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March 30, 2018

Thank you for subscribing to my e-newsletter. This week was my son Ryan's birthday. We were so happy to celebrate him as he turned 16.

Ahead of the rain storms that hit our area this week, the City of Houston began a pre-release of water from Lake Houston on Tuesday. The additional precipitation did cause some flooding and most tributaries have crested and started to recede. Please see below for more detailed information on this announcement and a review of the gauge heights before, during and after the storms.

Just this afternoon, the San Jacinto River Authority temporarily closed Lake Conroe due to high levels, submerged objects and floating debris. We will continue to monitor and post any new details.

On Monday, I was in Austin for a Commission on Public School Finance meeting. We listened to 12 hours of testimony from the education community who expressed the need for change to Texas's current public school finance system. I was specifically heartened to hear the various witnesses as well as the commissioners discuss in depth the need to address the current under funding for students with dyslexia in the state.

Tuesday morning, I remained in Austin for the inaugural meeting of the Expenditures work group of the commission. We heard from various experts from across the state and discussed the specifics of the school finance formulas and allocation of funding. We focused on many topics, including: the cost of education index, compensatory education, special education, transportation, the high school allotment and much more. [You can watch a broadcast of the work group meeting here.](#)

My Austin-based staff will be relocated into their normal office in the Capitol extension on Monday, March 26. If you are in Austin, be sure to stop by to check out the new renovations. My staff is always happy to see constituents in Austin. Remember, they can arrange private tours of the Capitol for you and your family, so please be sure to call before your visit!

I hope that you and your family have a great Easter weekend.

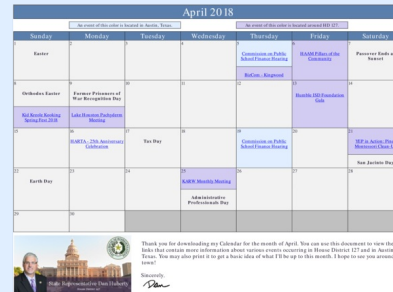
Sincerely,



Upcoming Events

April 2018 Calendar

Download my APRIL 2018 calendar by clicking the link below. This month is full of events in and around Texas that could fun or useful to you and your family! This new format allows you to save the document for printing or sending to your family members.



[Click Here to View and Download This Month's Calendar!](#)

Hurricane Harvey Recovery Resources

Continued Efforts to Recover Lake Houston

On Tuesday, the City of Houston announced the **temporary** lowering of Lake Houston's water level from 42.5 feet to 40 feet, ahead of the extensive rainfall anticipated in the San Jacinto Watershed this week.

The predicted rainfall began late on Wednesday, March 28th, dropping up to 6 inches of water in northern areas of the watershed. This precipitation, coupled with the rainfall actually received in and around Lake Houston, have caused the lake level to raise to 43.86 feet, (as of 12 PM), which is roughly one and a half feet above the normal pool level. Some road and greenway flooding has occurred along the banks of the San Jacinto River, causing several road and park closures.

As rainwater continues down the watershed over the next day, the spillway gates will remain open to continue the release of precipitation to the Ship Channel and Galveston Bay. Lake Houston is expected to return to the normal pool level of 42.5 feet over the weekend.

The City had planned to keep the lake at the temporary level of 40 feet for the remainder of the 2018 hurricane season. This was also in anticipation of future dredging projects. However, after hearing from concerned constituents about the negative effects, the level will now be monitored and only released to 41 feet in advance of future storms.

On the same day that the City began releasing water from Lake Houston, the Harris County Commissioner's Court voted to publish two requests for qualifications specific to the San Jacinto River. Those agenda items, listed below, were approved.

1. Engineering and other services to identify watershed-wide flood risks, evaluate flood mitigation strategies that address those risks, and develop recommendations to enhance the flood warning system and action plans used by emergency managers in the San Jacinto River Basin from its headwaters to Lake Houston in the San Jacinto River Watershed in Precincts 1, 2, and 4.
2. Engineering, environmental permitting, and other services in support of dredging the west fork of the San Jacinto River from IH-69 to Lake Houston Parkway in response to Hurricane Harvey in the San Jacinto River Watershed in Precincts 2 and 4.

Below is a table of the current levels of the main tributaries leading into Lake Houston and the lake itself, since the initial release of water at the beginning of the week, before the anticipated rain storms.

	Rain Amount	9:30 a.m. Fri., 3/30	Level on Thurs., 3/29	Level on Wed., 3/28	Level on Mon., 3/26	Has this tributary Crested?
Lake Conroe	6	202.95 ft	202.69 ft	201 ft	201 ft	n/a
West Fork at US99	3	50.1 ft	51.6 ft	40.56 ft	42.63 ft	Crested at 56.66 ft 5:15 p.m. yesterday and river is receding now.
Spring Creek	4	79.99 ft	86.83 ft	73.96 ft	73.94 ft	Crested at 86.83 ft at 5:30 a.m. yesterday river has continued to recede.
Cypress Creek	4	70.09 ft	79.51 ft	64.35 ft	64.29 ft	Crested at 79.51 yesterday and has continued to recede.
Lake Houston	3	43.82 ft	42.66 ft	40.56 ft	42.63 ft	n/a
East Fork at New Caney	4	57.25	55.45 ft	48.78 ft	46.88 ft	Rise in river is steady and predicted to Crest on Sunday at 7:00 p.m. at 61.6 ft
Lake Livingston	6	131.14	132.8 ft	131.57 ft	n/a	n/a

PRESS RELEASE: SJRA Temporarily Closes Lake Conroe

Lake Conroe Temporarily Closed Due to High Levels, Submerged Objects, and Floating Debris

Effective immediately, the San Jacinto River Authority is temporarily closing Lake Conroe due to high lake levels, the presence of submerged objects, floating debris, and other hazards that could put people's safety at risk.

