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Rockport Transcript

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SPECIAL EDITION DISASTERS & PREPAREDNESS

No one could have predicted that Rockport would experience eight disasters in less than four years. From hurricane to pandemic to winter storm, we have witnessed more than our fair share of destruction and debilitation.

Sadly, we have no control over weather incidents and any complications that may arise. Hurricane Hannah was not a direct hit, but the storm surges severely impacted our coastline causing erosion and flooding. Winter Storm Uri's impact was magnified because of its expanse and the failure of regional and state-wide utility systems.

According to the National Weather Services, the 2021 hurricane season may be abnormally active due to a lingering La Nina influence. This is a cooling of the waters in the east tropical Pacific, which encourage more rising motion and relaxed upper-level winds over the Atlantic making it more conducive to tropical development.

Experience and historical events have also taught us some lessons.



For example, we know that hurricane season for our area is August-September. By planning ahead, we can start gathering supplies such as bottled water, which can be stored at room temperature for 12 months, and alleviate the panic buying that takes place before a potential storm.

Stocking up just before a storm can also be a painful and expensive lesson. If the power goes out, food stored in the refrigerator or freezer will spoil. While using coolers or placing items outside in frigid temperatures may help, it is not always the best solution – es-

pecially in neighborhoods where there is a lot of wildlife.

There is an old saying that “the best defense is a good offense” and advance preparation is a key to successfully navigating in a crisis. The City’s web site offers a great deal of information about advance planning and dealing with certain situations in the “Emergency Information” and “Hurricane Information” sections in the “About Rockport” tab.

One of the biggest complaints we receiving during and following the storm was “no one told me.” The City worked closely with the news media; shared information on the City’s web site; posted on its Facebook page and shared with other social media pages; and employed the CodeRED emergency alert system, which will be discussed later in this issue.

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Disasters and Preparedness—continued from page 1

In this issue, we will be sharing some additional tips and information to help you prepare for potential problems and options that you may want to consider. While some are common sense, others can go a long way in preventing possible damage to your home or business and assist you in assessing possible risks.

Flooding

The City of Rockport has eleven major watersheds, each of which has areas that are subject to flooding from rising waters from the area bays, as well as localized street and yard flooding. Your property may never have flooded or may be shown on the FEMA maps to be outside the mapped limits of flooding. However, this is no guarantee your property will never flood.

You can determine your property's flood zone at <https://msc.fema.gov/portal>. You can get more information on flood insurance at www.floodsmart.gov.

Managing Utilities When You're Away

One of the biggest problems the City faced during Winter Storm Uri was the large number of water line breaks in unoccupied homes. Employees from the Building Code Enforcement, Parks, Police, Street and Water



Water shutoff valves may be located directly behind your water meter box close to the street, as indicated in the photo on the left, or through equipment closer to the house (see right photo)



departments were canvassing the entire City to identify broken pipes and turning off water to minimize the strain on the already compromised system and prevent damage at the sites.

Whether you are a part-time resident or going away for an extended vacation, it is recommended that you turn off your water. While connections and valves may differ, most properties have a turn off valve that links to the City's water lines. If your property does not have a cutoff valve on your side of the meter, contact the Utility Billing Office at 361-729-2213, ext. 234.

You should also ensure that your thermostat is set properly for the

period when you are away. A high air conditioning setting in the summer may encourage the growth of mold and mildew if your home is not well insulated. A low setting in the winter may not protect pipes, especially those directly exposed to the elements.

Should You Get a Generator?

The recent power outage has people wondering about the pros

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We now have four Facebook pages: Rockport, Texas – Charm of the Texas Coast; Memorial Park, Rockport Community Aquatics and Skatepark, and the Rockport Police Department. Like and follow us for the latest news, information and special events.

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and cons of installing a generator.

While we can't recommend what's right for you, there are a number of factors to keep in mind before making the purchase:

- **Do you have a safe place to put a generator?** Will you be able to operate it? If you do not have the system installed or are unfamiliar with how it works before a disaster, you've negated your original intentions. Unfortunately, there are always stories after a disaster about deaths associated with these instruments due to carbon monoxide, improper installation, and user error.
- **What is the right size?** Be realistic about what you need to power in an emergency. Do you really need to power your entire home or just the kitchen and a sleeping area? Talk with a professional to determine what size you need to meet your needs. You may need to upgrade your current meter or regulator.
- **Be mindful of fuel systems.** There have been instances when the natural gas supply has been compromised. Will other fuels (propane or gaso-

line) be easily accessible? Think about the long lines at the local gas stations and propane dealers during Winter Storm Uri. If a direct hit hurricane has been projected and a mandatory evacuation ordered, these businesses will be closed.

Assessing Your Landscaping

Do you have tree limbs touching your house or roof? Strong winds, even when it's not a tropical or winter storm, can cause wear and tear on your structure and cause major damage. Make it a point to take a serious look at tree limbs several times throughout the year to identify potential problems.

If you are considering adding trees to your yard, there are several things to consider. First, are there any utility lines where you may be planting – either above or below.



Call 811 before any digging for a free, underground utility locator service. This way you will

alleviate any possible damage to your utilities ... and your neighbors.

