



Charleston County News Release

Release Number: 2884

Date: June 2, 2008

Interview Opportunity: *Emergency Preparedness Director Cathy Haynes will be available for interviews today at 10:30 a.m. at the County's Public Services Building (4045 Bridge View Drive, off Leeds Ave. in N. Charleston). Because her schedule is tight, please arrive at 10:20 a.m. in order to get set up for the interviews to begin precisely at 10:30 a.m.*

Hurricane Season Begins — Are YOU Ready?

Charleston County Government announces official 2008 Hurricane Guide and four new Evacuation Pick-Up Points for those without transportation.

Most people know that June 1 marked the beginning of the 2008 hurricane season. And most people have probably heard the predictions for this year, so they realize that there is real potential for a storm to hit the East Coast. But are most people prepared? Are *you* prepared?

Cathy Haynes, Director of Charleston County's Emergency Preparedness Division, wants residents to get their family's emergency plan in place and put together their emergency supply kit prior to a storm.

Now is the time to get ready, and it's easy with the help of the new 2008 Charleston County Hurricane Guide available at www.charlestoncounty.org.

"Charleston County Government is always preparing for a storm and working with other local and state agencies to do so, but everyone has an individual responsibility to get prepared and make sure their family has a plan," Haynes said. "Anyone who lives along the coast is strongly encouraged to make travel arrangements in advance of an evacuation order."

Haynes also reminds the public that they should plan to leave town if at all possible.

"Because of the low-lying areas in our county, we will never have enough safe shelter space for all of the residents who live here. Therefore, we encourage everyone who has the means to leave town to do so and to consider shelters only as a last resort when they have nowhere else to go," Haynes said.

Also, those who have the ability to leave should do so as early as possible.

"You don't have to wait until a voluntary or mandatory evacuation order is issued," Haynes said. "If you can, leave as early as possible to make your trip easier and to help relieve the traffic congestion on our roads."

This year, Charleston County is adding four additional Evacuation Pick-Up Points in the North Charleston area, noted by blue signs, for those who do not have transportation. In the event of a mandatory evacuation, busses will transport citizens from 79 pick-up points across the county to the nearest available Red Cross Shelter.

The four new Evacuation Pick-Up Points that were added for 2008 are:

- Durant and Rivers Avenue (old Piggly Wiggly) – 4117 Rivers Avenue
- Felix C. Davis Community Center (Park Circle) – 4800 Montague Avenue
- Burns Elementary School – 3570 Dorchester Road
- Oak Ridge Plaza (old Piggly Wiggly) – 5060 Dorchester Road

"It is vital for residents in our community who don't have transportation to know where their nearest pick-up point is before the next hurricane approaches our coast," Haynes said. "It takes all of us working together to make sure our citizens and neighbors are prepared and safe."

The public can go to www.charlestoncounty.org and click on the "Are You Ready?" banner on the front page of the County's 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:

- 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 are being posted around the county. Learn now where you need to go!*
- Definitions and what you need to do during hurricane watches, warnings and tropical storms
- Rules to know and items to bring if you have to bring your pet to the pet shelter
- Preparations for your home and your family before the storm
- What you need to have in your emergency supplies kit
- What to do after a storm, including safety measures and handling debris
- A family communications plan form to fill out
- Important phone numbers