



# City of Philadelphia

## MAYOR'S OFFICE OF COMMUNICATIONS

Friday, August 26, 2011

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### MAYOR NUTTER ENCOURAGES CITIZENS TO PREPARE FOR HURRICANE IRENE

*Philadelphia, August 26, 2011* – The City of Philadelphia continues to prepare for Hurricane Irene and its potential impact on Philadelphia. The Emergency Operations Center will open on Saturday, August 27 at 6 p.m. to monitor the storm and coordinate the City's response and recovery activities. The City will not issue an evacuation order; however, citizens should evacuate if they are in a potentially dangerous situation and proceed to a City shelter or other safe location. The City's 311 Call Center is currently open 24-hours through Monday, August 29. SEPTA will suspend all transit services beginning at 12:30 a.m. on Sunday. All City park and recreation centers will close at 6:00 p.m. on Saturday.

"This is a dangerous storm, and I want to urge our residents to exercise extreme caution," said Mayor Michael A. Nutter. "Residents and businesses in low lying areas should prepare immediately. If you need to evacuate, please leave as quickly as possible for your own safety."

The National Weather Service is forecasting that Irene will be a Category One hurricane when it arrives along the coast of New Jersey. As a result, Philadelphia can expect:

- Rainfall amounts between six and nine inches.
- Sustained winds 50 - 60 mph with gusts reaching 70 mph.
- Rain could start as early as tonight ahead of the hurricane.
- Heavy rains could affect Philadelphia through Sunday.
- Heavy winds could affect the city Saturday night into Sunday. High winds may continue after the storm passes. The highest winds will be felt Sunday afternoon.
- Flooding of creeks and streams will likely begin on Saturday night.
- Significant localized flooding on roadways, flooding of streams, and flooding along the Schuylkill River.

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Philadelphia has many flood prone areas, including but not limited to:

- Cobbs Creek and the marsh lands in the southwest sector of the City;
- Other City creeks & streams including Pennypack, Poquessing, Tacony, Frankford, and Wissahickon Creeks;
- Main Street Manayunk;
- Portions of the Philadelphia Naval Base;
- Delaware River which is usually first observed along Delaware Ave & Ben Franklin Bridge;
- In the Northeast where Linden Avenue meets the Delaware; and
- Kelly and Lincoln Drives.

If you live in an area with a history of flooding, plan now to stay with family or friends whose homes are not prone to flooding for the length of this storm and until the flooding threat subsides.

The City will open shelter operations on Saturday at 6 p.m. at the following locations:

- Bartram High School, 2401 S. 67<sup>th</sup> Street
- Lincoln High School, 3201 Ryan Avenue
- Roxborough High School, 6498 Ridge Avenue

Sustained tropical storm force winds could cause downed trees, downed power lines, as well as the disruption of phone and cable service.

If a Power Outage Occurs:

- Keep a battery-operated radio tuned to local news for updates.
- Disconnect or turn off all appliances that would otherwise go on automatically when the power comes back on. If several appliances start up at once, they could overload the circuits.
- To prevent food spoilage, keep refrigerator and freezer doors closed as much as possible.
- Never touch or go near downed power lines.

Prior to the storm, Liam O’Keefe, Deputy Managing Director for Emergency Management, encourages residents to check on loved ones and neighbors, especially seniors and those with special needs, who may need special assistance or care during the storm. Also make sure you have the necessary supplies for a Shelter-in-Place Kit or an evacuation Go Bag.

A Few Items to include:

- Non-perishable food like granola bars and energy bars
- If you use canned foods, make sure you have a manual can opener.
- Have a supply of bottled water for everyone in your home.
- A battery-powered radio with extra batteries
- Flashlights with extra batteries
- First-aid kit
- If you take medication, make sure you have an adequate supply for the next several days.

A complete list of emergency supplies can be found on the Philadelphia Office of Emergency Management’s website, [www.phila.gov/ready](http://www.phila.gov/ready). Remember to stock supplies for everyone in your household including your pets.

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Do not travel, unless it is absolutely necessary or an evacuation order is called.

- Do not attempt to walk across flood water more than knee deep.
- Never drive through flooded roadways. Just two feet of moving water can sweep a Sport Utility Vehicle (SUV) off the road.

While Philadelphia's 311 call center will be operational 24 hours a day through Monday, August 29, there are several ways to stay updated on the latest storm and emergency information.

- Stay tuned to local news for updates.
- Sign up for ReadyNotifyPA, the region's emergency text and email alert system at [www.phila.gov/ready](http://www.phila.gov/ready) or texting PHILA to 411911 from your cell phone. Future updates on flooding will be sent to the Weather Warnings groups and the River - Schuylkill at Philadelphia groups.
- Monitor the National Weather Service forecasts at <http://weather.gov/phi>
- Check Channel 64, the City of Philadelphia's Government Access Channel

For additional information on emergency preparedness or for the latest storm information from the City of Philadelphia, visit [www.phila.gov/ready](http://www.phila.gov/ready).

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