

Charleston County Comprehensive Recovery Plan

Re-Entry Plan



January 2008

EMERGENCY RE-ENTRY

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this plan is to provide guidance to local and state agencies for an event that has caused a large scale evacuation of Charleston County and the return of those citizen in an orderly and efficient re-entry process.

II. MISSION

To quickly evaluate and assess the immediate human needs (food, water, health/medical, and housing) and the operational status of vital community infrastructure (transportation, communications, and utility systems). To assist impacted localities with the restoration of essential services. To plan for and implement, when possible, the return of evacuees to their homes.

III. SITUATION AND ASSUMPTIONS

Each municipality is responsible for conducting its own immediate needs assessment to determine re-entry restrictions. This assessment will determine if the locality is safe to permit re-entry of residents, property/business owners. However, state and federal assistance may also be available to assist or to conduct such an assessment. State participation will be coordinated by SCEMD and federal participation by DHS/FEMA. This plan is designed for the return of residents following an evacuation prior to a hurricane but may be modified to address other large evacuations.

IV. CONCEPT OF OPERATIONS

A. Return to the Risk Area

1. Once the threat has passed, county re-entry policy may be based upon one of three (3) scenarios.
 - a. Storm has passed and there is little or no damages that effect the communities.
 - b. Effects are isolated to a localized area, operational area, or region of the county with minimal or isolated significant damages, ie barrier islands north of the harbor.
 - c. Total devastation with significant infrastructure damages over a wide spread area.

2. The decision of when to permit residents to return to the effected area will be made cooperatively between the County EOC and municipalities in the impacted areas based upon the three scenarios above. The decision to allow reentry will be based on an overall evaluation of the situation, including the following major factors:
 - a. Access - Following a major event an aerial survey of the impacted areas should be conducted immediately to identify and prioritize the most seriously damaged areas of the locality. This can determine the level of damage to major routes into the area and help to determine the time needed for debris clearance from those routes.
 - b. Essential Emergency Services – Emergency Services agencies that have been moved to a safe haven shelter prior to an evacuation need to return back to their service areas.
 - c. Water Levels – Floodwaters have receded from most of the area.
 - d. Public Health - Water and sewer services are operating.
 - c. Subsistence - Food is available or made available in the impacted area.
 - f. Utilities - Electricity, potable water, sewer services, telephone, and natural gas services are operating or when they are made available in the effected area.
 - g. Existing services can support the people already in the impacted area as well as an additional influx of people.
3. Pre-Reentry Teams should begin the process of clearing access to critical facilities and roads to facilitate the reentry process. The Pre-Reentry Teams consist of but are not limited too:
 - a. Public Works Team with heavy equipment (wheel loader, backhoe, etc), and chain saw crews.
 - b. Power Crew to identify and remove down utility lines. (Power, Cable, etc)
 - c. Emergency Medical Service or Fire to provide medical support to victims that are located while opening up roads.
 - d. Law Enforcement to provide security for crews.

It needs to be understood that the Pre-Reentry Teams are not Search and Rescue Teams, they are only tasked with opening up roads to gain access so Search and Rescue Teams and Damage Assessment teams can gain access to areas of destruction.

4. Once the decision to permit re-entry has been established law enforcement personnel should set up checkpoints and roadblocks as needed based upon the level of damage that has occurred. Re-entry can proceed as recommended based upon a Phased Re-entry. This can limit primary access to essential personnel and help to manage the number of people entering the disaster area.
 - a. Phase A – Phase A allows the re-entry of agencies and groups that play key roles in restoring normal operations in the impacted area following a disaster. Law enforcement personnel should restrict access during this phase to provide for area safety and security. Phase A agencies and groups may include, but are not limited to, the following:
 - (1) Law Enforcement and security agencies (including private security for facilities and residential communities).
 - (2) Search and Rescue Responders
 - (3) Facility/Industry Emergency Response Teams
 - (4) Debris clearing and removal crews
 - (5) Infrastructure and Utilities Repair Personnel
 - (6) Official Damage Assessment Teams
 - (7) Other personnel at the direction of the County/Municipal Emergency Operations Center's
 - b. Phase B – Phase B allows for the limited re-entry of other critical groups as well as residents and business owners. The local EOC in coordination with public safety personnel should determine when it is safe to begin Phase B entry. These groups may include, but are not limited to, the following:
 - (1) Relief Workers
 - (2) Commodities Points Of Distribution (POD) Teams
 - (3) Health Agencies
 - (4) Insurance Agents

(5) Large Box Store Management and Staff (Lowes, Home Depot, etc...)

