



Baldwin County Emergency Management Agency

Baldwin County Commission

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MEDIA CONTACTS:

Jenni Guerry, Deputy Director

jguerry@baldwincountyal.gov

Sherry-Lea Bloodworth Botop, PIO

sherry-lea.botop@baldwincountyal.gov

BALDWIN COUNTY MEDIA ALERT #2

BALDWIN COUNTY, AL, (Aug. 29, 2021) – Baldwin County Emergency Management Agency (BCEMA) asks for the media’s help in sharing the following information:

Key points from latest weather update for residents and visitors (*National Weather Service deck is attached*):

- Baldwin County is currently under a Tropical Storm Warning, Storm Surge Warning, Marine Warning, Tornado Watch, and Flash Flood Watch. Tornado Warnings have been issued and we expect additional periodic warnings as the outer bands of Hurricane Ida approach our area.
- Today Baldwin County will see Tropical Storm force winds and heavy rain (6-8 inches, possibly more). Impacts along the coast in Gulf Shores, Orange Beach, and Fort Morgan, include storm surge (3-5 feet, possibly higher), high surf (10-15 feet), heavy rain, and deadly rip currents through Tuesday. High surf and deadly rip currents could last well into next week.
- The increasing possibility of river flooding, flooding in low lying areas, and isolated tornadoes continues to be a growing concern.
- As a precaution, local officials encourage residents and visitors to stay off the roads due to very hazardous conditions and DO NOT drive around “sightseeing” at weather conditions or storm damage. Flash flooding is a concern as weather conditions in Gulf Shores, Orange Beach, and Fort Morgan intensify.
 - Current road issues:
 - Part of the east bound Causeway is closed due to water over the road.
 - Windmill Ridge Road in Gulf Shores is completely impassable.
 - Multiple areas of Fort Morgan Road/Highway 180 are impassable.

- REMEMBER:
 - **Turn around, don't drown** – In the event of a roadway covered by water, do not attempt to drive over the flooded road. The water depth may be misleading, and you could end up stranded or trapped.
 - **Know Your Elevation** – You must know your elevation to understand if your location will be impacted by storm surge. Find your elevation online at <https://viewer.nationalmap.gov/advanced-viewer/>.
 - **Evacuate When Necessary** – If an evacuation notice is issued, leave. Research possible evacuation routes and make arrangements prior to the storm, so you have somewhere to go.
 - **“The First 72 Are On You”** - Shelters are not available during the first 72 hours after a storm passes, and residents should plan accordingly. Prepare by creating disaster kits that contain enough food, water, and essential supplies that will last seven days after the storm arrives. Individuals should consider having at least two emergency supply kits, one full kit at home and smaller portable kits in their workplace, vehicle, or other places they spend time.

- At this time, our beaches are under double red flags, which means the waters are closed and people should stay out of the Gulf waters.

- Residents and visitors are strongly advised to pay attention to flags posted at all beach entry points. Weather systems can bring strong surf conditions as well as dangerous lightning.
 - While the surf that comes with weather events may look “fun,” this surf is very dangerous with life-threatening rip currents.
 - High surf is already impacting the beaches with anticipated surf heights of 10-15 feet.
 - Red flags mean dangerous rip currents are present; double red flags signify the waters are closed, though the beaches may still be open.
 - For your own safety and the safety of others, stay out of the water if we are under red flag conditions.
 - Watch for lightning in the area and move indoors for safety.
 - Please refer to <https://www.gulfshores.com/beach-water-activities/beaches/beach-flag-warning-system/> for the full beach flag chart.
 - To receive daily Beach Flag and Surf Conditions on your phone, text “ALBeaches” to 888-777

Closures

- **Baldwin County**
 - Baldwin County facilities will be closed on Monday, Aug. 30. This includes all courts, driver’s license services, tags, and all other services within Baldwin County Courthouses.
 - Baldwin County Schools will be closed Monday, Aug. 30.

