

Severe Storm and Hurricane Plan

College of Charleston Residence Life and Housing

Revised: July 24, 2008

Introduction

This information is intended to prepare Residence Life and Housing to react quickly and effectively in the event of a severe storm or hurricane. Our goals are to provide a safe environment (whether on or off campus) for residents and minimize property damage. This information is to be used in conjunction with the College of Charleston hurricane preparedness plan.

The Atlantic Ocean and Gulf of Mexico hurricane season extends from June 1 to November 30 each year. Our reactions to these seasonal storms are based on

- Strength of Winds & Gusts: Miles per hour based on Saphir Simpson Scale
- Size: Diameter
- Span Direction: Established and potential path, potential shifts
- Proximity: Position relative to South Carolina coast and Charleston metropolitan area
- Potential for Flooding: Inches of rain per hour and interaction with tides
- Potential to Spawn Tornadoes: Advisories
- Prior Impact: Damage caused before making landfall and resulting anticipated strengthening or weakening.

Our plan is comprised of five basic phases: Pre-Season Preparation, Storm Threat Preparation, Class Cancellation/Voluntary Evacuation, Campus Closure/Mandatory Evacuation and Post-Storm Recovery.

The action steps indicated in the stages may or may not be taken within the stages listed, depending on the circumstances of the storm and time of day in which the phase occurs. In addition, a change in stage may be necessary at any time due to the unpredictable nature of hurricanes.

Glossary of Terms (in order of severity)

Tropical Wave or Disturbance – A cluster of clouds and/or thunderstorms without any organized circulation

Tropical Depression – An organized, tropical, low-pressure system with sustained winds less than 39 mph

Tropical Storm – An organized, tropical, low-pressure system with a defined circulation and sustained winds between 39 and 73 mph. Storms are named upon reaching this level of strength and can then easily reach hurricane status.

- **Tropical Storm Watch:** A tropical storm threat exists for the next 24 to 36 hours
- **Tropical Storm Warning:** Tropical storm conditions are expected within 24 hours.

Hurricane: An intense tropical weather system with a well-defined circulation and a sustained wind speed of 75 MPH or higher.

- **Hurricane Watch** – A hurricane threat exists for the next 24 to 36 hours
- **Hurricane Warning** – A hurricane strike is expected within the next 24 hours

Storm Surge – A dome of water pushed on shore with the hurricane

Saffir – Simpson Classification - A system for classifying storm strength as follows:

- **Category 1 Hurricane:** Wind velocity of 74-95 mph, storm surge of 4-5 feet, storm strength minimal
- **Category 2 Hurricane:** Wind velocity of 96-110 mph, storm surge of 6-8 feet, storm strength moderate
- **Category 3 Hurricane:** Wind velocity of 111-130 mph, storm surge of 9-12 feet, storm strength extensive
- **Category 4 Hurricane:** Wind velocity of 131-155 mph, storm surge of 13-18 feet, storm strength extreme
- **Category 5 Hurricane:** Wind velocity of 156+ mph, storm surge of 19+ feet, storm strength catastrophic

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Phase One: Pre-Season Preparation

(AS = Administrative Services / DD = Dean and Asst. to Dean / FS = Facilities Services / RE = Residence Education)

