

EHS & Risk Management Monthly Newsletter

May 2022 – Hurricane Season Edition

**EHS & Risk Management
Emergency Management
Campus Fire Marshal
Occupational Safety
Laboratory Safety**

E-mail:
riskmanagement_ehs@lamar.edu

Web: <https://www.lamar.edu/about-lu/administration/risk-management/index.html>

Contacts:
Gary Rash – Director
Phone: 409-880-7115
Email: gary.rash@lamar.edu

Akilah Cooper-Edmond – Risk Management and Occupational Safety Coordinator
Phone: 409-880-8008
Email: acooper16@lamar.edu

Nathan Macy – Lab and Building Safety Coordinator
Phone: 409-880-8276
Email: nmacy@lamar.edu

1 Hurricane Season Planning Checklist

Every Department Head should ensure the following preparatory actions have been completed before June 1st.

- Update Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP)
- Review and update the personnel to perform the unit's critical functions and designate them as essential personnel
- Have all employees update contact and evacuation information
- Update contact/notification list and distribute list to all unit employees
- Have employees enter important unit and University phone numbers into cell phone
- Backup all computer files on a network drive or

approved cloud-based storage program

- Remove and/or surplus any unnecessary items from office, workspace, hallways, exterior storage
- Ensure needed emergency/disaster supplies are available
- Verify all emergency or back-up equipment is operational and create/update list of emergency items and include in COOP
- Review specific roles and responsibilities with employees
- For insurance claims and FEMA reimbursement, photograph all workspaces and high-value equipment

Contact Emergency Management (880-7115) with any questions.

2 Continuity of Operations Planning (COOP)

Lamar University's [Continuity of Operations Planning Policy](#) requires that each College and Division, as well as University Departments, complete a COOP and submit it annually to EHS & Risk Management.

To meet the requirements of the policy, EHS & Risk Management has developed a step-by-step guide and posted it on its website. Training materials are also available on the website.

The COOP form is a Formstack document and is linked to the COOP section of the website. Once the form is completed, the COOP coordinator will review it and contact the submitting department with any questions.

COOP materials are posted at [EHS & Risk Management website](#).

3 Hurricane Monitoring

During the Atlantic Hurricane Season – June 1 to November 30 – Emergency Management constantly monitors numerous sources for the latest in tropical storm activity that could affect the Lamar Community.

Emergency Management also has working relationships with the Texas Department of Emergency Management, Jefferson County Emergency Management, and Beaumont Emergency Management and receives updates from these organizations during an active tropical storm event.

The Lamar Community can stay current with tropical storm activity through the [Emergency Management website](#).

4 Pre-Storm Action Steps

Pre-Storm Action Steps are guidelines to use during a potential impact from a tropical system. Based on predicted impact, some action steps may require completion at varying times or may not be required at all.

Phase I: 120 – 72 Hours Before Arrival of Tropical Storm Winds

- All Department Heads review list of essential personnel and make updates as needed. Update COOP plan if any changes
- Conduct a review of existing emergency response plans with

employees and ensure they can accomplish assigned roles and responsibilities

Phase II: 72-48 Hours Before Arrival of Tropical Storm Winds

- All Department Heads ensure photo-documentation of all offices, laboratories, and equipment has been completed and stored
- All Department Heads provide situation status to [Emergency Management](#)

Phase III: 48-24 Hours Before Arrival of Tropical Storm Winds

- Department Heads provide employees with post-storm instructions
- Department Heads ensure all emergency operation tasks have been completed

5 Post-Storm Action Steps

Immediately following the storm, all employees should evaluate their personal status and then follow their department contact procedures. Employees should monitor the University website and other information sources for updates on when to return to work.

It is important employees remember the campus will remain closed until the Safety Evaluation Unit determines the campus is safe for re-entry. Designated essential employees will be notified when to return to campus and must not return until notified. Any employee returning to campus early will be asked to leave.

An employee who has a need to return to campus before it opens can contact the Emergency Operations Center at coc@lamar.edu and make a request.

6 Laboratory Hurricane Preparation

Laboratories pose a particular concern in hurricane preparation, as assumptions of procedures used to keep materials safely stored, such as temperature control, humidity control, continuous ventilation, and lack of physical shocks, may be violated by emergency conditions. Valuable equipment contained within laboratories may also be damaged by emergency conditions.

Consequently, it is especially important to minimize risk of damage to laboratory elements, and to have clear response plans in place to manage any damage that does occur. To assist with this preparation, Lamar University supplies information in the yearly [Hurricane Manual](#) to assist the principal investigators of laboratories in preparing for the possibility of hurricanes.

If you are responsible for a laboratory, please pay particular attention to Appendices C and D of the Hurricane Manual, as well as the relevant elements of the evacuation plans in Section 11.6.

This year, please also note that Lamar University EHS & Risk Management has acquired CampusOptics, a data management system, which can be very helpful in the organization of hurricane response, allowing collection and organization of inventory information, training certification, hazard information, documentary photographs, and all other data required for hurricane preparation. As such, we very strongly encourage all laboratory principal investigators to use this tool in preparing for this year's hurricane season. If you have any questions concerning this tool, please contact the Building and Laboratory Safety Coordinator at nmacy@lamar.edu.

7 2022 Atlantic Hurricane Forecast

According to Colorado State University researchers, there is a 46% likelihood of a major Category 3, 4, or 5 hurricane hitting between Florida's panhandle westward to Brownsville, TX this hurricane season.

Additionally, researchers predict 19 named storms, nine hurricanes, and four major hurricanes with winds more than 110 mph in the Atlantic basin during the season.
