

University of St. Thomas Policies

HURRICANE PLAN

Policy Number: G.01.03

SCOPE

All staff, faculty, students.

PURPOSE

The official hurricane season for the Houston area is June 1st through November 30th. Although landfall may occur along the Gulf Coast, the campus could experience damage from high winds and flooding from heavy rainfall.

The primary objective of this plan is to outline the over all plan involved in the protection of the University of St. Thomas campus in the event of severe weather conditions, such as a hurricane or tropical storm. The responsibilities of each department are detailed in the implementation section of their respective plans. The precautions that must be taken to maximize the safety of campus personnel are of utmost importance.

DEFINITIONS

For purposes of clarification and simplifying the understanding of the campus plan for preparedness, the university has established three levels of priority that will trigger the appropriate campus response.

POLICY/PROCEDURES

1. Closing

The President of the University or his designated representative **and no one else** will make the decision to do one of the following: cancel classes; close the university; or close the university and evacuate the campus. This decision will be made as circumstances warrant, and in adequate time for faculty, staff and students to prepare offices/labs/rooms and go home or elsewhere during a storm.

Only the Director of Marketing & Communications, Vice President for Marketing & Enrollment Management, Marketing Communications Coordinator, and the Special Assistant to the President may notify the news media in the event of class cancellations, university closings and evacuations. Members of the Crisis Team can send an emergency message via the Emergency Notification System to faculty, staff and students. The following news media will be informed of the appropriate campus status:

KTRH-AM	740 AM Radio	KRIV-TV	Channel 26
KUHF-FM	88.7 FM Radio	KXLN-TV	Channel 45
KPRC-TV	Channel 2	KTMD-TV	Channel 47
KHOU-TV	Channel 11	KTRK-TV	Channel 13
Houston Chronicle			
UST Web site	www.stthom.edu		

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Using the emergency notification system (ENS), the campus community will be notified as to changes in the priority levels.

The three levels and appropriate response guidelines are as follows:

- **LEVEL 1 -**

STUDENTS – Classes are cancelled and non residential students will be directed to leave the campus. Students living in Guinan and Young Halls are expected to follow procedures as outlined in the Residence Life Hurricane Response Plan.

FACULTY – When classes are canceled, faculty members are expected to implement the provisions of their respective department's Hurricane Response Plan.

STAFF - When classes are canceled, staff members are expected to implement the provisions of their respective department's Hurricane Response Plan.

- **LEVEL 2 -**

STUDENTS – The University is closed and all non residential students must leave the campus. Students living in Guinan and Young Halls are expected to follow procedures as outlined in the Residence Life Hurricane Response Plan.

FACULTY – When the university is closed faculty members must leave the campus.

STAFF - When the university is closed, staff members designated as being essential under the provisions of their respective department's Hurricane Response Plan are expected to remain on campus and follow their plan's procedures. All other staff members must leave the campus. If the decision to close the university is made prior to the start of classes, essential staff members are expected to follow their plan's procedures which may involve coming to campus.

- **LEVEL 3 –**

At Level 3 a directive will be issued to evacuate the university, **all** faculty, staff and students, **including those living in Guinan and Young Halls**, are required to leave the campus. **No one will be allowed back in the buildings unless authorized by campus security.**

NOTE:

1. Classes cancelled due to severe weather conditions may be rescheduled as directed by the Vice President for Academic Affairs.
2. Time reporting for staff and administration during the storm period follows Human Resource Policy H.02.05–Weather Emergencies.

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2. Recovery

Essential personnel will be contacted by their supervisor regarding instruction on returning to campus and implementing campus recovery procedures as outlined in their respective department's Hurricane Response Plan. The ENS will announce changes as the situation warrants. The President or his designated representative will advise the appropriate news media once it has been determined that it is safe to re-open the university and for faculty, the rest of the staff and students to return to campus.

