



# City of Houston

## Office of Emergency Management

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The City of Houston's Office of Emergency Management (OEM) conducts programs and activities designed to provide City residents with the ability to prepare for, cope with, and recover from the effects of disasters. Housed in the Houston Emergency Center (HEC), OEM is the chief coordinating body for the City's response to various types of manmade and natural disasters.

### Houston's Hazards

Houston is exposed to many hazards with the potential to disrupt the community, causing damage and casualties. Natural hazards include hurricanes, floods, tornadoes and other types of severe weather. As a major petrochemical manufacturing and distribution center, Houston also faces the threat of hazardous material accidents involving the transportation, manufacture and storage of chemicals and hazardous substances.

### Houston's Emergency Plan

To address these potential threats, OEM publishes the City's emergency management plan. This plan provides the framework upon which the City of Houston prepares for, and responds to emergencies. The plan is based on the four phases of emergency management:

- **Mitigation** - Those activities which eliminate or reduce the probability of disaster, or the severity of its impact.
- **Preparedness** - Those activities which governments, organizations and individuals do to save lives and minimize damage.
- **Response** - Those actions to minimize loss of life and property damage during an emergency and provide emergency assistance.
- **Recovery** - Short and long-term activities which restore city services to help communities return to a normal state.

When the City of Houston faces an emergency and the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) is activated, the office works with appropriate city departments, as well as county, state, and federal agencies to effectively and quickly respond, providing for the safety and basic needs of City residents.

### Hazardous Weather Monitoring

Monitoring various hazards is a significant part of the day-to-day OEM operations. This includes continuous monitoring of potentially hazardous weather situations both actively within the city, and those which may impact the city in the near future. Continuous communication with the National Weather Service as well as neighboring emergency management agencies allows for OEM to shape the appropriate response to severe weather hazards.

## **OEM in the Community**

OEM provides public education and training to help City Departments, residents and businesses better prepare for and respond to disasters. This includes attending community meetings, visiting local schools and community groups, and developing and holding training exercises with City Departments and outside agencies.

In the event that a hazard threatens the City, OEM will advise the public through the media, Emergency Alert System, internet ( [HoustonOEM.org](http://HoustonOEM.org) ), and through various social media outlets such as [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).

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For more information on the Office of Emergency Management, please contact Mark Rayne at [mark.rayne@houstontx.gov](mailto:mark.rayne@houstontx.gov) or by phone at 713.884.4501.