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MAYOR

*City of Charleston
South Carolina*

OFFICE OF
COMMUNICATIONS

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City of Charleston Begins Initial Preparations for Tropical Storm Idalia

Charleston, S.C.—City of Charleston officials continue to monitor Tropical Storm Idalia and have begun making initial preparations for potential local impacts. The city remains at OPCON 3, and Emergency Management is working closely with state and regional officials to monitor the storm's track and coordinate preparation efforts.

Current forecast: At this time, the primary threat to the Charleston area is heavy rainfall and major coastal flooding associated with King Tides. Charleston is currently forecast to receive 4 to 8 inches of rain Wednesday night into Thursday morning, with 8-foot tides projected for Wednesday night.

Tropical storm force winds and heavy rainbands are expected to arrive as early as Wednesday morning.

City plans and preparations: Due to the expected storm impacts, city offices, including all city recreation facilities and the City Gallery, will close at 12 p.m. on Wednesday, August 30. The West Ashley Farmers Market scheduled for Wednesday has been cancelled.

Due to the likelihood of flooding, Stormwater and Public Service Department crews are working to position temporary pumps, clear ditches and drains, and sweep streets in low lying areas.

Additionally, the Parks Department is working to lower water levels in Lake Dotterer and Colonial Lake.

The Police Department has barricades staged in areas of known flooding and will close flooded roadways during the storm, as needed. If possible, citizens are advised to avoid travel during the storm and, as always, should never drive on flooded roadways.

As roads are closed, city staff will update the GIS map linked here: <https://gis.charleston-sc.gov/road-closures-regional/map/>.

The Fire Department has high water vehicles on-hand and stands ready to assist throughout the storm as needed.

As of now, garbage and trash collection is scheduled to run as normal. Crews will continue to monitor conditions and make adjustments, as needed.

The city will shift to OPCON 2 and activate the Municipal Emergency Operations Center (MEOC) in a limited capacity at 8 a.m., Wednesday, August 30 to manage the city response to the storm. Representatives from throughout the city including Police, Fire, Public Service and Parks will staff the MEOC to ensure a quick and efficient response to any issues.

Charleston Mayor John Tecklenburg said, “While it’s still too soon to know exactly what Idalia’s local impacts may be, with heavy rain, winds and King Tides expected, we’ve begun making preparations here in the city. Citizens are encouraged to do the same, and to continue monitoring local media for the latest news and public information announcements regarding the storm.”

Sandbags: From 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Tuesday, the city will have a limited supply of free sand and bags available for residents to build their own sandbags. Residents should bring their own shovels for assembly. Staff will be on-site to provide assistance, as needed.

The self-serve pick-up locations are:

- Bees Landing Recreation Center, 1580 Ashley Gardens Boulevard
- James Island Town Hall, 1122 Dills Bluff Road
- Hampton Park (parking lot near the baseball field), 30 Mary Murray Drive

Parking garages: The following city parking garages will be open to the public to park their cars for free during the storm. Based on the latest forecast, the city currently plans to open gates beginning at 1 p.m., Wednesday, August 30 through 11 a.m., Thursday, August 31.

- Aquarium parking garage (24 Calhoun Street)
- Visitor Center parking garage (63 Mary Street)
- Queen Street parking garage (93 Queen Street)
- East Bay/Prioleau parking garage (25 Prioleau Street)
- 99 West Edge parking garage (99 West Edge Street)
- Charleston Tech Center parking garage (997 Morrison Drive)

Garage openings are for cars only, and do not apply to boats, trailers or golf carts.

Additional information: For the most accurate and up-to-date weather forecasts, residents should stay tuned to the National Hurricane Center and National Weather Service Charleston websites, as well as local media and the FEMA app.

Additional hurricane preparedness information can be found at www.scemd.org. Citizens can also monitor weather and tidal conditions via TideEye, the city's web and mobile friendly GIS tool, linked here: <https://gis.charleston-sc.gov/tideeye/>.

The city's Citizen Services Desk is staffed to answer citizens' questions about storm preparations and can be reached at 843-724-7311.

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