



Charleston County Emergency Operations Center News Release

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Charleston, Berkeley and Dorchester Counties Move to OPCON 3 at 3 PM Today

Operating Condition 3 means an emergency situation is likely or imminent.

Charleston, Berkeley and Dorchester Counties participated in conference calls at 8:30 a.m. and 11:30 a.m. today, Tuesday, Sept. 2, regarding Tropical Storm Hanna. The call was initiated by the South Carolina Emergency Management Division (SCEMD) and included representatives from several counties.

Based on the information learned in the conference call and the uncertainty of the storm's track, **Charleston, Berkeley and Dorchester Counties will move into Operating Condition (OPCON) 3 at 3 p.m. today, Tuesday, Sept. 2.** The OPCON 3 level means that an emergency situation is likely or imminent. At OPCON 3, there is full or partial activation of the County's Emergency Operations Center.

The public is encouraged to monitor their local news media and to be prepared in case Tropical Storm Hanna moves toward the state's coastline.

Officials from the Tri-county area will stay in close communication with state agencies and other counties and organizations.

Information for the public:

- The Charleston County Citizen Emergency Information Line, (843) 202-7100, and the Spanish Information Hotline, (843) 202-7191, have been activated so citizens can call in and get answers to any questions relating to Tropical Storm Hanna. The emergency information lines will be available until 8 p.m. on Tuesday, Sept. 2. The lines will be open again for calls beginning at 7:30 a.m. on Wednesday, Sept. 3 and will stay open for 24 hours until further notice.

- The following organizations can help anyone with special medical needs make a plan and register for emergency assistance:
 - Special Medical Needs:
S.C. Department of Health and Environmental Control (DHEC) at (843) 953 - 2450
 - Mobility Needs:
Disabilities Resource Center at (843) 225 - 5080.
- Charleston County residents can register for Alert Charleston County, a free program that allows the public to receive phone and text message notifications about emergency situations, such as a chemical spill, an escaped convict, a missing person or a hurricane evacuation order. When notified, citizens will hear a message that gives details on the emergency and includes instructions on any actions they should take. Alert Charleston County. Register online at: <http://alert.charlestoncounty.org>

To download the 2008 Charleston County Hurricane Preparedness Guide, and to keep up to date with County news releases concerning Tropical Storm Hanna, visit www.charlestoncounty.org. Click on the "Are You Ready?" banner on the front page of the Web site to download, print and share:

- The 2008 Charleston County Hurricane Preparedness Guide
- The 2008 Disabilities Emergency Guide

Information in the 2008 Charleston County Hurricane Preparedness Guide includes:

- Definitions and what you need to do during hurricane watches, warnings and tropical storms
- Preparations for your home and your family before the storm
- What you need to have in your emergency supplies kit
- Evacuation information and routes out of Charleston County
- Shelters in Charleston County
- What to do if you don't have transportation – *NEW! Four more pick-up point signs have been posted around the county. Learn now where you need to go!*
- Rules to know and items to bring if you have to bring your pet to the pet shelter
- What to do after a storm, including safety measures and handling debris
- A family communications plan form to fill out
- Important phone numbers

The Operating Condition (OPCON) levels of readiness run from five to one in level of severity, with one being the most severe. This is opposite of how hurricane severity levels run, from one to five, with five being the most severe.

The following is an explanation of each OPCON level, and Charleston, Berkeley, and Dorchester Counties will move to OPCON 3 at 3 p.m. today:

- 5: Day-to-day operations to include normal training and exercises.
- 4: Possibility of an emergency or disaster situation that may require a limited or full activation of the County's Emergency Operations Center.
- 3: Disaster or emergency situation likely or imminent. Full or partial activation of the County's Emergency Operations Center; activate County Emergency Operations Plan.**
- 2: Disaster or emergency situation in effect; maximum preparedness level; full activation of the County's Emergency Operations Center.
- 1: Disaster or emergency situation in effect; full-fledged emergency response operations on-going; highest state of emergency operations.

Visit www.charlestoncounty.org for updated information, news and instructions related to Tropical Storm Hanna.