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Update on Hurricane Ike

September 12, 2008

AUSTIN - Below is the latest update regarding state efforts in advance of Hurricane Ike.

During the night, Hurricane Ike shifted 12 miles west and increased to 105 MPH. The storm is predicted to be a Category 3 before landfall at around 1 a.m. Saturday morning.

The onset of tropical storm winds began in some areas at approximately 10 a.m. today and the onset of Hurricane winds are expected to begin late this afternoon.

On its current predicted path of travel, Ike's eye will cross slightly west of Galveston Bay and the Houston Ship Channel, creating a storm surge over 16 feet in Galveston Bay, Sabine Lake and Port Arthur, which is expected to put these communities underwater.

Throughout the night, the state's emergency management team directed numerous rescue missions to evacuate citizens with medical special needs from these areas prior to sunrise this morning. Texas Task Force 1 is currently conducting high water rescues along the coast.

Texas Task Force 1 launched rescue mission yesterday evening, evacuating 476 medical special needs patients and some family members by air and ambulances.

Additionally, in the early morning hours, Texas Task Force 1, supported by Texas Military Forces and Department of Defense aircraft, evacuated a total of 70 patients, including ten critical care and ten neonatal patients, from the South East Texas Medical Center in Port Arthur which is projected to end up under 14 feet of water.

For more information, visit the Hurricane Center on the governor's newly-redesigned Web site, <http://www.governor.state.tx.us>.

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