

U.S. Department of
Homeland Security

United States
Coast Guard



Commander
U.S. Coast Guard
Sector New Orleans

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29 APR 2013

Dear Sector New Orleans Family Member,

The 2013 Hurricane Season begins on June 1st and ends November 30th. Hurricane season creates challenges and uncertainties for those living in hurricane prone areas. These challenges are great for Coast Guard dependents whose spouses are called on to respond when hurricanes strike. I hope to reduce your stress and anxiety by providing information to aid in your planning and preparation for this upcoming season. In this letter, I included preparation suggestions, information on evacuation planning and personnel accountability. My top priority is knowing you and your family are safe at all times. If you have any questions, please contact your respective Hurricane Officer (his or her information is enclosed at the end of this letter). I cannot emphasize enough the need to prepare early so we can have a safe hurricane season.

New Orleans, Morgan City, Baton Rouge, Venice, Dulac, Grand Isle and Houma are prone to severe flooding and wind damage. You *must* be prepared to evacuate; your Coast Guard spouse will be performing all necessary duties before, during and after a storm's land fall and you may have to evacuate *without* him or her. Establish a family plan to include multiple evacuation options to alleviate stress and confusion during a real event. I strongly encourage you to have an emergency supply kit that is stocked for at least 72 hours. This kit should have food, water, medication, important documents, cash and, if you have pets, sufficient pet supplies. For the first 72 hours following a storm's land fall, emergency services may not be able to respond. I recommend having your automobile filled with gas when a storm threatens the area. Also, do not forget to plan for your pets and if there is an evacuation order, do not leave them behind. To aid in creating your supply kit and family plan, visit www.FEMA.gov and State of Louisiana's website www.getagameplan.org.

Having adequate insurance is an important part in preparing for the hurricane season. As a result of the damage caused by hurricanes since 2005, Coast Guard members living in government housing have filed over 650 personal property claims totaling almost \$700,000. The amounts paid via the Coast Guard claims services was only a fraction of the actual replacement costs. It is prudent for **ALL** Coast Guard members to have personal property insurance whether living in government housing or living on the economy. Your insurance should include full replacement coverage that provides for full replacement at today's prices. If you already have personal property insurance, ensure that your premiums are paid and the type/amount of coverage is adequate.

Ensuring you have comprehensive vehicle insurance is also beneficial. Those who only have liability coverage are at financial risk because current Coast Guard policy limits vehicle claim payments to \$3000. If you have a vehicle valued at \$10,000 and leave it on board a Coast Guard facility, for example, and do not have comprehensive coverage, the most the Coast Guard can provide to you as compensation is \$3000. During the recent past hurricanes, vehicles left at

exposed units, like Galveston, TX and Gulfport, MS, were severely damaged or destroyed and caused damage to the facility itself, or severely impacted the Coast Guard's ability to recover the facility following the storm. I asked all Commanding Officers and Officers in Charge to reduce the number of vehicles allowed to remain on their facilities during a storm. I realize this does place an additional burden on your Coast Guard spouse and you, so it is prudent to plan ahead of time. Some units have made arrangements with other federal facilities for vehicle storage, so contact your respective Hurricane Officer for more information on where your vehicle can be kept.

Lastly, in regards to insurance, I recommend you attain a Special Power of Attorney (SPA) just in case you need to file an insurance claim on behalf of your Coast Guard spouse. You can get a SPA from either the Eight District Legal Office (Mr. Crawford at 504-671-2038) or at the Legal Office on board NAS-JRB Belle Chasse (904-542-2565 Ext. 3007).

Hurricane evacuation preparations will begin when a storm is forecasted to impact the area. **ALL** Coast Guard members **SHALL** be registered in the Emergency Notification System (ENS) prior to June 1st. ENS will help keep you updated about Sector New Orleans operational status via text messaging on your cellular phone. The Coast Guard will not reimburse for any charges associated with text messaging from ENS. Coast Guard members can only register on the Coast Guard computer network: http://apps.mlca.uscg.mil/CG_ENS/. A secondary way to obtain updated information on Sector's evacuation status is through the **Sector New Orleans Hurricane Hotline: 1-866-504-USCG (8724)**. It will be activated and updated when a storm threatens our area of responsibility; it also has the capability to receive voice mails. I encourage you to pay attention to the National Weather Service (NWS) forecasts and state/local government warnings and advisories. Another source of information is the unit Ombudsman, Ms. Alma Buckley. She can be contacted via cell phone (786-325-7388) or email (almabuckley@hotmail.com).