Secondly, what is the mature height and width of a tree? Make sure that you allow for ad-

equately growing space. Third, make sure that your tree is properly secured for its initial growth. Strong winds and sun can affect the growing habit of the tree.

Don't Wait for an Emergency

As soon as a storm is near, put important papers and photos in a central location, make copies of medical prescriptions and insurance information, and have a supply of cash ready in case power goes out and ATMS are not working or empty.

Make a plan and have an emergency kit ready. – visit the City's web site or ready.gov for recommendations.

Sign up for Emergency Alerts

During an emergency, extended utility outage, street closure, or other issue of public concern, the City of Rockport may utilize the CodeRED Emergency Notification

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



**Over 90% of the car
break-ins reported in Rockport
are for unlocked cars.**

**TOGETHER, WE CAN MAKE ROCKPORT
A SAFER PLACE**



Disasters and Preparedness—*continued from page 3*



Citizens with caller ID on their phones should take note that the caller name that appears is "CodeRED" and that the call will have a 361 area code. The system will call each telephone number in the database.

Once answered, the system will deliver a short voice message to you or your answering machine. If a recipient of a call wants to hear the message again, calling the phone number that appears on the caller ID will give residents the opportunity to listen to the call again. If the call is not answered or if the line is busy, the system will attempt to make the call again. The system can also send this emergency message to a cell phone by SMS (text) and can be received by email.

Residents **must** register with the system in order to receive messages from the City through the CodeRED system. Residents can choose to enter up to a combined total of five different phone numbers or email addresses. To sign up, please go to the City's web site for a direct link or go to: <https://public.coderedweb.com/CNE/en-US/C3F2FDDE07FB>.



Elections for Ward 1 and Ward 3 will take place on Saturday, May 1 at the Aransas County Elections & Voter Registration office at 602 E. Concho Street. Ward 1 candidates are Rusty Day and Katy Jackson. Ward 3 candidates are Brad Brundrett and Bob Cunningham (incumbent).

Early in-person voting will be from 8am—5 pm weekdays at the Aransas County Election & Voter Registration office from 8:00 a.m.—5:00 p.m. starting Monday, April 19 and ending on Tuesday, April 27. Extended early voting are April 26 & 27 when the office will be open 7 am-7 pm.

If you are unsure of your ward, look at the "CTY" box on the Voter Registration Certificate OR go to - <https://cityofrockport.com/DocumentCenter/View/13942/City-Ward-Map>.

COVID-19 Vaccination Information

As of March 29, the COVID-19 vaccine is available to all Texas residents age 16 and older. With more vaccines being produced, sent to Texas, and allocations are increasing locally and statewide now that the vaccines are more readily available.



To assist Texans in need of a vaccine, the Texas Department of State Health Services has launched two initiatives. The Texas Public Health Vaccine Scheduler, is an online services which gives people one place to sign up for a COVID-19 shot through multiple public health departments, including the eight DSHS public health regions. The second service is for individuals who have limited Internet access or other barriers to using technology.

For online registration, Texas residents can visit getthevaccine.dshs.texas.gov to create a profile that includes their contact information, demographic details, and preferred time of day and days of the week for an appointment. Within a day, people eligible to be vaccinated will be matched with the next available appointment within their home county and preferred times. If none are available, the scheduler will continue to search for appointments as new clinics are scheduled and contact individuals when they have an appointment.

For the less technological savvy, residents can call groups can call 1-833-832-7067 from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. seven days a week to enroll in the scheduler and get help making an appointment. Please note that this is through participating health departments and local residents will be referred to another county as there is no health district in Aransas County.

These vaccination scheduling tools DO NOT include pharmacies and medical practices, which are also providing shots. People who want to be vaccinated should continue to look for available vaccine at those providers, as well. Links to other vaccine scheduling tools are available at dshs.texas.gov/coronavirus/immunize/vaccine.

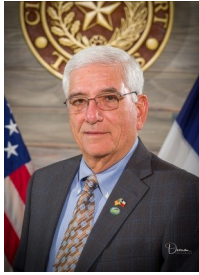
Registration for local vaccine providers include:

CVS	https://cvshealth.com/covid-19/vaccine-information
HEB	https://vaccine.heb.com/
Walgreens	https://www.walgreens.com/findcare/vaccination/covid-19
Walmart/Sam's Club	https://www.walmart.com/cp/1228302

For pharmacies, clinics and other locations outside of Texas that offer vaccines, visit www.vaccinefinder.com

Rockport City Council

Mayor



Pat Rios

Ward 1



Michael Saski

Ward 2



J.D. Villa

Ward 3



Bob Cunningham

Ward 4



Andrea Hattman

Remember — The City web site offers the latest news and information. Also, you can pay your utility and municipal court bills online through the City's website.

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Who Do I Call If ...

Illegal Dumping in Progress	729-1111
Illegal Dumping After the Fact	790-1125
Emergency	911
Non-Emergency Public Safety	729-1111
Utility Bill/Trash Questions/Concerns	729-2213 x 234
Street Issues and Repairs	790-1160
Sewer, Water and Gas Issues	790-1160
After-Hours	729-1111
City Administrative Offices	729-2213 x 253
Building and Development Dept.	790-1125



2751 State Hwy 35 Bypass
Rockport, Texas 78382
Phone: (361) 729-2213
www.cityofrockport.com

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.