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Hyde County, NC

PRESS RELEASE: September 7, 2017

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Hurricane Irma Press Release #1

Hyde County officials are closely monitoring Hurricane Irma and its potential track. As of this afternoon, we do not anticipate needing to evacuate any part of Hyde County but residents and visitors need to keep in mind that small track changes can result in greater impacts for our area. Hyde County officials have discussed potential triggers for the issuance of emergency declarations and orders, but based on the current official forecast we do not anticipate that those thresholds will be met and no recommendations are under consideration at this time.

Residents and visitors should monitor weather reports and be aware of any updated watches and warnings issued by the National Weather Service. Please make sure you have multiple ways to receive weather alerts, as there is the potential for severe weather during Irma's trek inland. In addition, everyone needs ensure that their household hurricane preparedness plans are in place and that they are prepared to act should the track shift more toward Eastern NC.

Hurricane Irma is expected to track toward southern Florida over the weekend, then along the East Coast of Florida and Georgia on Monday. While it is too early to determine what, if any, direct impacts we could see from Irma, long period swells are already being observed. The threat of dangerous surf and strong rip currents exists along the beaches of Eastern North Carolina and they are expected to persist through early next week. Individuals visiting the beaches of Ocracoke need to be aware that National Park Service lifeguard services ended on Labor Day weekend and take the following precautions:

- If caught in a rip current remain calm. Don't fight the current. Swim in a direction following the shoreline. When out of the current, swim back to shore. If tired, float or tread water until out of the rip current. If you are unable to escape, face the shore and call or wave for help.
- Shore break occurs when waves break directly on the beach. The most common injuries associated with strong shore break are neck and back injuries, which most often occur when the powerful surf throws a swimmer or surfer head first into the bottom. It is extremely important to protect your head and neck whenever you are in breaking waves by keeping your hands in front of you at all times.

Keep in mind that we are in the peak of hurricane season and it is prudent to be prepared. The National Hurricane Center has some great information on hurricane preparedness at <http://www.nhc.noaa.gov/prepare/ready.php> We recommend everyone be aware of their own personal needs and always be prepared.

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