We recognize that this is Easter weekend, and we will make every effort to fully reopen the reservoir as soon as conditions allow. The lake level has risen to nearly 203' above mean sea level, which is two feet over the lake's normal pool level.



At this level, many docks, bulkheads, small islands, and other structures are fully submerged and create a very dangerous situation for boaters. In addition, high winds and rapidly-flowing water from local streams have resulted in a large amount of floating debris on the reservoir. With bulkheads becoming submerged, lake area residents should also be cautious of electrical outlets and equipment coming into contact with water.

Over the last several days, the Lake Conroe watershed has experienced rainfall totals from five to eight inches. This has resulted in a rapid rise in lake level. SJRA is currently releasing water from the dam in accordance with its operating procedures for the reservoir. The rate of release is currently 6526 cubic feet per second (cfs). The estimated peak inflow into the lake during this event was nearly 30,000 cfs. This means that the operation of the dam reduced the peak flow that would otherwise have continued down the river.

The lake appears to have crested which should minimize how long the lake will remain closed.

Anyone interested in monitoring Lake Conroe levels, releases, rainfall totals, or stream flows can visit <https://sanjacinto.onerain.com/home.php>. For additional information visit our website at www.sjra.net.

UPDATED: City of Houston Reduces Level of Lake Houston



Update from Houston City Council District E:

The District E Office has continued to monitor river and lake levels over the last 48 hours and has compiled the data in the graph from information gathered from the National Weather Service.

The water was reduced in advance of severe weather and will remain at the level it is "filled up" to until the next threat of inclement weather. We understand the effects of this reduction were dramatic. This was never a permanent reduction in the level of the Lake.

This release of water was done while tributaries feeding in to the river were not experiencing local rain fall. We beat the rain and were able to get the water out before it got to the Lake Houston Area. We did not have that benefit during Harvey when we had all gates open well before the storm Thursday, August 25, 2017. We expect normal pool of 42.5 ft. to be restored by tomorrow or Saturday so that shouldn't be an issue for those boating this weekend. We will be continuously monitoring the level of the lake but believe that 41 ft. will be an easier level to manage in the future.

Future releases of water will only occur in the imminent threat of severe weather and to the 41 ft. level not 40 ft. Again, in the future water will only be reduced from 42.5 ft. to 41 ft. in the immediate threat of severe weather.