- All locations of the Health Department will be closed Monday, Aug. 30 and vaccine clinics are cancelled until further notice.
- Garbage collection routes will be pushed back one day from the scheduled pick-up days. Bulk and yard debris will also be pushed back one day from the scheduled pick-up day.
- **City of Bay Minette**
 - Garbage collection routes will be pushed back to Tuesday
- **City of Fairhope**
 - Fairhope Pier is closed until further notice.
- **City of Gulf Shores**
 - All public beach parking areas and the Little Lagoon parking area are closed until further notice.
 - All city offices and facilities and city schools will be closed Monday, Aug. 30.
 - Gulf Shores City Council meeting is moved to Tuesday, Aug. 31 at 4:00 p.m.
- **City of Orange Beach**
 - Orange Beach Aquatics Center, Golf Center and Recreation Center will be closed on Sunday, Aug. 29

Facebook Live

Baldwin County EMA is giving updates via Facebook Live daily at 10:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m.

Sand/Sandbag Locations

- Gulf Shores – Gulf Shores SportsPlex at 19025 Oak Road West (County Road 6). Sand is available; residents must bring their own sandbags and shovel.
- Orange Beach – Behind City Hall at 4099 Orange Beach Blvd. Sand and limited sandbags are still available; residents must bring their own shovel and may want to bring their own sandbags, in case the provided supply runs out.
- Robertsdale – Baldwin County Central Annex at 22251 Palmer St. Sand and sandbags are still available; residents must bring their own shovel.

Shelters

No shelters are planned to open at this time. If this changes, we will alert media outlets immediately.

Visitors

- For questions regarding cancellations for your vacation rental, please contact the rental company or owner directly because policies vary from company to company.

Resources to stay informed:

- How to prepare for a storm, local evacuation routes, and more - <https://www.baldwincountyal.gov/departments/emergency-management-agency/ema-downloads>
- To receive timely weather updates on your cell phone from the Baldwin County Emergency Management Agency, please register at <https://www.alertbaldwin.com/> .
- Download the Baldwin County EMA app for [Android Smartphone](#) or [Apple iPhone](#).
- <https://algotraffic.com/> is the best resource for up-to-date information on road closures and transportation routes.
- For information on streams and river gages, visit https://www.usgs.gov/mission-areas/water-resources/science/waternow?qt-science_center_objects=0#qt-science_center_objects

General Storm Preparedness Information to share: See attached Baldwin EMA Post-Storm Safety document for additional safety guidance.

Food Safety

- Power outages associated with hurricane storm force winds can cause concerns about the safety of frozen and refrigerated foods. As a general rule, a full upright or chest freezer will keep foods frozen for about two days without power.
- A partially full freezer will keep foods frozen for about one day. This time may be extended by keeping the door shut. A refrigerator will keep foods cool for four to six hours if the door is kept closed as much as possible.
- Any thawed foods that have been at room temperature for more than two hours should be discarded. Foods still containing ice crystals can be refrozen, although the quality of the food may decrease. Foods that have thawed to refrigerator temperatures (that is, no more than 40 degrees Fahrenheit) can also be cooked and then refrozen.
- Additional resources (including infographics ... USDA Food Safety infographic is attached to this alert):
 - <https://www.cdc.gov/foodsafety/keep-food-safe-after-emergency.html>
 - <https://www.cdc.gov/foodsafety/food-safety-during-a-power-outage.html>
 - <https://www.fda.gov/food/buy-store-serve-safe-food/food-and-water-safety-during-power-outages-and-floods>
 - <https://www.fda.gov/media/72124/download>

Generator Safety

- While the use of a generator can help you get on the road to recovery, it can also pose danger to your health and safety if not used correctly – especially carbon monoxide (CO) poisoning from the toxic engine exhaust, electric shock or electrocution, and fire.
- Generators should not be operated indoors, should be set at least 20 feet from any structure, and should not be used in rain or wet conditions. (See attached info sheet and infographic for more detailed guidance on how to safely operate a generator).

For more information, contact Jenni Guerry or Sherry-Lea Botoy, Baldwin County
Emergency Management Agency at jguerry@baldwincountyal.gov or (251) 972-6807.

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