- (AS) Accurate rosters with residents' names, housing locations and contact information are available in electronic and hard-copy forms.
- (AS) Updated scripts of multi-scenario telephone greetings are stored in electronic and hard-copy forms, with written instructions from Telephone Services on how to program record and change greetings as conditions change.
- (AS) A template of website messages is available in electronic and hard-copy forms. Duplicate information is provided to College Relations.
- (DD) Assistant to the Dean tentatively reserves with Lancaster Tours **four** motor coaches to be used in the event of an evacuation. A Purchase Order is on file and updated annually.
- (DD) Instruct staff to perform regular back-ups of computer data to network as well as portable jump drives.
- (DD) Maintain an accurate list of home telephone numbers and emergency contacts for all staff members.
- (FS) Check roofs of buildings for loose debris; insure drain heads are cleared.
- (FS) "Pre-storm" supplies are on hand such as pre-filled sandbags, sand, mops, buckets, absorbent snakes, etc.
- (FS) "Post-storm" repair supplies are on hand and stored in a safe, dry location: palette of plywood, sufficient attachment hardware, waterproof tarps, power tools (cordless where possible) and generators.
- (FS) Physical Plant has keys for all residence hall mechanical rooms.
- (FS) Photographic database of facilities is updated to show interior and exterior conditions of facilities for insurance purposes and as a record if reconstruction is required.
- (FS & RE) Residence Hall Emergency Kits are updated with all contents operational. Kits consist of flashlights, batteries, radio, work gloves, first-aid kit, light sticks, moist towelettes, breathing masks, duct tape, plastic sheeting, water containers, rain ponchos and whistle.
- (RE) Director of Residence Education coordinates with Aramark the supplying of food and beverage services to residents. Plans should include two specific scenarios of (1.) evacuation and (2.) staying on campus. An open purchase order is updated annually and on file with contact information.
- (RE) Promote to residents the importance of regular back-ups of computer data to portable jump drives, purchasing of renter's insurance and creating photographic and/or video documentation of valuables.
- (RE) Instruct residents through programming events to assemble their Personal Evacuation Plans denoting
 1. Evacuation Destination: Residents should choose several places: Home, especially if within a 200 mile radius of the College and away from the storm's path; A friend's home in another town; A motel or a shelter. Keep handy the telephone numbers of these places as well as a road map of the area. Residents may need to take alternative or unfamiliar routes if major roads are closed or clogged.
 2. Identify a method of transportation. Residents who have their own transportation are strongly encouraged to take other residents with them to assist in the evacuation process.
- (RE) Instruct residents through programming events to assemble their Personal Emergency Kits including
 1. First aid kit and essential medications, especially prescription medications.
 2. Extra set of car keys.
 3. Canned food, can opener and at least three gallons of water per person.
 4. Protective clothing, rainwear, and bedding or sleeping bags.
 5. Flashlight and extra batteries.
 6. Copies of driver's license, Social Security card, proof of residence, insurance policies, etc.

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Phase Two: Storm Threat Preparation

(All measures are in place from Phase One.)

Phase Two begins when a weather pattern is elevated to tropical storm status and poses possible danger to the Georgia or South Carolina coastline. The College may be under Stage Two for several weeks or days before predicted storm landfall.

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- (All Areas) Directors collect information from their staffs (including live-in staff) listing phone numbers, home addresses, travel plans (if applicable) and emergency contacts.
- (AS) Rosters with residents' names, housing locations and contact information are updated, printed and distributed to Administrative Services staff, Dean and Assistant to the Dean, Director of Administrative Services, Director of Residence Education, Area Coordinators and Residence Hall Directors. Building-specific rosters are distributed to Resident Assistants.
- (AS) Script of telephone greeting is customized for weather conditions and subsequent College reaction.
- (AS) A condition-specific website message is developed and forwarded to College Relations.
- (DD) Dean corresponds with College administration to receive updates on class cancellations, campus closings and evacuation plans.
- (DD) Assistant to the Dean reserves with Lancaster Tours **four** motor coaches to be used for evacuation.
- (DD) Assistant to the Dean instructs staff to back-up computer data to network as well as to portable jump drives.
- (DD & RE) Director of Residence Education forwards an advisory e-mail to be distributed by the Assistant to the Dean electronically in a broadcast message to all residents. Message should include reminders such as:
 1. Notify your parents/family reminding them of your personal evacuation plan.
 2. Begin researching available air, train, and bus schedules and fares if not evacuating by car. Arrange transportation to the airport or train/bus station.
 3. Arrange for a ride with someone else if you do not have a vehicle.
 4. Obtain a supply of cash.
 5. Secure a full tank of gas for your vehicle as early as possible.
 6. Back up data on your computer hard drives and portable jump drives.
 7. Photograph or video record possessions in your room and suite.
 8. Disclaimer: Residents who decide to leave prior to official cancellation of classes are responsible for making provisions for missed classes and assignments with his/her professors directly.
 9. Disclaimer: College is not responsible for the loss, theft or damage of residents' personal property.
- (FS) Director of Facilities Services instructs maintenance staff to sandbag low entrances to buildings such as 13, 28, 45, 70 & 72 Coming Street, 8 Kirkland Lane, Lockshop and McConnell Hall side doors. Decisions of which facilities to sandbag will be based on the anticipated severity of the storm.
- (FS) Director of Facilities Services verifies **radios** are charged and operational.
- (FS) Director of Facilities Services identifies essential personnel (Asst. Director for Maintenance, Asst. Director for Custodial, Administrative Manager, HVAC Manager, Project Manager and Maintenance Team Leaders that must return **immediately after the storm.**
- (FS) Maintenance Craftsmen and Team Leaders as well as Custodial Associates and Team Leaders contact their RHD's to ensure their facilities needs are conveyed and met.

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- (FS & RE) Director of Residential Education issues a mandate that all residents' personal items be removed from all porches and balconies and request that all other items be removed from these areas. Director of Facilities Services verifies items have been removed.
- (RE) Director of Residential Education designates Emergency Kit "Keepers" and distributes the kits. Kit inventories are verified and operating contents tested.
- (RE) Director of Residence Education confirms with Aramark the supplying of food and beverage services to residents. Plans include two specific scenarios of (1.) evacuation and (2.) staying on campus.
- (RE) Area Coordinators and Residence Hall Directors call mandatory staff meetings to advise RA's and DA's of measures already taken as well as convey campus consolidation and/or evacuation plans. Residence Education staff members should be prepared to consolidate their remaining residents (those who do not choose to participate in a voluntary evacuation) in safe interior corridors not exposed to windows or exterior doors.
 1. 1 Warren Place consolidates in 1 Warren 2nd & 3rd floor corridors.
 2. 10 Warren Place consolidates in 10 Warren 2nd & 3rd floor corridors.
 3. 20 Warren Place consolidates in 20 Warren 2nd & 3rd floor corridors.
 4. Kelly House consolidates in Lightsey Center 2nd floor corridor.
 5. McAlister Hall consolidates in Lightsey Center 1st floor corridor.
 6. Berry Hall floors 1-3 consolidate in Berry 3rd floor corridor.
 7. Berry Hall floors 4-6 consolidate in Berry 5th floor corridor.
 8. College Lodge and 298/300 Meeting consolidate in Berry 2nd floor corridor.
 9. Buist Rivers Hall, Lesesne House/Carriage House, 70/72 Coming consolidate in Buist 2nd & 3rd floor corridors.
 10. Rutledge Rivers Hall, 2/4/6/8/24 Bull consolidate in Rutledge 2nd & 3rd floor corridors.
 11. George Street Apartments residents consolidate in Liberty 4th & 5th floor corridors.
 12. Liberty Street Hall residents consolidate in Liberty 2nd & 3rd floor corridors.
 13. Craig Hall, 15/17 St. Philip and 90/92 Wentworth consolidate in Liberty 1st floor corridor (not ground floor).
 14. McConnell Hall consolidates in McConnell 3rd floor corridor.
 15. 99/101/103/105/107 Wentworth, 8 Kirkland and 13/28/29/31/32/34/36/38 Coming consolidate in McConnell 2nd floor corridor.
 16. BellSouth Building 2nd & 3rd floor corridors will be used if needed to house overflow from McAlister Hall, Kelly House and College Lodge.

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Phase Three: Class Cancellation / Voluntary Evacuation

(All measures are in place from Phases One and Two.)

In the event that a tropical depression or storm is approaching the US Southeastern coast in the next 72 hours and the College suspends classes due to hazardous/deteriorating conditions for commuters and residents, residents may choose to leave campus. We will make every effort to account for every resident.

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- (AS) Rosters distributed in Phase Two are verified to still be accurate.
- (AS) Script of telephone greeting is updated for weather conditions and subsequent College reaction.
- (AS) A condition-specific website message is updated and forwarded to College Relations.
- (DD) Dean corresponds with College administration for updates on class cancellations, campus closings and evacuation plans.
- (DD) Assistant to the Dean instructs staff to secure office spaces by issuing an e-mail to "Residence Life" stating:
 1. Unplug all electrical equipment. Do not unplug phones. Place phones in desk drawers if cords are long enough.
 2. Place small equipment inside filing cabinets, desks or other secure locations.
 3. Back up computer hard drives to the network and to portable jump drives. Take jump drive with you.
 4. Wrap valuable equipment, files and records in plastic and place on desks in interior rooms, if possible, or under desks if located on the top floor.
 5. Take personal possessions home and prepare to evacuate.
 6. Lock and latch all doors and windows.
 7. A designated person in each building office (40 Coming: Director of Administrative Services, 45 Coming: Director of Facilities Services) will notify the Assistant to the Dean when their area is secure. Satellite offices for Facilities Services will notify the Director who will then notify the Assistant to the Dean. Satellite Offices for Residence Education will notify the RE Director who will then notify the Assistant to the Dean.
 8. Note: If a watch is anticipated over a weekend, offices should prepare as if the watch was issued on Friday.
 9. Reminder: Residence Hall Directors, Area Coordinators and Administrative (Director) Staff are on alert and asked not to leave campus without contacting the Dean. All other Residence Life and Housing staff should not leave campus without contacting each area Director. If released by the Dean or area Director, each departing staff member must sign a "Sign-Out Sheet" providing home and cell telephone numbers, physical addresses, evacuation destinations (with phone numbers) and emergency contacts.
- (DD & RE) The Director of Residence Education forwards an advisory e-mail to be distributed by the Assistant to the Dean electronically in a broadcast message to all residents. Message should include reminders such as:
 1. Again, notify your parents/family and update them of your personal evacuation plan.
 2. Make air, train, and bus schedules and fares if not evacuating by car. Make travel arrangements to the airport or train/bus station.
 3. Confirm your arrangements for a ride with someone else if you do not have a vehicle.
 4. Turn off and unplug computer equipment and other electrical equipment. Move personal computer and other important equipment to protected area of dormitory room. (Best location is away from windows behind a protected wall.) Take your personal laptop computer with you.
 5. Pack important portable belongings for removal from campus. (Note: Very limited belongings will be allowed in shelters or in College sponsored evacuation vehicles.)
 6. Move remaining equipment/belongings off the floor. Pack and remove personal, irreplaceable items.

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7. Place all loose papers and important documents in drawers, cabinets or files.
 8. Cover remaining personal equipment/belongings and important files with plastic (i.e. garbage bags).
 9. Clean and fill your bath tubs (where available) with water to serve as a drinking water source in the event of city supply contamination.
 10. Lock all suite doors and windows, taking all keys with you.
 11. Sign-out with your Residence Hall Director, providing your name, student ID number, destination, home address, emergency contact and a phone number where you can be contacted.
 12. Leave campus, preferably within 2 hours of initial announcement of evacuation, no later than 4 hours. Low lying areas may flood with salt water and can cause damage to automobiles.
 13. Disclaimer: Residents who decide to leave prior to official cancellation of classes are responsible for making provisions for missed classes and assignments with his/her professors directly.
 14. Disclaimer: College is not responsible for the loss, theft or damage of residents' personal property.
- (FS) Adequate fuel (gasoline and diesel) is on hand for operation of emergency generators and vehicles.
 - (FS) Director of Facilities Services ensures Residence Life and Housing vehicles (trucks, vans and buggies) are parked at the second floor parking deck of College Lodge. All vehicle keys are to be stored in the key box at 45 Coming, with duplicate sets stored in the lockshop.
 - (FS) FS Administrative Manager obtains a block of Purchase Order Numbers to be used after the storm for clean up. The Administrative Manager will keep records of P.O. Numbers and associated purchases until the Purchasing Department is able to return to the campus and set up business.
 - (RE) As best as operationally practicable, Director of Residence Education and Area Coordinators ensure all evacuating residents sign out with their Residence Hall Director listing their name, student ID number, destination, home address, emergency contact and a phone number where they can be contacted.
 - (RE & DD) Area Coordinators and Residence Hall Directors will update RA's and DA's of measures already taken and issue instructions to prepare for the storm. As the storm intensifies, the Dean will declare the need to evacuate remaining residents from individual rooms to their designated consolidation points (as detailed in Phase Two), instructing them to bring their Personal Emergency Kits (as detailed in Phase One) with them.
 - (FS) Director of Facilities Services dispatches staff to secure buildings, making sure windows and doors are closed and locked. Public Safety simultaneously checks buildings.