(6) Hotel/Motel Staff (to prepare for receiving of State and Federal relief agencies)

c. Phase C – Phase C allows for the limited re-entry of only those residence who can prove they live, own, rent, lease or other wise have a need to be allowed into the restricted areas.

5. If the impacted areas cannot support the return of evacuated residents, temporary housing may be established in non-impacted areas near the disaster area. State and County authorities in accordance with the State Disaster Recovery Plan will make decisions on the location and operation of temporary housing facilities.

6. Residential and nursing homes are **NOT** to bring residents back to the community until all services have been restored to normal. To include power, water, sewer, communications and local suppliers of commodities used by the facilities.

7. In the event of a major disaster declaration, a Joint Field Office (JFO) will be established in or near the affected area. Federal and state officials will work from this facility to support disaster response and recovery operations.

B. Checkpoints and Routes

1. Evacuees will return to the area following primary and secondary evacuation routes.

2. Pre-Established Traffic Control points will be used to verify residents or workers have a need to re-enter a restricted area. Serve as a road block to deny enter of those looking to site see or other undesirable intent.

3. Local law enforcement officers should be primarily responsible for establishing and staffing checkpoints for re-entry into their locality. Local Check points may be supplemented by County, Constables, State and Mutual Aid assistance. Secondary Check Point may be established by local jurisdiction where required.

a. Primary Traffic Control Point;

i. Operational Area 1901 - McClellanville;

- ~ North: Hwy 17 North at Santee River Bridge (*Sheriff*).
 - ~ South: Hwy 17 North at Doar Road, and Willow Hall Rd and Cooter Creek (*Sheriff*).
 - ~ West: Steed Creek and Halfway Creek Rd, and Hwy 45 at Honey Hill Rd (*Sheriff*).
- ii. Operational Area 1902 – Mt. Pleasant / Awendaw;
- ~ North: Hwy 17 North at North at Doar Road (*Sheriff*). and Willow Hall Rd and Cooter Creek (*Sheriff*).
 - ~ South: Hwy 17 North at Ravenel Bridge (*Mt. Pleasant*), I-526 at Wando Bridge (*Mt. Pleasant*).
 - ~ West: Steed Creek and Halfway Creek Rd (*Sheriff*), Guerins Bridge Road at Halfway Creek (*Sheriff*), and Hwy 41 at Wando River (*Sheriff*).
 - ~ Isle of Palms: IOP Connector at Rifle Range Rd (*Isle of Palms*).
 - ~ Sullivans Island at Ben Sawyer Bridge (*Sullivans Island*).
- iii. Operational Area 1903 – James Island / Folly Beach;
- ~ North: (Hwy 171) Folly Rd at Wappoo Cut Bridge (*Charleston*).
 - ~ West: (Hwy 700) Maybank Hwy at Stono River Bridge (*Charleston*).
 - ~ Folly Beach: Folly Road at Bowens Island Road (*Folly Beach*).
- iv. Operational Area 1904 – Johns Island;
- ~ North: Main Road at Stono River Bridge (*Charleston*).
 - ~ East: (Hwy 700) Maybank Hwy at Stono River Bridge (*Charleston*).
 - ~ Kiawah and Seabrook Islands: Betsy Kerrison and Kiawah Island Parkway (*Sheriff*)
 - ~ Wadmalaw Island: Maybank Highway at Brownswood Rd (*Sheriff*).
- v. Operational Area 1905 – Edisto Island;
- ~ North: Hwy 174 at Dawho Bridge (*Sheriff/Edisto Beach*).
- vi. Operational Area 1906 – Hollywood / Ravenel;
- ~ North: Parkers Ferry and Hwy 165 at County Line (*Sheriff*).
 - ~ South: Hwy 174 at Dawho Bridge (*Sheriff/Edisto Island*).
 - ~ West: Hwy 17 at Edisto River (*Sheriff*).

