



# City of Slidell

Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Department of Cultural and Public Affairs ♦ 444 Erlanger Street ♦ Slidell, LA 70458

September 22, 2005

## *Hurricane Katrina Update 9-22-05*

To the Citizens of Slidell,

We are now under a Tropical Storm Warning from Hurricane Rita. We could have 3" - 5" of rain with possible flooding in low lying areas; 2' - 4' surge in Lake Pontchartrain, and winds of 40 to 50 mph.

A mandatory evacuation has been ordered beginning Friday at 8:00 a.m. for areas below Highway 190. East St. Tammany Parish shelters will open at 9:00 a.m. on Friday at the following locations:  
Creekside Jr. High School, 65434 Hwy 41, Pearl River, 863-5882  
Pearl River High School, 39110 Rebel Lane, Pearl River, 863-2180  
Riverside Elementary, 38480 Sullivan Drive, Pearl River, 863-3141  
Sixth Ward Jr. High, 72360 Hwy 41, Evans Creek, Pearl River, 863-7126

Curfew is in effect 9:00 p.m. - 6:00 a.m.

For those citizens with internet access, we are providing continuous updates on the city's website as news becomes available, at [www.slidell.la.us](http://www.slidell.la.us) under the "Emergency Information" link.

Here are the most recent updates regarding our Hurricane Katrina recovery efforts:

**FOOD STAMPS:** While Food Stamp Applications were being accepted in the Slidell Municipal Auditorium, that service is temporarily on hold as Hurricane Rita approaches. We will advise citizens when that service resumes.

**FEMA:** Although FEMA had set up offices in John Slidell Park, that application assistance has been suspended until Hurricane Rita has passed. You may apply by calling 1-800-621-FEMA or 1-800-621-3362, or register online at [www.fema.gov](http://www.fema.gov). Please inform FEMA if you are in need of transitional housing to get your name on the list. FEMA will determine housing priority.

**EMERGENCY UNEMPLOYMENT CLAIMS:** The State of Louisiana Department of Labor will be stationed at the Slidell Auditorium, 2056 Second Street, Monday - Friday from 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. The Department will be taking Disaster Unemployment Insurance Claims. Additionally, they will be screening clients for the (temporary) National Emergency Grant job openings (humanitarian assistance jobs in the local community).

**JOB FAIR:** The Department of Labor is hosting a Job Fair at the Slidell Municipal Auditorium on Thursday, September 29, from 8 a.m. – 5 p.m. Due to the disaster, this will be a very informal event, and companies are free to come and go throughout the day. Companies should bring blank applications and pens or pencils for applicants to use. Companies that are looking to hire employees are asked to email Shane Boucher at [sboucher@ldol.state.la.us](mailto:sboucher@ldol.state.la.us) to pre-register for this event. Phone service is unavailable at this time.

**SBA APPLICATIONS:** Louisiana's Small Business Development Centers (SBDC) are providing assistance to businesses in filling out the SBA Disaster Loan Program applications. Locally, Southeastern Louisiana University's SBDC is hosting

SBA Disaster Loan Application assistance workshops throughout the parish. Please call (985) 549-3831 to register for any of the workshops. Workshops will be held at the St. Tammany Parish Library Slidell Branch on Robert Boulevard on September 23 and 30, and October 7, 14, 21 and 28 at 9 a.m. The workshops are free.

**FEEDING LOCATIONS:** Feeding locations are open throughout the city including First Baptist Church on Pontchartrain Drive, Harvest Church in the John Jay Shopping Center, and Grace Memorial Church on Pearl Street. Operation Blessing, located on the vacant lot next to Starbuck's on Front Street, has suspended services until after Hurricane Rita passes. FEMA is handing out ice, water and MREs at the old Wal-Mart on Gause Blvd & I-10.

**MEDICAL CARE:** A medical facility has been set up in the vacant lot next to Starbuck's on Front Street. Doctors and nurses from across the nation are there to help the citizens of Slidell.

**ELECTRICITY:** Cleco has restored power to 92% of its customers in areas that power can be restored. If you still do not have power, Cleco is asking that you report it to 1-800-622-6537. Cleco is also beginning clean-up throughout the area. If your electrical panel was submerged by water or received damage, a licensed electrician must notify the Building Safety Department that your panel is ready to be energized. This department will then notify Cleco. A licensed electrician must call 645-3651 to file process to restore power and to make all necessary electrical repairs. For more information or assistance on restoring your power, please contact Cleco at 1-800-622-6537. Cleco will remain operational through Hurricane Rita. Please report any outages to Cleco.