Clarification: Temporary Reduction of the Level of Lake Houston

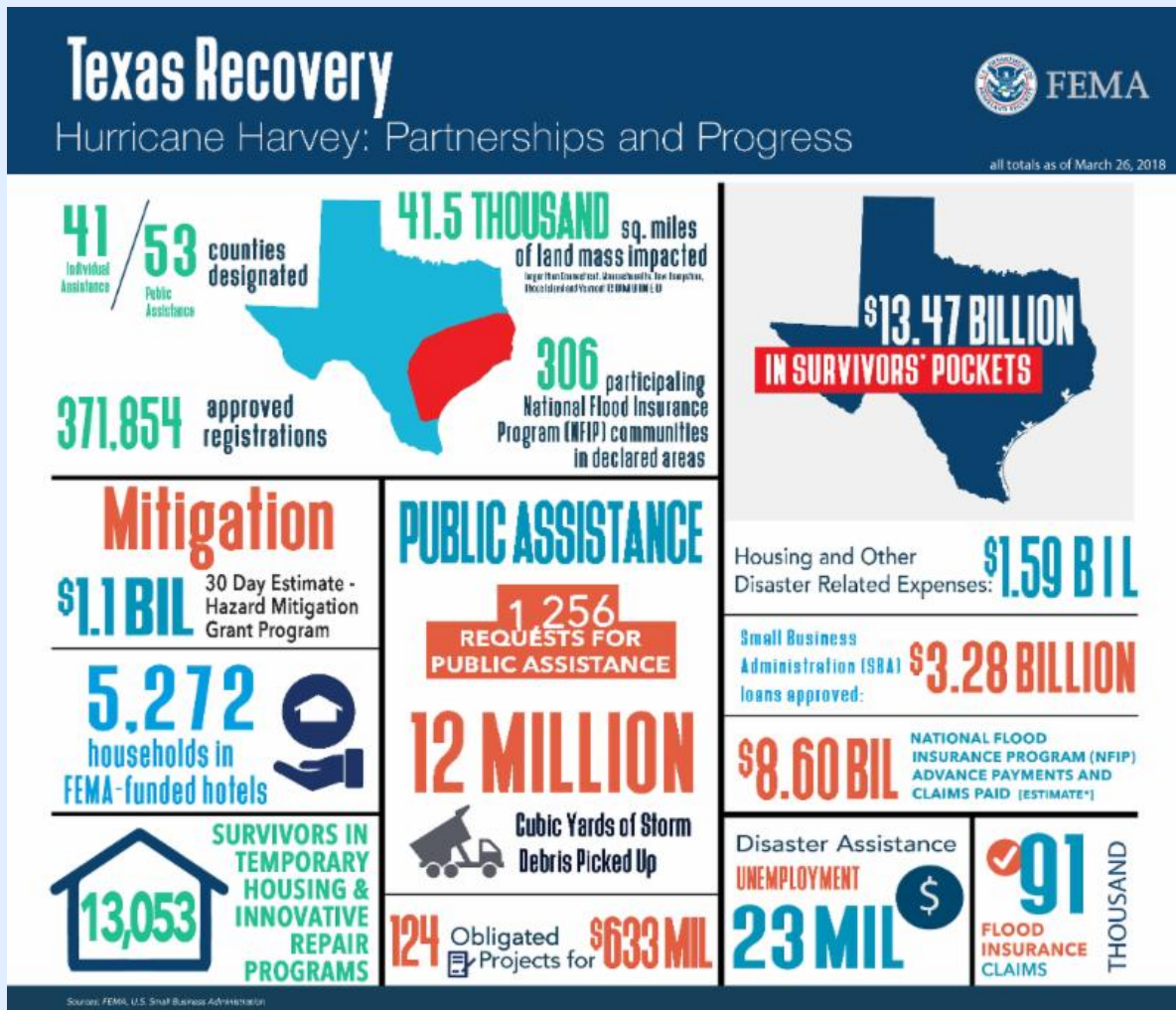
The level of the Lake is temporarily being reduced for seasonal rain events until the river, lake, and interior channels can be dredged. Harris County has approved the request for qualifications for engineering and environmental permitting to support the dredging of the West Fork of the San Jacinto River.

Once the lake is lowered to 40 feet it is the City of Houston's plan to adjust the spillway gates to maintain a level of 40 feet temporarily moving forward this rainy and hurricane season. The lake is currently releasing 7,600 cubic feet per second, and the elevation is 40.52 feet. No major changes in policy have been made. This temporary reduction addresses the immediate concerns of the Lake Houston Community, including Kingwood, Humble, Atascocita, and Huffman.

This lower lake level will continue to be observed while the City works with area partners to address siltation and other coordination efforts with Lake Conroe. The City of Houston will continue to monitor and evaluate water demand, weather patterns and other mitigation activities.

In the event, the City of Houston has a need for additional water, the City has the ability through existing water rights to call water from Lake Conroe and Lake Livingston to meet high demand. For more information, please contact the District E office at (832) 393-3008 or via email at districte@houston.tx.gov.

Texas Recovery Update



Austin Updates

USDE Approves TEA's ESSA Compliance Plan



announced that U.S. Secretary of Education Betsy DeVos has approved the state's Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) consolidated plan. Commissioner of Education Mike Morath issued the following statement in response to the plan's approval:

"In Texas, we are committed to ensuring every child is prepared for success in college, a career or the military. Our state plan reflects a commitment to reinforcing public education outcomes for more than five million schoolchildren while continuing to strengthen the economic future of Texas."

ESSA became law in December 2015, replacing the No Child Left Behind Act. ESSA requires federal review and approval of a state consolidated plan, which provides a comprehensive overview of how each state will use federal funds to advance its own goals and visions of success for students. Specific highlights of the final Texas consolidated state plan include:

- Maintaining rigorous, yet achievable goals for all student groups;
- Creating stronger alignment between all state and federal program areas;
- Shifting the proficiency level for students from the "Approaches" label on State of Texas Assessment of Academic Readiness (STAAR) to the "Meets" label; and
- Better aligning of federal funding with priorities within TEA's strategic plan.

For more information regarding ESSA implementation in Texas and to view the final state plan approved by the federal government, [visit the TEA website](#).

"I am grateful for the strides that Commissioner Morath has taken to ensure that Texas remains on-track for preparing students for the real world. This plan is indicative of the momentous shift in Texas public education. Our state is moving away from the one-size-fits-all method of education and toward a system that allows students to succeed in his or her college, career, or military endeavors."

State Representative Dan Huberty, Chairman of the House Committee on Public Education

Constituent Resources

Need Assistance?

Our office is always ready to assist you. Call or email us and we will do our best to help. Many State Agencies also have hotlines or citizen assistance offices to assist you. That contact information is available at this link, in alphabetical order:

<http://www.lrl.texas.gov/genInfo/stateAgencies.cfm>

Live Updates

All of the relevant information our office has fathered in regard to response and recovery of Hurricane Harvey is posted immediately to our Facebook page. Be sure to "like" us so that you can have the most up to date information. Click the image below to find our page.



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