

Community Engagement and Public Information Department

## IMPORTANT EMERGENCY INFORMATION

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### Gloucester County Emergency Management Urging Residents to Prepare for Hurricane Season Amid COVID-19 Pandemic



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Gloucester County Emergency Management officials are urging residents to prepare now as peak hurricane season approaches and the nation continues to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic.

“Although it’s always of the utmost importance, having an evacuation plan and being prepared is even more serious this year,” said Brett Major, Gloucester’s Emergency Management Coordinator. “Residents should make advance arrangements in efforts to avoid congregate (large group) sheltering if at all possible, as there is still a risk of COVID-19 transmission in congregate sheltering facilities, despite all of our advance plans to mitigate its spread.”

With shelter capacity also being limited due to social distancing requirements, it is imperative that residents try to identify their own shelter location outside of an evacuation zone - perhaps with friends or family.

Residents who do utilize a County shelter will be limited in what they can bring with them due to space restrictions. Though all safety precautions will be implemented if a County shelter opens, Major reminds residents that it will still be a congregate shelter and those utilizing the shelter will share space with others.

Specific safety procedures that will be in place will require residents who seek admittance to the shelter to pre-register by phone. Also, COVID-19 screening questions will be used during shelter admittance and temperatures will be taken via non-contact thermometers.

With storm surge flooding a major concern for much of the County, residents can identify whether their home or business is in a particular evacuation zone by visiting [KnowYourZoneVA.org](http://KnowYourZoneVA.org). Zone colors have been updated this year and users can enter their physical address in the search bar of the website to view and confirm their designated evacuation zone.

In addition to awareness and planning for individual and family risks, officials also encourage residents to consider purchasing flood insurance (if applicable), develop a family communication plan and make an emergency kit. Much of this information and more can be found in Gloucester’s Disaster Preparedness Quick Guide that was mailed out to all residential addresses in Gloucester County in mid-July. An updated version of the guide can also be viewed by visiting [www.gloucesterva.info](http://www.gloucesterva.info) and clicking on the image, “Gloucester County, Virginia Disaster Preparedness Quick Guide.”

Gloucester’s Emergency Management department welcomes residents or visitors with any questions or concerns to reach its office via phone at 804-693-1390 or via e-mail at [DEM@gloucesterva.info](mailto:DEM@gloucesterva.info).

**# End of Announcement #**