

Mark Your Calendars

Operation Lone Star provides free medical services to our communities each year.

Services include:

- Immunizations for children.
- Diabetic screening.
- Blood pressure screening.
- Hearing and vision screenings.
- Sports physicals.

Dental services and vision exams for prescription glasses will be offered at the Palmview and San Juan sites.

Services will be offered in Hidalgo County in Palmview and San Juan; in Cameron County at Manzano Middle School; in Starr County at Ac2E Magnet Elementary School (the old Ringgold Middle School); and in Webb County at JB Alexander High School.

Operation Lone Star is a collaborative project that unites state and county human service agencies, Texas Military Forces, local service groups and volunteers in the largest public health humanitarian effort in the country. It is also a real-time, large-scale emergency preparedness exercise providing medical services and disaster recovery training to state agencies and personnel.



Monday, July 27 – Thursday, July 30
8 a.m. to 4 p.m.

&
Friday, July 31
8 a.m. to 2 p.m.

PSJA High School
805 West Ridge Rd in San Juan
&
Palmview High School
3902 North La Homa Rd in Palmview



COUNTY CONNECTION

HIDALGO COUNTY NEWSLETTER | JUNE 2015

Message from County Judge Ramon Garcia

Hidalgo County has been hard hit by spring storms that have produced record-breaking rain and damaging winds. That is why a local state of disaster was issued by my office and extended indefinitely by Commissioners Court on May 22. Governor Greg Abbott



included Hidalgo County in a state declaration on May 25 and President Barack Obama included Hidalgo County in his disaster declaration for Texas on June 5.

For residents most impacted by recent storms, the severity of the situation that caused the disaster declarations is something with which they live daily. Although county crews from each precinct have been working diligently to alleviate flooding, clear debris and patch roads, their efforts have been hampered by continuing rain. Although, for some families living with storm damage or flooding, it may seem that the county is not acting quickly enough, our Office of Emergency Management informs me that work continues around the clock with the most heavily impacted areas getting the top priority.

If you have suffered damages from recent storms or have flooding in your area, please call the county's hotline at 956-292-7750. This hotline was implemented the week of June 1 – the start of the 2015 Hurricane Season – and is a one-stop shop for residents. Operators will record your information and concerns and direct you to the proper office, department or precinct.

We welcome your calls to the hotline because it helps our Office of Emergency Management track affected areas, address those issues and report back to our state and federal governments on damage. By calling the hotline, residents are assured of the following:

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It only takes one: Residents urged to prepare ahead of time

With Hurricane Season upon us, Hidalgo County officials remind residents to review their emergency plans and kits or to prepare them, if they haven't already.

Hurricane Season is June 1 – November 3.

"The message we want to share is that it only takes one storm," said County Judge Ramon Garcia. "Whether we get one major hurricane or a series of storms with torrential rain and strong winds – as we have seen this spring – the damage can be devastating."

Since mid-April, parts of Hidalgo County have received more than 30 inches of rain.

"We must be vigilant in our preparations," said Office of Emergency Management Coordinator Ricardo Saldaña. "Preparedness starts with us and extends to our families, neighbors, communities and others."

Disaster plans should include ways to reach family; important documents; medication; an evacuation plan; and food, water and supplies to last from three days to a week. A cut-out chart with tips is available on page 2.



"Families should assemble emergency kits well before an emergency," said Saldaña.

"In the event of a hurricane or other disaster, you may need to evacuate at a moment's notice so your kit should be readily accessible to grab and go."

According to Saldaña, flooding and its aftereffects are of special concern this year.

Sheriff honors officers killed in line of duty

The Hidalgo County Sheriff's Office marked the observance of National Police Week and Peace Officers Memorial Day with a Fallen Heroes ceremony on Thursday, May 14, 2015. The ceremony pays tribute and honors those law enforcement officers who have lost their lives in the line of duty.

Sheriff J.E. "Eddie" Guerra hosted the event and was joined by several elected officials and representatives from local, state and federal law enforcement agencies. County Judge Ramon Garcia, who was the keynote speaker,

expressed his deepest gratitude and sympathy on behalf of the county and Commissioners Court to the families of the five fallen deputies who have been killed in the line of duty since 1935.

"As elected officials, our first responsibility is to protect our people – whether in their homes, their neighborhoods, or their communities," said Garcia. "This is not possible without the heroic courage of our public safety officers who by their sacrifices and commitment to duty provide our community with a strong sense of security and peace of mind."

The Hidalgo County fallen officers are: Deputy Sam R. Tidwell, Deputy George Dennett, Deputy Alvin Marcellus Albrecht, Narcotics Investigator Manuel Abelardo Segovia, Jr., and Deputy Benito Eduardo Bravo.