In the consolidated resident locations, residents will be lined up against the wall to allow mobility of staff to flow throughout the group. In the event of a power outage, Residence Hall emergency lights will remain illuminated for at least 3 hours. This will be the only source of lighting in many areas. Instruct residents to have flashlights available and to proceed with caution, particularly in stairwells. Candles are not to be used. Keep in mind that some older buildings that lose power may also lose their magnetic door locking systems and security camera coverage. Only elevators with emergency generators will operate and use will be restricted to physically impaired residents, staff and emergency personnel.

Residence Hall Directors and Area Coordinators are to keep consolidated residents calm and occupied for the duration of the storm, while staying alert for signs of increasing intensity and/or deteriorating conditions. Maintenance Craftsmen will place protective plywood guards over areas residents may be using when evacuated if there is glass present. Remind residents that the cafeteria services will be available even in the event of a power outage, as they are on back-up generator systems.

Attending to residents until the storm passes will be crucial. Create an atmosphere of calm and provide assistance to any residents who may be in need. Staff will be instructed to have their first aid kits on-hand.

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Phase Four: Campus Closure / Mandatory Evacuation

(All measures are in place from Phases One, Two and Three.)

In the event that a hurricane is suspected of striking the Charleston coast in the next 24-48 hours and the President decides to close the College and suspend classes, the Dean of Residence Life and Housing will issue the closure of all residence halls and houses. All residents will be evacuated.

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- (AS) Script of telephone greeting is updated to announce College closure and location of alternate housing site.
- (AS) A condition-specific website message is updated and forwarded to College Relations.
- (DD) Dean announces closure of residence halls and houses along with mandate of evacuation.
- (DD) Dean will contact appropriate institutions projected to be out of the storm's path to serve as an alternate housing site for residents (typically international and out-of-state residents) without living accommodations while the College is closed. Dining accommodations by the alternate housing site will be arranged at this time.
- (DD) Administrative staff is instructed by the Assistant to the Dean not to leave campus without contacting the Dean. All other Residence Life and Housing staff members are instructed not leave campus without contacting each area Director. If released by the Dean or area Director, each departing staff member must sign a "Sign-Out Sheet" providing home and cell telephone numbers, physical addresses, evacuation destinations (with phone numbers) and emergency contacts.
- (DD & RE) Director of Residence Education forwards an advisory e-mail to be distributed by the Assistant to the Dean electronically in a broadcast message to all residents. Message should include:
 1. Notice of Mandatory Evacuation: Residents who can leave campus and return home must evacuate immediately. The designated evacuation route for downtown Charleston is I-26 in the east-bound (normally outgoing) lanes. Residents who have no means of transportation are encouraged to travel with trusted friends/family. Residents unable to travel with friends/family will be evacuated via College provided buses.
 2. Secure Your Rooms: Turn off and unplug computer equipment and other electrical equipment. Move your personal computer and other important equipment/possessions to a protected area. Take your personal laptop computer with you. Lock all suite doors and windows, taking all keys with you.
 3. Sign-out with your RHD, providing your name, student ID number, destination, home address, emergency contact and a phone number where you can be contacted. Indicate whether you intend to take your own vehicle, ride with friends or family (giving their names and contact information) or ride the College provided bus.
 4. Personal Vehicle Evacuees: Call your parents/family before you hit the road. Let them know your time of departure and warn them that traffic will be heavy. Do not talk on your phone while driving.
 5. College Bus Evacuees: Bring your Personal Emergency Kit (detailed in Phase Two) and minimal personal belongings (toiletries, sleeping bag, towel, medications, 2-3 changes of clothing and laptop computer) that can be held on your lap. No large suitcases are allowed. All personal belongings must be in a book bag or small duffel/gym bag. **South Campus bus collection point will be at the corner of George and St. Philip Streets.** North Campus collection point will be on St. Philip Street between Berry and McAlister Residence Halls. The designated departure time will be strictly enforced. Remaining residents and emergency support staff who fail to report to the loading area accept total responsibility for their personal safety. Whether on the bus or at the alternate housing site, all rules and regulations as described in the Guide to Residence Living still apply.
 6. International residents in particular are instructed bring their passports and visas.
 7. Travel safely and stay tuned to media sources for updates on reopening after the storm.