**WATER AND SEWER SERVICES:** Our water utility system and sewer system are operational and the water system has been re-chlorinated. The drinking water is safe to drink. City crews continue to clean out our many drainage canals and maintain the water treatment plants 24/7.

**TELEPHONE SERVICE:** Bell South's telephone service is back up and running.

**CABLE TELEVISION:** Charter Communications is beginning to restore cable television around the parish and will then restore cable internet service. They are currently at 20%.

**TRAFFIC:** Traffic is extremely slow throughout the city due to the number of residents, volunteers, and clean-up crews in Slidell. The Slidell Police Department asked for your patience while our city is trying to get back to normal.

**IMPOUNDED VEHICLES:** Any vehicles that were parked in city rights-of-way interfering with debris removal have been impounded and can be picked up at the old City Barn on Bayou Lane (near Heritage Park.) It is imperative that we keep all rights-of-way clear so that the city can continue its clean-up efforts. If it is necessary to impound a vehicle, the vehicle owner will be responsible for all related charges.

**DEBRIS CLEANUP:** Several organizations are helping with debris clean-up including Operation Blessing, located on Front Street next to Starbuck's, First Baptist Church on Ponchartrain Drive, and Grace Memorial Church on Pearl Acres Street. Please register your property address at one of these locations to have your debris removed.

**EMERGENCY CLEAN-UP EFFORTS:** Our city crews are working to clean out drainage canals and repair damage to work sites and stations throughout the city. The city is also beginning a comprehensive sweep of the neighborhoods from south to north and will assist with emergency clean-up efforts and tree removal to those in need.

**PROPERTY REPAIRS:** A reminder about repairs done on your property: if you are hiring a contractor to make repairs on your home, please verify that the contractor is licensed and insured, get a written contract, do not give any money in advance, do not pay more than the price stated in the contract, and verify that the contractor has a work permit issued by the City of Slidell before any work begins.

**PRICE GOUGING/EVICTION:** People with questions about apartment evictions or who wish to report price gouging should contact the Consumer Protection Agency at 1-800-351-4889, the Office of Emergency Preparedness at (225) 925-7455, or the Louisiana State Bar Association, Disaster Relief Committee at 1-800-310-7029.

**COMPUTER DISPOSAL:** Be careful if you are throwing out computers damaged by Katrina. Don't leave computers out

on the street where your personal information could be retrieved from the computer's hard drive. Protect yourself from identity theft. Take out and keep the hard drive before you throw out your computer.

**TRAVEL TRAILER DUMPSITES:** The City of Slidell is providing dumpsites for travel trailers to dump sewage into the sewer collection system at the South (dead end) of Bayou Lane at the Old City maintenance barn and at Civic Club Drive. Dumping will be allowed from 7:00 a.m. - 7:00 p.m. on Mondays and Thursdays. City personnel will be on site to monitor the activity.

**LOST AND ABANDONED PETS:** The Slidell Office of Animal Control, with the help of Noah's Wish, a non-profit volunteer organization, is currently housing over 700 pets displaced by the hurricane at the Public Operations building. If your pet is there, please pick up your pet as soon as you can. Or if you would like to adopt one of the many displaced animals, please visit their temporary animal shelter at the Slidell Public Operations building next to Heritage Park. Noah's Wish is also giving out free dog and cat food.

**SCHOOLS:** St. Tammany Parish schools have a target date of October 3 to reopen schools. Please continue to check their website [www.stpsb.org](http://www.stpsb.org) for daily updates. Pope John Paul II High School plans to reopen on Monday, September 19. St. Margaret Mary School will also open Monday and will host students from Our Lady of the Lourdes School, while Lourdes classrooms are being repaired from the storm.

**SHOPPING:** North Shore Square is now open from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Monday through Saturday, and noon to 6 p.m. on Sundays. Department stores that are open are Dillard's Men's, JC Penney and Sears. Dillard's Women will re-open on October 12.

The City of Slidell extends a very gracious thank you to the many businesses, individuals, and the volunteers from throughout the United States and Canada whose hard work and dedication have made a tremendous difference in our city's recovery efforts. We appreciate all you are doing for us!

Thank you and stay safe,  
Mayor Ben Morris