- ~ East: Hwy 17 at Wallace Creek Bridge (*Sheriff*).
- vii. Operational Area 1907 – West Ashley / St. Andrews;
 - ~ North: Hwy 61 at County Line Road (*Charleston/Sheriff*).
 - ~ East: I-526 and Hwy 7 at Ashley River Road (*Charleston*), Hwy 17 at Cross Town (*Charleston*) and Hwy 30 at Hwy 61 (*Charleston*).
 - ~ South: (Hwy 171) Folly Rd at Wappoo Cut Bridge (*Charleston*).
 - ~ West: Main Road at Stono River, Hwy 17 at Wallace Creek Bridge (*Sheriff*).
- viii. Operational Area 1908 – Charleston Peninsula / North Charleston;
 - ~ North: Dorchester Road at County Line (*North Charleston*), Ashley Phosphate at County Line (*North Charleston*), Highway 78 at College Park Road (*Sheriff*), I-26 at College Park Rd (*Sheriff*), Hwy 52 at County Line (*Sheriff*), NAD Road at Railroad tracks (*North Charleston*).
 - ~ East: Ravenel Bridge (*Charleston*), Don Holt Bridge (*North Charleston*), North Rhett in Hanahan at Yeamans Hall Road, Berkeley County (*Hanahan/SCHP*).
 - ~ West: Hwy 30 (*Charleston*), Hwy 17 at Ashley River Bridge (*Charleston*), Hwy 7 at Cosgrove Bridge (*North Charleston*), Mark Clark Bridge at Westmoreland Bridge (*North Charleston*).
- 3. In order to expedite the reentry process, an Identification Verification Area (IVA) should be established close to each checkpoint for people with questionable identification. Every effort should be made to ensure that residents return to their homes as soon as safely possible. Law enforcement may limit the flow of returning traffic to better manage the checkpoints.

C. Identification Procedures

1. Identification procedures are intended to provide guidance for law enforcement personnel who may be directing access to disaster-impacted localities.
2. Residents should have proper identification, such as a driver's license, voters registration, utility bills, property tax receipts, etc; a document that proves residence within the disaster area.
3. Relief workers and business owners should have a company ID card,

and/or Dash Pass with agency information to enter an impacted area.

D. Roadblocks

1. The strategic location of roadblocks is an important part of the reentry process. Roadblocks can be utilized to seal entry points into devastated areas for two main reasons.
 - a. Roadblocks can be used to prevent mass entry of the civilian population, which can clog rescue routes for people in the impacted areas who may require medical attention.
 - b. Roadblocks are a method to help curtail acts of unlawfulness such as looting.

E. Curfews

Curfews may be initiated as a crime prevention measure depending on the intensity of the disaster and the level of damage sustained. The decision to implement a curfew and the duration rest with the local governing body, but said curfews should be coordinated through the Emergency Council to insure continuity among jurisdiction. Curfews may be implemented County wide, regionally or within a municipality depending on the impact of the emergency.

F. Contingency Planning for a Minor Hurricane

A major Category 3 or greater hurricane, involving a large-scale evacuation with thousands of private vehicles moving inland, is the contingency upon which this plan is based. However, an appropriate response to a lesser storm must also be prepared. With a Category 1 or 2 hurricane, potential storm inundation areas will be smaller and the resulting number of evacuees and persons seeking public shelter will be more manageable locally. Special provisions for mass relocation inland and regional traffic control may not be needed.

G. Re-Entry Public Information

The Public Information Office working with the Emergency Preparedness Division (EPD) will provide information to assist business and industry in Charleston County to plan for re-entry procedures and activates back into Charleston County.

Pre-Incidents the Re-Entry procedures will be post on the County Website, as well as will provide businesses with the policy upon request.

Post storm, the Public Information Office will issue press releases to local, State and National Media outlets to inform the public of Charleston County's re-entry policy.

V. RESPONSIBILITIES

A. General

Following a mass evacuation, and the evacuation order has been lifted, the Traffic Control Points for evacuation operations will become Traffic Control Points for re-entry manned by the Law Enforcement agencies as designated in the South Carolina Hurricane plan.

B. Charleston County Emergency Preparedness Division

Coordinate EOC activities to include Evacuation and Re-Entry activities.

C. Charleston County Public Information Officer

Coordinate the Joint Information Center activities to include press releases and public information upon request.

