



Charleston County Emergency Operations Center News Release

Date: September 4, 2008

Release Number: 2917

Charleston County Moves to OPCON 2 at 10 AM Today to Prepare for Tropical Storm Hanna

Operating Condition 2 means a disaster or emergency situation is in effect, County staff is at a maximum preparedness level, and there is full activation of the County's Emergency Operations Center.

Based on the information learned during the 8:30 a.m. conference call with state officials and officials from other counties and the National Weather Service, **Charleston County will move to Operating Condition (OPCON) 2 at 10 a.m. today, Thursday, Sept. 4.**

The OPCON 2 level means a disaster or emergency situation is in effect, County staff is at a maximum preparedness level, and there is full activation of the County's Emergency Operations Center.

Charleston County is currently under a Hurricane Watch. The public needs to monitor their local news media and be prepared as Tropical Storm Hanna moves toward the state's coastline. Tropical storm force winds are expected to reach the state's coast Friday, early to mid-morning, from Edisto Beach northward in South Carolina. However, there is still a chance that hurricane force gusts could be seen on the shore Friday afternoon to evening in the watch area. The threat of tornadoes is low due to being on the west side of the storm. The storm surge is expected to be two to four feet above normal tide levels.

Officials from Charleston County 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 opened at 8 a.m. today and will remain open 24 hours a day 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) staff are now part of the Charleston County Citizen Emergency Information Line and can be reached at (843) 202-7100

- 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>

2008 Charleston County Hurricane Guide:

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

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 County will go to OPCON 2 at 10 a.m. today (Thursday, Sept. 4):

- 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.