



# TDEM

THE TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY SYSTEM

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## Texas Division of Emergency Management Urges Texans to Stay Vigilant as Tropical Storm Nicholas Moves Along the Texas Coast

AUSTIN — As Tropical Storm Nicholas begins impacting the Texas coast, the Texas Division of Emergency Management urges Texans to remain vigilant. According to the National Weather Service, the storm is bringing heavy rainfall to portions of the Texas coast which may lead to widespread flooding, storm surge, and damaging winds. Tropical storm conditions and dangerous storm surge inundation are expected in portions of coastal areas in Southeast Texas. Heavy rain will cause significant flash flooding along the Texas Gulf coast. Flooding impacts can stretch inland 100 miles or more as rain bands push onshore. Excessive rain is expected for the overnight hours in the middle and upper Texas coastal region.

Over the weekend, Governor Greg Abbott [activated resources](#) to respond to requests for assistance from local officials. He [also ordered](#) the Texas State Operations Center (SOC) to increase its readiness to Level II (Escalated Response).

### KEY POINTS

- [Tropical Storm Nicholas](#) will continue to affect areas in the coastal plains. Anyone in the forecast path of the storm should monitor their local news for updates, follow [weather alerts](#), and heed direction/orders provided by local officials.

- [Be ready and prepared](#) by [gathering supplies](#) for your entire household now. Include medication, disinfectant supplies, [face masks](#) and [pet supplies](#). After a storm, you may not have access to these supplies for several days.
- TDEM is coordinating with local partners to support needs of citizens affected by this system. The agency is working with state agencies and non profits to assist with impacts from this system. Search and rescue teams have been deployed to areas that could be impacted by heavy rain and flash flooding. Other teams are on standby for deployment if necessary.
- Visit [TDEM's website](#) and social media (available in English and Spanish) to receive emergency preparedness tips and information on disaster resources.

## **STAY SAFE DURING POWER OUTAGES**

- **Use only flashlights or battery-powered lanterns for emergency lighting.** NEVER use candles during a blackout or power outage due to extreme risk of fire.
- **Avoid carbon monoxide poisoning.** A grill, camp stove or other gasoline, propane, natural gas, or charcoal burning devices should never be used inside a home, garage, or any partially enclosed area. These should only be used outdoors and at least 20 feet away from windows.
- **Use a generator safely.** Never use a generator inside a home, basement, shed or garage even if doors and windows are open.
- **Keep generators outside and far away from your home.** Windows, doors, and vents could allow carbon monoxide to come indoors. Read both the label on your generator and the owner's manual and follow the instructions.
- **Power Outages can impact the safety of food** in your refrigerator and freezer.
  - Keep refrigerator and freezer doors closed to keep your food as fresh as possible. The refrigerator will keep food cold for about four hours. A full freezer will keep the temperature for about 48 hours. Use coolers with ice if necessary.
  - Throw away any food that has been exposed to a temperature of 40°Fahrenheit (4° Celsius) or higher for two hours or more or that has an unusual odor, color, or texture. When in doubt, throw it out!
  - Never taste food or rely on appearance or odor to determine its safety. Some foods may look and smell fine, but if they have been at room temperature too long, heat-resistant bacteria that cause food-borne illnesses can start growing quickly.
- **Check on neighbors who may require assistance if it is safe to do so.** This includes individuals with infants, children as well as older adults, people with disabilities and others with access and functional need.

## WHAT TO DO IN CASE OF FLOODING

- **Don't drive through flood waters:** Almost half of all flash flood deaths happen in vehicles. When in your car, look out for flooding in low lying areas at bridges and at highway dips. As little as 6 inches of water may cause you to lose control of your vehicle. Be extremely cautious of any water on roads or in creeks, streams, storm drains, or other areas. Always observe road barricades placed for your protection. Remember, *Turn Around Don't Drown*. For the Texas road conditions, visit [drivetexas.org](http://drivetexas.org).
- **If you are a person with disabilities,** you may need to take additional steps to plan for the needs of yourself and your service animal if you have one. Visit [Ready.gov/flooding](http://Ready.gov/flooding) to learn how to stay safe before, during and after a flood.
- **Be aware of areas where floodwaters have receded.** Roads may have weakened and could collapse under the weight of a car.
- **Stay out of floodwater.** Standing water may be electrically charged from underground or downed power lines or contain hazards such as human and livestock waste, dangerous debris, contaminants that can lead to illness, or wild or stray animals.
- **Evacuate if told to do so.** If you go to a community or group shelter, remember to follow the latest recommendations from [the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\) for protecting yourself and family from COVID-19](https://www.cdc.gov/covid19/protect-yourself-and-family-from-covid-19).
- **Stay off the roads:** Emergency workers will be assisting people in flooded areas. You can help them by staying off the roads and out of the way.
- **Be careful when cleaning up.** Wear protective clothing, including a long-sleeved shirt, long pants, work gloves and sturdy thick-soled shoes. Do not try to remove heavy debris by yourself. Use an appropriate mask if cleaning [mold or other debris](#). Children should not take part in disaster cleanup work.
- **Flood Insurance:** Your National Flood Insurance Program policy will [cover and reimburse certain actions](#) you take to minimize damage to your home and belongings before a flood.

## WHAT TO DO WHEN YOUR PROPERTY IS BEEN DAMAGED BY FLOODS

- **Report your flood loss and damage immediately:** Contact your insurance agent or carrier and be sure to ask them about advance payments. For finding your insurance agent or carrier, call the National Flood Insurance Program at 877-336-2627.

For tropical weather safety tips, [visit gov.texas.gov/hurricane](http://gov.texas.gov/hurricane).

Texans can also visit [www.TexasFlood.org](http://www.TexasFlood.org) for resources and tips on how to stay safe during flood events.