Area, there are several tax opportunities that one should know. You may deduct casualty and theft losses relating to your home, household items, and vehicles on your federal income tax return, unless they are covered by insurance. For complete information, go to: <https://www.irs.gov/businesses/small-businesses-self-employed/disaster-assistance-and-emergency-relief-for-individuals-and-businesses-1>

Walk The Streets of Rockport Rebuild Our Little Town

"It tried to take everything but it couldn't take our soul
Together we are stronger then any storm could be
The good Lord knows we'll make it through
Just you watch and see

Chorus:

We will stand together
Rebuild our little town
Walk the streets of Rockport
Knowing it couldn't keep us down.

The blue crab may still be missing out by Little Bay
But the Friday Night Lights still shine and the Pirates they still play
though we may be shaken we haven't fallen down
We made it through the storm
And we're stronger for it now

Repeat Chorus

From the bait shops down in Fulton to The Helping Hands that came
We all felt the storm
We felt it just the same

Repeat Chorus

We will stand together
Rebuild our little town
Walk the streets that we love knowing it couldn't keep us down."

Phillip Zuniga, Final Hour Media

**Shop Rockport—
Keep your retail
sales taxes working
at home**

Rockport City Council

Mayor



C.J. Wax

Ward 1



Rusty Day

Ward 2



J.D. Villa

Ward 3



Pat Rios

Ward 4



Barbara Gurtner

Are You Prepared for An Emergency?

It was very distressing to learn about residents who said they were unaware of the evacuation and projected strength of Hurricane Harvey. Additionally, these same individuals did not have access to water boil notices, curfews and other significant emergency announcements.

If you, or someone you know, has not signed up for CodeRED, the area emergency system, we urge you to do it now. You will not receive messages unless you register. You have the option of re-

ceiving a text, email, phone call or all three - up to five different phone numbers, land line or cell phones, and email addresses.

You may register by going to the City's home page (cityofrockport.com) and click on the CodeRED logo, which is located on the bottom left side of the page. Links are also available on the Aransas County and Town of Fulton web sites. It doesn't matter WHERE you register, just that you DO.

Who Do I Call If ...

Illegal Dumping in Progress

Illegal Dumping After the Fact

Emergency

Non-Emergency Public Safety

Utility Bill Questions/Concerns

Street Issues and Repairs

Sewer, Water and Gas Issues

After-Hours

Trash Pick-Up

City Administrative Offices

Building and Development Dept.

729-1111

790-1125

911

729-1111

729-2213 x 234

790-1160

790-1160

729-1111

729-2213 x 234

729-2213 x 221

790-1125

For additional questions or concerns, visit the "FAQs" or "Fix It" sections on the City's web site (www.cityofrockport.com) or call City Hall at (361) 729-2213.

Didja' Know?

The City's web site has a wealth of information about post Harvey Recovery, including links to federal and state agencies, social service organizations, donation and volunteer opportunities and more.

Report Illegal Dumping!

For dumping in progress, call 729-1111. For all other dumping, call 790-1125.

Save the Date

November 11—11 am Veterans' Day Observance and Ceremony

December 2—Tropical Christmas at the Fairgrounds adjacent to Aransas Bay



622 E. Market Street
Rockport, Texas 78382
Phone: (361) 729-2213
www.cityofrockport.com