



Baldwin County Emergency Management Agency

Baldwin County Commission

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MEDIA CONTACTS:

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BALDWIN COUNTY MEDIA ALERT #3

BALDWIN COUNTY, AL, (Aug. 30, 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

- Baldwin County is still under a Coastal Flood Warning, High Surf Warning, Tornado Watch, and Flash Flood Watch.
 - Flood Warning for Fish River near Silverhill – Minor flooding is forecast. The river is expected to crest at 12.8 ft tomorrow morning.
 - Styx River is forecast to reach moderate flood stage and expected to crest at 16.2 ft on tomorrow afternoon.
 - Hydrologic Prediction Service details for rivers and streams can be found here - <https://water.weather.gov/ahps2/index.php?wfo=MOB>

- Impacts expected on Tuesday include heavy rain, possible river flooding, flooding in low lying areas and over roadways in low lying areas, high surf, isolated tornadoes, and deadly rip currents. High surf and deadly rip currents could last throughout the week.

- Local officials encourage residents and visitors to drive with caution especially in areas with water over the road. If you encounter roadblocks or barricades due to flooded conditions, do not attempt to drive around. Current road issues and resources for monitoring roads are:
 - State traffic updated - <https://algotraffic.com/>
 - Baldwin County managed roads and highways status can be found here - <https://baldwincountyal.gov/departments/highway/highway-services/road-notices>
 - The Causeway remains closed.
 - Isle of Pine Drive located in Magnolia Springs is impassable.
 - Gulf Shores is reporting that Windmill Ridge Road is closed, and a number of other roadways are still inundated with water. These include but are not limited to:

- Hwy. 182
- Creekview Drive
- West 3rd Ave.
- West 4th Ave.
- West 5th Ave.
- West 6th Ave.
- West 8th Ave.
- West 12th Ave.
- Sunset Drive
- Hwy. 59 between Waterville and Bayou Village Bridge
- Sunrise Drive
- Minnow Lane
- West Lagoon Ave.
- Brigadoon Trail
- Lagoon Winds Drive
- Waterway West
- Plash Island
- 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.

Beaches

- The beaches along coastal Alabama (Gulf Shores, Orange Beach, Fort Morgan, Dauphin Island) are still under double red flags, which means the waters are closed and people should stay out of the Gulf. The surf is extremely deadly.
- 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

City and County Openings

- All Baldwin County offices and facilities will be open on Tuesday, Aug. 31 for normal operations
- Baldwin County Public Schools will be open on Tuesday, Aug. 31
- All cities across Baldwin County are reporting their offices and facilities will be open on Tuesday, Aug. 31 for normal operations.
- Garbage and recycle pick up routes for the county and most cities were adjusted due to the storm. Residents should check with their specific entity to find out when trash and recycle items will be picked up this week.
- COVID testing at the PZK Hall in Robertsdale will resume Tuesday, Aug. 31 from 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.

Assisting Louisiana

- Officials in Louisiana have asked that Alabama residents interested in donating or volunteering to help those in need in their state please do so through an official organization and not “self-deploy” to the area.
- Residents of Baldwin County wanting to donate items or volunteer can work through the Baldwin County VOAD group (Volunteer Organizations Assisting in Disasters) to get partnered with an official agency - <https://unitedway-bc.org/baldwin-county-voad>
- VOAD groups across Alabama will be working with Serve Alabama, the Alabama Governor’s Office of Volunteer Services, to deploy volunteers and resources in partnership with Volunteer Louisiana, which is that state’s official office for volunteer service. More information on Serve Alabama can be found on their website at <https://www.servealabama.gov/volunteer-donations>.
 - Per the Volunteer Louisiana website, “Volunteers must affiliate with an organization. Under no circumstances should a volunteer self-deploy to an affected area. Unaffiliated, self-deployed volunteers can create additional burdens on affected communities and can pull resources away from survivors.” - <https://volunteerlouisiana.gov/disaster-services>
- The Better Business Bureau of Central and South Alabama advises people take measures to ensure their donations for Hurricane Ida relief are used appropriately and to ensure they don’t fall victim to scams or fraud. More information is on their website at <https://www.bbb.org/article/news-releases/24807-giving-tips-for-hurricane-ida-relief>
- The American Red Cross has established a shelter at Springhill Community Center located at 1151 Springhill Ave, Mobile, AL, for evacuees of Louisiana. A link to a map indicating shelters https://maps.redcross.org/website/maps/ARC_Shelters.html

Resources to stay informed:

- 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](#).
 - For daily text alerts on beach conditions in Baldwin County, text “ALBeaches” to 888-777.
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General Storm Preparedness Information to share:

Power Lines

If power lines are lying on the ground or dangling near the ground, do not touch them. Notify your utility company as soon as possible that lines have been damaged, or that the power lines are down, but do not attempt to move or repair the power lines.

Avoid driving through standing water if downed power lines are in the water. If a power line falls across your vehicle while you are driving, continue to drive away from the line. If the engine stalls, do not turn off the ignition. Stay in your vehicle and wait for emergency personnel. Do not allow anyone other than emergency personnel to approach your vehicle.

Septic Tanks

During heavy rains and floods, the ground can become saturated. Residents who use an onsite sewage disposal system (a septic tank system) may be experiencing performance problems due to these rain-soaked conditions. Follow these suggestions that may provide some relief:

- Limit water usage when possible by reducing toilet flushing, dishwashing, clothes washing and showering.
- Consider laundering at commercial establishments, as this will significantly reduce the demand on your own system.
- Inspect disposal areas for depressions where rainwater ponding may occur. Adding soil to these depressions will aid in surface drainage.
- Inspect roof draining and gutters to ensure that rainwater run-off is diverted away from the disposal area.
- Consider having your septic tank pumped out. This may provide temporary relief and may help with maintenance for long-term system performance. The Alabama Department of Public Health recommends having your septic tank pumped out every three to five years to eliminate sludge build-up. After weather conditions improve, the system should return to normal functioning. If you continue to experience problems with your system, contact your local health department environmentalist for assistance.
- Signs that a septic system is not working properly include the following:
 - Sinks drain slowly
 - Toilets drain slowly
 - Floor drains overflow
 - Sewage becomes visible outside the home
- Precautions related to septic systems include:
 - Avoid contact with any septic system electrical devices until they are dry and clean.

- Do not pump out the septic tank more than halfway or the tank may float out of the ground.
- Reduce all nonessential water use (for example, dishwashing, clothes washing, showering).
- Flush toilets as little as possible or use a temporary toilet. If you suspect septic system damage, get the system professionally inspected and serviced.

Well Water

Severe flooding can put drinking water wells at increased risk for contamination from floodwater that may contain sewage. Persons in areas where there may have been flash floods should test their private water wells before drinking water from them. Private wells that have been covered by flood water should be assumed to have been contaminated.

Do not drink water from your well or feed it to your animals until you have tested it and have received a satisfactory test result. Sample kits may be obtained from the local health departments and state health department laboratories, which are equipped to sample well water for bacteriological contamination.

Once a satisfactory sample is obtained, the well should be monitored by continued sampling to ensure the quality of the water supply. Until water is known to be free of contaminants, residents should only use clear water which has been brought to a full boil for one minute. Contact your health department (<http://www.alabamapublichealth.gov/publications/assets/countycontacts.pdf>) for a list of septic system contractors who work in your area.

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

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