



Hays County, Texas

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May 26, 2017

Hays County Encourages Residents & Visitors to be Weather-Aware as 2nd Anniversary of Memorial Weekend Flood Approaches



Hays County Courthouse, San Marcos, TX – May 22-26 is Flood Awareness Week in Texas, and Hays County officials are echoing the words in the proclamation issued by the Governor’s Office that encourages Texans to “be informed and prepared for floods and flash floods and to be mindful of signs and barriers warning of flood dangers.”

Hays County Emergency Management Coordinator Kharley Smith said she is encouraging residents and visitors to sign up for emergency alerts at www.warncentraltexas.org. “You can register to have a text, voice or email message sent to your phone about emergency information near your home, work and vacation neighborhoods,” she said. Countywide emergency information is posted at www.HaysInformed.com.

“Good planning should also include a communications strategy and emergency meeting locations as well as a preparedness kit for homes and vehicles,” Hays County Emergency Management Coordinator Kharley Smith said. “Make sure that your home and vehicles have preparedness kits that take into consideration the needs of everyone in the household, including guests and pets.” She also cautioned pedestrians and motorists to “turn around, don’t drown” when they see water over a roadway.

Smith noted that repairs and reconstruction from the Memorial Weekend flood and October All Saints

Flood in 2015 are ongoing. “We’ve made a lot of progress, but we know full well it will take years to recover from the physical effects of these tragedies.” A few examples of the progress:

The Blanco River Recovery Team (BR3T), the 501-c-3 non-profit organization formed to help residents rebuild their lives and homes after two historical floods in 2015, has helped more than 1,000 families recover by providing clean up, repair and reconstruction funds and volunteer help. The BR3T works hand-in-hand with the many local, regional and national volunteer groups that have so generously given of their time and talent in Hays County. There are 225 families still awaiting assistance. To donate money, items or to volunteer your time or services: <https://www.facebook.com/BR3Volunteers/>.

The City of San Marcos is administering more than \$32 million in Disaster Recovery Block Grants from the federal Housing and Urban Development to help residents of the City recover. Hays County and participating jurisdictions are assessing projects for a \$7.4 million Disaster Recovery Community Development Block Grant that will be shared among the jurisdictions.

The Hays County Transportation Department is finishing repairs to numerous roads and low-water crossings that were damaged or destroyed in 2015, some by both the May and October floods. The County has already installed new, updated sensors at four of the 22 low water crossings identified as priorities for public safety with TWDB as a financial partner in that project.

Five new river gauges that report real-time water level and flow speed to the National Weather Service have been installed along the Blanco to provide earlier and more accurate flood potential information. The USGS, NWS, GBRA, LCRA, TWDB and local jurisdictions cooperated to make these improvements happen. Gauges have also been placed on five dams surrounding San Marcos that provide real-time notifications to the Hays County Office of Emergency Management and the NWS about rapidly rising waters on Purgatory Creek and Sink Creek.

When the projects are all completed the monitoring information will be available at www.HaysInformed.com.

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