3. Responsibilities

The following pages represent a brief outline of suggested items to consider in the respective functional areas. It is the responsibility of each department to provide for the appropriate protection and preparation of their functional space and should be detailed in the respective department's emergency response plan, a copy of which should be forwarded to the President's office as well as that of Facilities Operations.

A. FACILITIES OPERATIONS

1. Prepare a building response plan covering items not mentioned in this plan that would be specific to the campus as well as the Facilities Operations Department updating the plan as necessary and sending the revised plan to the President's cabinet.
2. Check and maintain hurricane emergency supplies inventory.
3. Obtain emergency purchase orders.
4. Prepare buildings and grounds appropriate with LEVEL 1, 2 per the building response plan.
5. When the notification that the campus has moved to LEVEL 3 has been given, Facilities Operations will closely coordinate with Information Technology to shut down or otherwise secure building systems and notify Campus Security when to clear and lock down the buildings. When the Assistant Vice President is satisfied that all building systems are secure, he will give the order for Facilities Operations Staff to evacuate the campus.
6. As soon as the storm has passed and as soon as they are safely able, Facilities Operations personnel are to report back to campus to assess and repair damages and begin to restore order to the campus returning the building systems and functions back to normal in preparation for re-opening the university
7. Report to the VP for Finance and/or President on pre-storm preparation status, recovery operations as well as post-storm status to include the status of each building, utility services and accessibility in and around campus
8. Direct and coordinate all emergency plan operations and university recovery actions through collateral co-ordination with the VP for Information Technology, the VP for Student Affairs and Campus Security.

B. CAMPUS SECURITY

1. Prepare a building response plan covering items not mentioned in this plan that would be specific to the campus as well as the Security Department updating the plan as necessary and sending the revised plan to the President's cabinet.
2. During campus notification LEVELS 1 & 2, the Security office will maintain its normal routine of security operations.

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3. When the notification that the campus has moved to LEVEL 3 has been given, Campus Security will closely coordinate with Facilities Operations to clear and lock down all the buildings AFTER Facilities has shut down or otherwise secured building systems. When the Chief of Security is satisfied that all buildings are cleared and locked, he will give the order for all security personnel to evacuate the campus.
4. As soon as the storm has passed and as soon as they are safely able, security personnel are to report back to campus to evaluate potential security risks and begin the process of returning the campus back to normal.

C. INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (IT)

1. Prepare a building response plan covering items not mentioned in this plan that would be specific to the campus as well as the IT Departments updating the plan as necessary and sending the revised plan to the President's Cabinet.
2. Prepare the information system for shutdown, notify all user groups of impending shutdown and perform shutdown as outlined in the building response plan and execution section of their plan.

D. DEPARTMENTAL REPRESENTATIVES

1. Prepare a departmental response plan covering items not mentioned in this document that would be specific to their department; to include emergency supplies such as plastic bags and tape.
2. Update the response plan as needed and supply a copy to the President's office as well as that of Facilities Operations.
3. Prepare office and/or lab areas as outlined in their departmental response plan.
4. Every department should have a first aid kit supplied by campus health services. Missing kits and/or supplies can be replaced by contacting the Health Promotion and Wellness Services Dept. at extension 3513.

NOTE: Remember to backup your computers prior to unplugging them.

DO NOT UNPLUG YOUR TELEPHONES

Plastic garbage bags can be picked up at the Facilities Operations office.

E. RESIDENCE LIFE

1. Prepare a building response plan covering items not mentioned in this plan that would be specific to the campus, updating the plan as necessary and sending the revised plan to the President's Cabinet
2. Keep Residence Life students informed of the university's expectations appropriate with LEVEL 1, 2 or 3 statuses.

F. AUXILIARY SERVICES

1. Prepare a response plan that delineates the services that will be provided to the campus community appropriate to the LEVEL 1, 2 or 3 statuses, updating the plan as necessary and sending a copy to the President's Cabinet.
2. Keep Residence Life students informed of the university's expectations appropriate with LEVEL 1, 2 or 3 statuses.

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