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- (FS & RE) Director of Facilities Services schedules bus transportation. Area Coordinators and RHD's contact residents to determine how many will need bus transportation to an alternate housing site. Director of Residence Education obtains and conveys that information to Director of Facilities Services.
- (AS & RE) Using rosters, ADS Staff will make every effort to account for all evacuating residents not riding the College bus. RE Staff will register bus riders listing each resident's name, student ID number and emergency contact.
- (RE) Resident Assistants are to evacuate as traditional residents would. RA's on College bus will assist Area Coordinators and RHD's, making sure that conduct is appropriate and calm is maintained.
- (AS, DD, FS & RE) Directors ensure all residents are vacated. Every room on campus must be thoroughly checked (including under furniture, in closets, shower stalls, etc.) to confirm no residents remain on campus.
- (FS) Director of Facilities Services dispatches staff to secure all buildings, making sure items are unplugged and windows and doors are closed and locked. Maintenance staff opens rooftop air vents to equalize air pressure during a storm and turns off all gas, water and appropriate electrical systems. Public Safety simultaneously checks buildings. Public Safety declares buildings as cleared, chains and locks buildings' main doors and posts "No Trespassing" signs to protect them from after-storm vandalism or burglary. Windows will be boarded up only as time permits.

Phase Five: Post-Storm Recovery

Housing Facilities Services, Physical Plant and Fire/Life Safety will inspect all buildings, grounds, and utilities and report to the Dean and President on any unsafe campus conditions, making emergency repairs if practical. Once the College is deemed safe by the President to reopen, students, residents and non-essential staff will be permitted to return to campus.

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- (AS & DD) Residence Life and Housing Office is re-opened. Contingent upon condition of facilities, staff may need to operate out of temporary location(s).
- (FS) Facilities Services staff will do basic preparation for residents to return. Every room will be walked to check for problems. Life Safety and security issues such as roof leaks and broken glass will be prioritized. Utility restoration will have second priority, "conveniences" such as air conditioning, cable TV and internet will be third and cosmetic issues will be last. Custodial staff will need to return to campus as soon as possible for cleaning. All issues may not be resolved before residents return.
- (FS & RE) Working with Public Safety Officers, look out for looters. Report any suspect behavior to Public Safety.
- (RE) When the President says residents may return to the Residence Halls, Area Coordinators and Residence Hall Directors will return with the residents on the buses, making sure all residents are accounted for.
- (RE) Area Coordinators and RHD's will ask residents to be careful upon their return. Multiple hazards will still be present after the storm. Expect to encounter fallen trees and limbs, strewn debris, sounds of chainsaws and generators and mildew, which can affect asthma and allergies. Residence Education staff will keep first aid kits on-hand. Emergencies will be directed to Fire/Life Safety.
- (AS) Off-campus residents who live in accommodations too badly damaged to occupy will be offered a place in emergency housing. Area Coordinators and Residence Hall Directors will coordinate with Assistant Director for Housing Assignments to place residents in temporary housing.

After recovery, the department will conduct an evaluation and implement any corrective measures deemed appropriate.