Officials from Hidalgo County Constable Precinct 3, City of Mission Police Department, U.S. Border Patrol, Texas Department of Public Safety Region 3, Texas Game Warden, City of McAllen Police Department and the Willacy County Sheriff's Office also honored their fallen comrades.



County Connection is produced by the Hidalgo County Public Affairs Division

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Federal aid may be available to residents with storm damage

The Hidalgo County Office of Emergency Management announced on June 9 that Hidalgo County residents whose homes or businesses were damaged from recent storms and flooding may be eligible for federal assistance.

Residents who suffered damages from the storms on or after May 4 are encouraged to register with FEMA by calling 800-621-3362.

Once registered, an inspector will then be sent to the resident's home. There is no charge for the inspections.

Residents with damage received from the recent storms and flooding can also call the county line at 956-292-7750.

Funds may be available for home repairs, which may include:

- Structural
- Windows, doors, floors, walls, ceilings, cabinets
- Septic or sewage system
- Well or other water system
- Heating, ventilating, and air conditioning system
- Utilities
- Entrance and exit ways from the home, including privately owned access roads
- Blocking, leveling and anchoring of a mobile home and reconnecting or resetting its sewer, water, electrical and fuel lines and tanks.

Did you know?

The 254 counties in the state of Texas are organized into nine Judicial Districts. The 5th Judicial District houses all Rio Grande Valley counties, including Hidalgo County.

In this district, Hidalgo County holds 11 District Courts, the largest number in the region.

Hidalgo County is one of only 10 counties in all of Texas with a Probate Court and seven County Courts-at-Law. The 30 judges and their staff members strive to provide an accessible, fair, courteous, efficient and innovative system of justice.

HURRICANE Preparedness Checklist for 3 - 5 days

- * First Aid Supplies and prescription medication
- * Canned food supplies and manual can opener
- * Minimum 1 gallon of drinking water per person per day
- * Protective clothing, rainwear, bedding or sleeping bags
- * Batteries
- * Battery powered radio, flashlight, clock
- * Full gas tank and cash
- * Fully charged cell phone with a car charger accessory
- * Pet Supplies
- * Important documents in waterproof bag
- * For more information please scan QR code or visit www.ready.gov



Judge's Letter Continued

1. County workers will visit your property to assess the damage. They may or may not knock on your doors, but they will investigate.
 2. Based on the initial assessment, properties will be placed in a queue. Areas that are hardest hit will have top priority.
 3. A tracking number will be assigned that allows us to follow-up on what was done.
- The standing water, damaged septic systems, and debris are breeding grounds for mosquitoes and pose other health risks. Our Health and Human Services Department, Precincts and Office of Emergency Management are working together, in partnership with our cities and Drainage District, to address the issues.

Residents also must do their part, by clearing debris and keeping drains clear, removing standing water from containers, taking precaution when working or playing outdoors, and having a plan to huddle down or evacuate if instructed to do so.

In closing, I want to express my appreciation to our county staff, Commissioners, and city and community partners who work diligently to keep our communities safe.

The onslaught of rain received in Hidalgo County continued in June. Some areas received 10-15 inches of rain in 48 hours.



Hidalgo County Dares residents to Prepare

Many colonia residents in Hidalgo County took part in this year's Dare to Prepare Fairs throughout the month of June. The fairs offer county residents the opportunity to inform themselves about this year's hurricane season. Put together by local community resource centers and Hidalgo County, the fairs educate and empower the community to make informed and responsible preparations and to alert residents on the importance of preparing for a disaster.

At this year's fairs, residents were educated on how to make an emergency preparedness plan and taught residents about home resiliency planning.

"When disaster strikes, resorting to an emergency preparedness plan can save your life," said Deputy Emergency Management Coordinator Rolando Casas at a recent fair held in Alton. "Identifying and repairing any leaks, cracked windows and structural damage in your home during dry weather can prevent it from succumbing to a severe weather event."



Property Tax Deadline



Delinquent taxpayers: July 1st is the deadline to avoid additional fines and fees.

Stay Connected!

Hidalgo County is home to one of the fastest growing regions in the nation. We provide health and justice services to the approximately 900,000 residents of our county as well as a variety of services offered by our four precinct offices to residents who live outside city limits. We partner with the cities in our county on services, special projects and economic development. We strive to be accessible and responsive to our citizens. We are committed to providing excellent public service through the values of leadership, transparency, collaboration, fairness, respect and fiscal responsibility.



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Scan the QR codes and follow us on social media.

Tune in FRIDAYS at 10 a.m.

WATCH COMMISSIONERS COURT MEETINGS ON YOUR SCHOOL DISTRICT TV STATION CHANNEL 17

Participating Stations: