



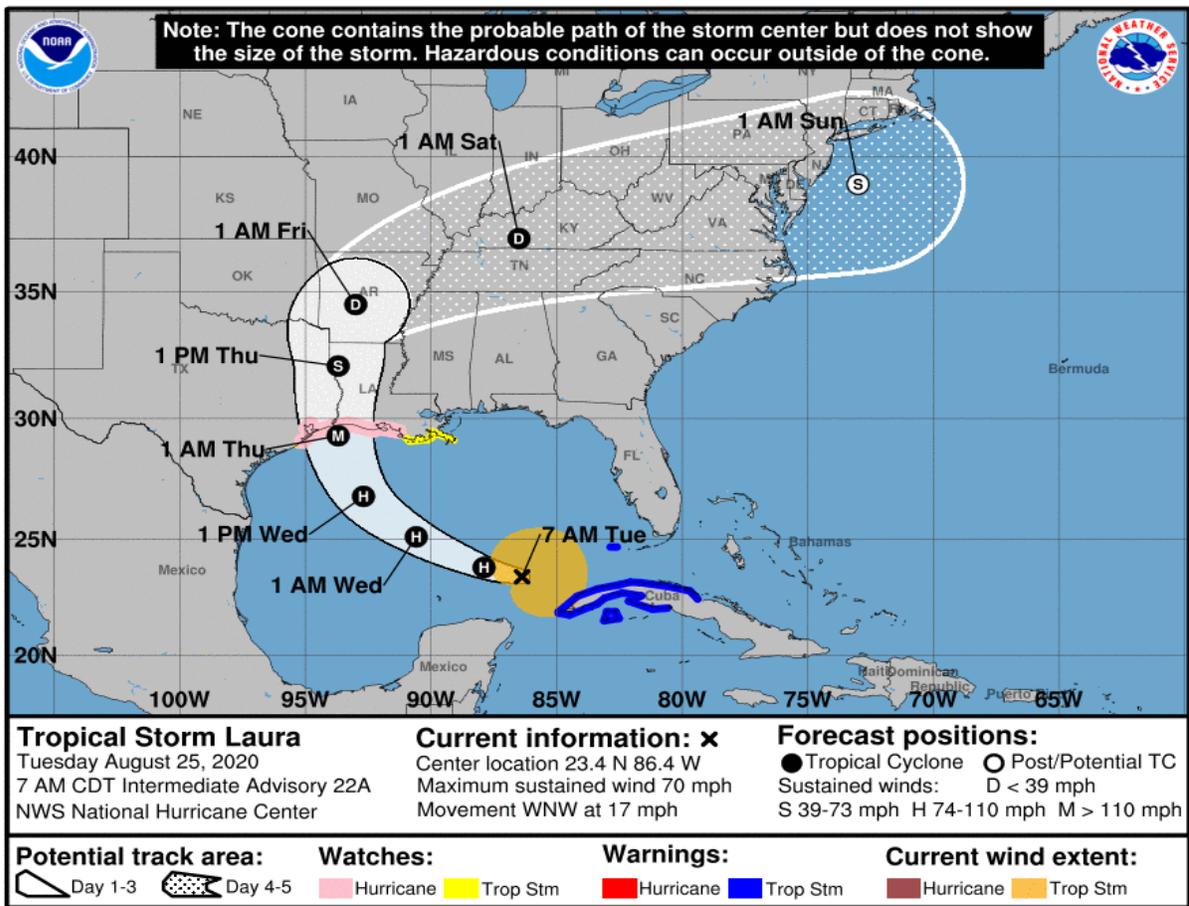
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
August 25, 2020

Hurricane Laura Update

Status Update from the Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Management

MONTGOMERY COUNTY – Based off of aircraft data, Tropical Storm Laura has now become Hurricane Laura with maximum sustained winds of 75 mph. A Hurricane Watch has been issued along the upper Texas Coastline down to San Luis Pass. This includes the areas around Galveston Bay. A Tropical Storm Watch has been issued for much of Southeast Texas down to Freeport. A Storm Surge Watch has been issued for the coast areas down to San Luis Pass. Hurricane Laura is now forecast to become a major hurricane over the Northwestern Gulf of Mexico Wednesday. This very dangerous hurricane is forecast to make landfall on the upper Texas Coast or far Southwest Louisiana. County Judge Mark Keough urges residents to “Play close attention to Hurricane Laura, because the storm’s track still remains uncertain. Today is the final day to make your last preparations; before Laura makes landfall Wednesday night into Thursday morning.”

Montgomery County agencies and resources are on alert and ready to activate as needed for our area. The Montgomery County Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Management would like to remind our residents that Montgomery County is a pass through county, which allows coastal residents to safely evacuate through our county. Our office will not call for mandatory evacuations due to our distance from the coast. We continue to monitor these storms, and will send updates today as we receive them.



PREPARE FOR HURRICANE SEASON

- Understand that your planning may be different this year because of the need to protect yourself and others from COVID-19.
- Give yourself more time than usual to **prepare your emergency food, water, and medicine supplies**. Home delivery is the safest choice for buying disaster supplies; however, that may not be an option for everyone. If in-person shopping is your only choice, take steps to **protect your and others' health when running essential errands**.
- Protect yourself and others when filling **prescriptions** by limiting in-person visits to the pharmacy. Sign up for mail order delivery or call in your prescription ahead of time and use drive-through windows or curbside pickup. If available order a 60 or 90 day supply to have on hand.
- Pay attention to local guidance about updated plans for evacuations and shelters, including **potential shelters for your pets**.
- If you need to evacuate, prepare a "go kit" with **personal items** you cannot do without during an emergency. Include items that can help protect you and others from COVID-19, such as hand sanitizer, or bar or liquid soap if not available, and two cloth face coverings for each person. Face covers should not be used by children under the age of 2. They also should not be used by people having trouble breathing, or who are unconscious, incapacitated, or unable to remove the mask without assistance.

- When you check on neighbors and friends, be sure to follow **social distancing** recommendations (staying at least 6 feet, about 2 arms' length, from others) and **other CDC recommendations** to protect yourself and others.
- If you need to go to a disaster shelter, follow CDC recommendations for staying safe and healthy in a **public disaster shelter** during the COVID-19 pandemic.

STAY SAFE AFTER A HURRICANE

In addition to following guidance for staying safe and healthy **after a hurricane**, note that:

- You should continue to use **preventive actions** like washing your hands and wearing a **face covering** during clean up or when returning home.
- It may take longer than usual to restore power and water if they are out. Take **steps to prevent carbon monoxide poisoning** if you use a generator.
- If you are injured or ill, contact your medical provider for treatment recommendations. Keep wounds clean to prevent infection. Remember, accessing medical care may be more difficult than usual during the pandemic.
- Dealing with disasters can cause stress and strong emotions, particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic. It is natural to feel anxiety, grief, and worry. **Coping with these feelings and getting help** when you need it will help you, your family, and your community recover.
- People with preexisting mental health conditions should continue with their treatment and be aware of new or worsening symptoms. Additional information can be found at the **Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration** page.

STAY INFORMED

- Register for **AlertMCTX**, the county's official emergency alert system, to receive real-time weather alerts and post-storm recovery information.
- More information about how to prepared for this year's hurricane season is available **here**.
- Download the ReadyMCTX app. This app shows shelter and donation center locations when activated, and additional information from our office.
- Recovery information is available at www.mctx.org/recover_

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