



HEALTHY LIVING MATTERS

Connecting Policy to the Future



A Houston/Harris County Childhood Obesity Prevention Collaborative

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Call for Volunteers

On Saturday, September 16, 2017, Harris County Public Health (HCPH) will conduct a Community Assessment for Public Health Emergency Response (CASPER) in selected neighborhoods of Southeast Harris County (League City, Friendswood, Webster, Seabrook, Nassau Bay, & El Lago). Volunteers are needed to help conduct surveys to assess how prepared residents were during Hurricane Harvey, and to identify the remaining needs in impacted areas. For more information on how to volunteer, please click [here](#).

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Contact us:

A Note on Hurricane Harvey

Friends,

Harris County and surrounding areas have suffered immense damage from Hurricane Harvey and the following rain event. We here at Healthy Living Matters hope that you and your loved ones are safe. There are many who are still in distress and who will need our assistance as we progress through the recovery period.

Similar to those around the country, we are encouraged and overwhelmed by the incredible support provided by the numerous volunteers who are ready and are currently serving. As we assess what is next for Harris County, we would like to reaffirm our dedication to providing avenues to live a healthy life.

For those who need or would like to provide assistance, please see the list of resources below.

[Harris County Public Health](#)

[Houston Disaster Recovery](#)

[City of Houston Emergency Information](#)

Please contact Mark Solano at msolano@hcphe.org for any inquiries.

Flood Recovery Recommendations

When returning to a home that's been flooded, your house may be contaminated with mold or sewage, which can cause serious health risks. **Dress for safety:** wear gloves, long-sleeved shirts, long pants, eye/ear protection, boots and insect repellent to avoid mosquito bites.

Cleaning up your home

Mold is one of the greatest potential **health risks** from flooding and it can grow/spread to your dry items. Mold can pose a serious health risk for people with existing respiratory (breathing) or weak immune systems. Others may experience **allergy-like symptoms** – runny nose, watery eyes, sneezing, and skin irritation.

- * Clean and sanitize surfaces immediately – within 24 to 48 hours if you can.
- * Discard wet items that can't be repaired such as mattresses, carpet/padding, rugs, upholstered furniture, cosmetics, stuffed animals, toys and books.
- * Air out your house by opening doors and windows.
- * Fix leaks in roofs, walls or plumbing as needed.
- * Bleach is the most common cleaner that kills bacteria, mold, and mildew. To make cleaner, mix one cup of household bleach with one gallon of water.
- * Contact your local HOA, City Councilperson or landlord to find out light and heavy trash days.

Avoid Mosquito Bites

Prevent mosquito bites by using an [EPA registered insect repellent](#) that contains one of the following: DEET, picaridin, IR3535, oil of lemon eucalyptus/PMD or 2-Undecanone. Follow product instructions.

- * **Wear light colored** long-sleeved shirts, long pants, and socks. **Use netting** on strollers, cribs, and carriers. Make sure screens are in good condition and fit tightly in doors and windows.
- * Mosquitoes need water to breed. Empty any containers that may hold standing water.

For additional flood recovery recommendations and more information on health and safety precautions, please click [here](#).

Coping after Disasters

Everyone in Harris County was affected by Hurricane Harvey to some degree. Harris County Public Health encourages residents to recognize trauma and find support.

Emotional and physical responses to disasters include:

- * Anxiety or fear
- * Overwhelmed by sadness or anger
- * Guilty, even if you had no control over events
- * Heroic, like you can do anything
- * Too much energy or no energy at all
- * Disconnected or numb, unable to care or feel
- * Impatient with ordinary problems
- * Stomachaches or diarrhea
- * Headaches or other pains for no clear reason
- * Eating too much or too little
- * Sweating or having chills
- * Tremors or muscle twitches
- * Being jumpy or easily startled
- * Isolating, wanting to be alone more than usual
- * Having trouble sleeping
- * Having difficulty making decisions

Who can we call?

United Way 2-1-1

CALL: 2-1-1 or 713-957-4357

Web: <http://referral.unitedwayhouston.org/>

Staffed 24/7 by navigators who connect us to resources for basic needs and distress support. Multi-lingual.

SAMHSA Disaster Distress Helpline

CALL: 1-800-985-5990

TEXT: "TalkWithUs" to 66746

Web: <http://disasterdistress.samhsa.gov>

Staffed 24/7 by counselors to help us cope and manage stress. Multi-lingual.

For additional information on how to cope after disasters, please click [here](#).

Recovery Efforts

Healthy Living Matters would like to commend and support the ongoing recovery efforts still underway throughout Harris County. Below are some photos capturing these efforts:





From top to bottom: (1) Volunteers from across the state and country help coordinate donations with the Houston Food Bank. (2) Richey Elementary students in Pasadena ISD smile for their first day back in school. (3) Harris County Public Library volunteers set up a pop up library at NRG stadium for evacuees. (4) Dr. Umair Shah, Director of Harris County Public Health canvasses the community of Galena Park and hands out supplies to residents.