



## A Message from Mayor Wax

August 31, 2017

Another productive day in Rockport. I'm overwhelmed by the outpouring of concern and good wishes from folks all over the country. Couple of things I wanted to share.

1. Rockport Wi-Fi, AT&T, Sprint and other specialists continue to make headway towards increasing bandwidth and providing cellular service throughout the City. Still don't have 100% coverage, but we're making tremendous strides.
2. Garbage Service. Residential trash pickup began today. If your trash was not picked up, please wait another day or so to call the City as the trucks will be filling up at a much faster than the regular routes. We're identifying possible sites for dumpster locations so residents can rid their property of debris in a more timely manner
3. Utilities. The Public Works Department and AEP are still hard at work to resume water, sewer and electricity. The WATER BOIL ADVISORY is still in place. Leaks in the water system have been located and we're in the process of fixing them before our water supplier resumes pressurized service. We're still finding and fixing numerous gas leaks in our natural gas lines, including a major problem with our big line in Aransas Bay.
4. Donations. The Chamber has set up a page on Go Fund Me and is accepting restricted donations for hurricane relief at its office on Broadway. The fund will be managed by John Jackson. Two separate accounts have been set up at 1<sup>st</sup> Community Bank. The first is a restricted account for Rockport's clean-up efforts and rebuilding. The second is for City of Rockport Employees, who sustained damage or total loss. They put the safety of residents ahead of their own personal needs.
5. Government Assistance. Reminder that the Small Business Administration is open to assist businesses with loans, rebuilding and vital information. They will be operating out of the former Public Works Building located at the corner of Laurel and Gagnon. A FEMA office is at the First Presbyterian Church.
6. National Exposure. Today, Vice President Pence, U.S. Transportation Secretary Elaine Chao, Secretary of Energy Rick Perry, Governor Jim Abbott and other federal and state officials toured Rockport and participated in our ongoing clean-up process. Additionally, media personality Kerri Kasem visited Rockport and provided a first-hand report of the situation on the nationally syndicated Joe Pags radio show, while also encouraging listeners and followers of her Facebook page to contribute specifically to relief efforts in our community.

7. 911. We are receiving an inordinate amount of non-emergency calls on our system. Wellness checks and relative location requests should be directed to the Red Cross.
8. Shelter. Refugio has a full amenity facility and has room for an additional 200 individuals. Please call Refugio County's Emergency Manager for details before heading over there.
9. Electricity. September 8 is a very important date for the City. That is when AEP is scheduled to resume electric services. It certainly hasn't been easy, but it's comforting to know when things may start to get back to "normal."
10. Local Assistance, Donations and Volunteering. 902 E. Main Street, the current Church Unlimited and former site of the First Baptist Church between S. Live Oak and S. Magnolia, is the headquarters of a volunteer and relief effort for individuals and families. The lead agencies for this activity are Church Unlimited, Operation Blessings and Team Rubicon, a nonprofit association of military veterans committed to undertaking physical tasks. Aransas County residents, who may need debris removed, home repair, clothes, bedding, etc, will be interviewed and matched with appropriate agencies or volunteers. Individuals, volunteer groups and agencies will be asked for the specifications of their donation and a match will be undertaken.
11. Special Emergency City Council Meeting. This will be held on Friday at 1:30 pm at the Rockport Service Center, located on the west side of the Bypass access road between Pearl and Market. An agenda has been posted on the web site. As always, our City Council meetings are open to the public.
12. Rebuilding. If you have suffered significant damage and are rebuilding, you will need to obtain a building permit. You may use this link: <https://rockport.seamlessdocs.com/f/CQcce> or go to the City's Web site and click on Building Department under the Departments tab. We will be posting more information about post flood requirements in the next few days.
13. City Hall and Operations. Just a reminder that while City offices are closed due to damages, there are a great number of employees working behind the scenes. This includes members of our Public Works, Parks, Police and Public Safety Staff. And, a "satellite" City Hall has been in operation in Bastrop since last Friday to answer calls, relay information to us in the Emergency Operations Center, and coordinate communication on our web site and with social media pages.

I know I've said it before, but it bears repeating – we will not be forgotten. National and state officials continue to draw attention to our plight and rebuilding efforts by their visits. Their support is not diminished because of what's happened further north along the coast.