D. Charleston County Sheriff's Office

1. Provide EOC staff to coordinate law enforcement missions pertaining to evacuation and re-entry activities.
2. Provide deputies to man Traffic Control Points and Road blocks.
3. Coordinate with other law enforcement agencies to insure TCPs are manned and assist where required.
4. Maintain security to evacuated areas.

E. Local Law Enforcement Agencies

1. Provide Police Officers to man Traffic Control Points and Road blocks.
2. Maintain security to evacuated areas.

F. South Carolina Highway Patrol

1. Provide Police Officers to man Traffic Control Points and Road blocks.
2. Maintain security to evacuated areas.

G. Public Works

1. Assemble and deploy Pre-Entry Team with heavy equipment to open up primary routes following a disaster.
2. Assist other agencies with pre-reentry operations and damage assessment.

H. Emergency Medical Service and Fire Departments

1. Assemble and deploy Pre-Entry Team to open up primary routes following a disaster and assess areas to trapped and injured victims.
2. Assist other agencies with pre-reentry operations and damage assessment.

I. Businesses, Utilities and Industry

Prior to a disaster affecting the area businesses, utilities, industries, facilities should take step to identify and prepare proper documentation for its employees. Proper credentialing will insure essential staff can prove their need to be allowed to transit the disaster areas following a major disaster to begin recovery operations and provide essential services.

VI. PLAN DEVELOPMENT AND MAINTENANCE

This plan is the principle source for guidance concerning re-entry to Charleston County following an event that forced a significant evacuation of citizen from Charleston County. Overall coordination of this plan will be administrated by the Charleston County Sheriff's Office, the lead Law Enforcement Agency for Charleston County.

ATTACHMENTS

- ~ Attachment 1, Vehicle Dash Pass Guide

ATTACHMENT 1

VEHICLE DASH PASS GUIDE

Following a disaster in Charleston County parts of the County or impacted communities may impose curfews, restrict access to only Public Safety, Residential or Facility Security, Emergency Response Teams, and Utility Repair Crews as part of the re-entry process. It may be necessary to not allow re-entry of residents, site-seers or those with illegal intent into impacted areas until infrastructure repairs and security has been established.

In order to assist Law Enforcement personnel in identifying those individuals who have a need to access or travel restricted areas, EPD provides guidance for issuing Dash Passes. Employees of critical facilities or functions can display these passes in the vehicles to call attention to the fact that they have a need to access secure areas or be in transit during curfew hours.

The Dash Passes do not guarantee access to the entire County. They do identify essential employees that may need to be able to pass through checkpoints to perform pertinent duties required to begin recovery operations.

Dash Passes must be used in conjunction with a company's official identification card that has the employee's picture and basic information, to include the holders name and specific job function or task.

The Dash Pass should include information on how to contact someone having authority from your company or a 24/7 dispatch center.

In order for your company's Dash Pass to be Honored;

- 1) An example of you company's Dash Pass shall be provided to Charleston County Emergency Preparedness Division.
- 2) A list of the employees and their job function or duties shall be provided to Charleston County Emergency Preparedness Division and the list must be up-dated annually.

Passes not on file in the EOC at the Law Enforcement Deck will not be honored.

Attached is an example of the Dash Pass issued to Charleston County Employees. The passes are 8 ½ X 5 ½ inches.

If you have any questions concerning the Dash Pass Program, please contact Charleston County EPD at 843- 202-7403 or email you questions to sjones@charlestoncounty.org. You can mail a copy of your pass and employee list to Charleston County EPD, 4045 Bridge View Dr., North Charleston, SC 29405.

CHARLESTON COUNTY
EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS DIVISION



OFFICIAL VEHICLE

THE DRIVER AND OCCUPANTS OF THIS VEHICLE ARE AUTHORIZED TO PASS THROUGH POLICE OR FIRE RESTRAINING LINES IN CONNECTION WITH OFFICIAL EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS BUSINESS.

CARD NO.

DATE

ISSUED TO

CITY OR COUNTY

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Cathy S. Hayes".

Director of Emergency Preparedness Div.

THIS CARD IS TO BE DISPLAYED ONLY WHILE VEHICLE IS BEING USED ON OFFICIAL BUSINESS IN DISASTER AREAS.

IF VEHICLE PASS IS CHALLENGED HAVE OFFICER CONTACT EPD IMMEDIATELY.