Highways within the New Orleans area will be very congested once an evacuation order is issued, and most times even before. I urge you to consider leaving early, but realize reimbursement is not authorized until the evacuation order for dependents has been issued by the Eighth District Commander. Usually, it is issued at the same time as when the parish or city issues theirs, but not always. If you live in base housing, you will follow the evacuation orders of the base Commanding Officer. If you are employed in the local economy, ask your employer about their hurricane policy. You might not be allowed to leave to evacuate until last minute, even though an order has been issued. In any case, fill up your gas tank, pack your bags and have your supply kit ready to go.

I have made arrangements with Naval Air Station Meridian, MS and Barksdale Air Force Base in Shreveport, LA to operate as our safe havens for hurricane evacuations. Please consult with your Coast Guard spouse to determine which safe haven is your primary one.

All families and personnel can evacuate to NAS Meridian, but those from Station and ANT Venice, Station Grand Isle, ANT Dulac, USCGC STURGEON and USCGC PAMLICO will receive priority. For those who evacuate to Meridian, your Coast Guard spouse's Commanding Officer shall be notified and you must print and fill out evacuation forms that will be turned into

the "Welcome Center" upon arrival (these forms can be found at the link related to Meridian further in this letter). Pets are allowed to evacuate to Meridian, but exotics (i.e. birds, reptiles) are not allowed (there are veterinarian clinics and boarding facilities in town that will accept exotics). You shall provide for your pet a collar with identification, leash, kennel, shot records, and food; also, if you have any felines, you shall provide the appropriate number of litter boxes and required litter. There is a base clinic, but supplies will be limited, so do not forget any necessary prescriptions. All weapons shall be surrendered to the security building on base and there is no RV facility/storage on base. For questions, or concerns, related to NAS Meridian as a safe haven, contact MKCM Eric Engle at 504-365-2213 or eric.c.Engle@uscg.mil.

For those stationed at MSU Baton Rouge, MSU Morgan City, MSU Houma, ANT Morgan City, and USCGC AXE, it is recommended to evacuate to Barksdale AFB, since it is geographically closer to your unit.

Memphis, TN is considered as the secondary safe haven for families and personnel, however, you are allowed to evacuate to a location of your choosing. Just be aware, Memphis serves as the extreme limit for evacuations in regards to mileage reimbursement (use the distance between your residence and Memphis as a radius to create your circle of range of where you can go) and meals, incidentals and lodging will be reimbursed at the rate approved for Memphis. If you choose to make separate evacuation arrangements, be aware you might not receive full reimbursement. Ensure you make your hotel reservations early; during Hurricane Katrina, hotels as far as Houston, Memphis and Atlanta were completely filled. I highly encourage you to visit the appropriate evacuation website and familiarize yourself with the drive and location specifics.

Once you have evacuated, dependents will not be allowed to return home until the local government allows you to return. Make sure to plan and pack accordingly. Active duty, reserve, auxiliary and civilian employees who are ordered to return to their units may do so with the proper credentials and identification. Those who are cleared to return should be prepared for worst case conditions.

Here are links to directions, maps and information about our safe havens.

Naval Air Station Meridian Installation Guide

<http://www.cnic.navy.mil/meridian/InstallationGuide/index.htm>

Driving Directions to Barksdale Air Force Base

<http://www.mapquest.com/maps?zipcode=71110>

If you do not evacuate with your Coast Guard spouse and/or for some reason you lose contact with your Coast Guard spouse, please call the following contact to report your location and status: Sector New Orleans Command Center at 504-365-2533. If for some reason you cannot contact the Sector Command Center, contact Eighth District Resource Division at 1-866-378-1981/1982/1983; or 1-800-USCGWLS (874-4957), extension 302, if Eighth District evacuated.

Please take the time to review the enclosed information closely and plan for your family. Each storm is different, so do not assume anything and always pay attention to the forecasts. If you have any questions or need any assistance, please contact your appropriate Hurricane Officer:

MSU Baton Rouge	LT Victoria Saxon	225-298-5400
MSU Houma	Mr. John Knapp	985-851-1692 Ext. 240
MSU Morgan City	LT Jason Michalczak	985-380-5334
Sector New Orleans	LT EvelynAnn Bruno	504-365-2107

Let us make sure we are all prepared for this storm season!

Sincerely,



P. W. GAUTNER
Captain, U.S. Coast Guard