



Coast Guard Sector Houston-Galveston Marine Safety Information Bulletin 13-24

Date: 06/04/24

Time: 1130

Severe Weather Safety Planning For Vessels and Facilities

The 2024 Hurricane Season officially starts on June 1, 2024. All facilities and vessels in the Houston-Galveston Captain of the Port (COTP) Zone are encouraged to review their severe weather plans and begin preparations for the hurricane season.

Sector Houston-Galveston has instituted five Port Conditions within our Hurricane and Severe Weather Plan. As the COTP, I intend to issue Marine Safety Information Bulletins (MSIBs) and broadcasts declaring the Port Conditions with further requirements and instructions for vessels and facilities, as severe weather approaches. Since harbors along the Gulf coast may not provide adequate safe refuge for approaching storms, I may direct all capable sea-going vessels to make timely departures from port ahead of Tropical Storm conditions, as necessary. The five Port Conditions are:

- Port Condition Whiskey:** 72 hours prior to arrival of tropical storm conditions;
- Port Condition X-Ray:** 48 hours prior to arrival of tropical storm conditions;
- Port Condition Yankee:** 24 hours prior to arrival of tropical storm conditions;
- Port Condition Zulu:** 12 hours prior to arrival of tropical storm conditions;
- Post-Storm Recovery:** COTP will set after a storm has passed once the situation allows.

VESSELS: All commercial vessels shall follow the Heavy Weather Port Conditions listed below. It is imperative that “Declaration of Intent to Remain in Port” are submitted for all vessels requesting to remain in port. Submitting timely declarations is also essential. While submitting a declaration may not necessarily guarantee approval to remain in port, it will give my office the visibility to properly review the proposed request, assess the risks, provide situational awareness of what vessels will possibly remain in port for post storm accountability, and ensure facilities are fully aware of the vessels at their docks that are intending to remain in port.

Following a storm’s passing, and once the port is reopened, vessels returning to port are required to resubmit a Notice of Arrival as per 33 Code of Federal Regulations Part 160, and this office will rescreen each vessel prior to reentry. Post storm, vessels may also be required to fill out the “Vessel Post Storm Self-Assessment Checklist.”

FACILITIES: All regulated commercial port facilities shall follow the Heavy Weather Port Conditions listed below. All containers, storage tanks, pallets, and other items/equipment that could create a risk/hazard in a high wind environment shall be secured, as necessary, in accordance with regulations, industry standards, and best practices.

Waterfront facilities should conduct pre-storm surveys and post storm emergency surveys of their docks as soon as practical if there is reason to believe that bottom conditions have changed. These surveys will help determine whether water depths have been reduced, and whether ship traffic will be able to safely proceed following a storm’s passing. Post storm, port facilities may be required to fill out the “Facility Post Storm Self-Assessment Checklist.”

SUBJ: MARINE SAFETY INFORMATION BULLETIN 13-24

Port Condition	Expected Actions
<p>WHISKEY (72 hours prior to arrival of tropical storm conditions):</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Initiate vessel and facility severe weather plans. - Regulated facilities must submit Pre-Storm Checklist. - Commercial self-propelled vessels >500 GT requesting to remain in port shall submit “Declaration of Intent to Remain in Port”. - Vessels >500 GT that intend to remain in Galveston Fairway Anchorage shall notify COTP using “Declaration of Intent to Remain in Port”. Vessels will not be permitted to remain in Bolivar Anchorage if Condition Yankee is set. - Ocean going vessels begin making plans for departure. - Reminder: Port Closure (ZULU) may be set 12 hours ahead of expected arrival of tropical storm conditions.
<p>XRAY (48 hours prior to arrival of tropical storm conditions):</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Departing orders for vessels without approval to remain in port shall commence. - Commence clearing vessels from Bolivar Anchorage. - Suspend bunkering and lightering. - Suspend all cargo transfers when winds reach 40 mph. - Disconnect transfer hoses/arms when winds reach 50 mph. - Smaller vessels shall seek shelter in preparation for possible port closure. - All containers stored near flood-prone areas should be moved. - Reminder: Port Closure (ZULU) may be set 12 hours ahead of expected arrival of tropical storm conditions.
<p>YANKEE (24 hours prior to arrival of tropical storm conditions):</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Suspend all inbound vessel transits. - Inland tows are to be properly moored. - Regulated facilities shall secure or remove all missile hazards, dangerous cargo, containers and/or pallet stacks. - Regulated facilities shall press up storage tanks to reduce wind damage. - Reminder: Port Closure (ZULU) may be set 12 hours ahead of expected arrival of tropical storm conditions.
<p>ZULU (12 hours prior to arrival of tropical storm conditions):</p>	<p>Port Closed to all transits.</p>

All documents (checklists, forms, etc) mentioned in this MSIB can be found on Sector Houston-Galveston’s Homeport page under [Local Contingency Plans](#). Please contact Sector Houston-Galveston WWM Division via houstonwwm@uscg.mil or the Command Center at (866) 539-8114 if you have any questions.



Captain, United States Coast Guard
Captain of the Port