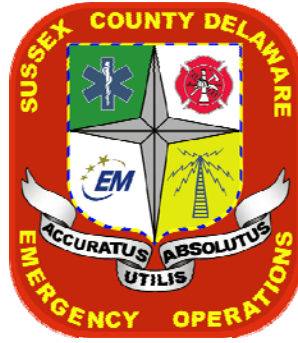


Joseph L. Thomas
Director
(302) 855-7801 Office
(302) 855-7805 Fax
(302) 855-7803 Office After Hours
(302) 855-7800 Fax After Hours



Sussex County
EMERGENCY OPERATIONS CENTER
21911 RUDDER LANE
P.O. BOX 589
GEORGETOWN, DE 19947

Sussex County now under hurricane watch

Hurricane Earl still expected to pass off Delaware coast, but 40 mph winds, large waves, beach erosion remain greatest threat

**FOR IMMEDIATE
RELEASE**

**1230 Hours, Wednesday
Sept. 1, 2010**

The National Hurricane Center has issued a hurricane watch for all of Sussex County, as Hurricane Earl continues its journey toward the mid-Atlantic region and promises to bring with it gusty winds, large waves and beach erosion by late Thursday into Friday.

Forecasters continue to call for the center of the Category 3 storm, now with sustained winds of 125 mph, to pass approximately 170 miles off the Delaware coast late Friday morning or early Friday afternoon, before quickly departing the region later in the evening. In its wake, skies should turn sunny for Saturday and the rest of the Labor Day weekend, with temperatures in the 70s.

Sussex County's coastline, though, will nonetheless feel some of Hurricane Earl's wrath in the next 48 hours, with 35 mph to 40 mph winds, 5- to 10-foot waves in the surf zone, deadly rip currents, minor tidal flooding and as much as an inch of rain. Because the storm's structure is so tightly wrapped, inland locations may see nothing more than breezy and drizzly conditions.

The Sussex County Emergency Operations Center again reminds the public to prepare in advance of the storm. Have a supply kit ready, and know where you might relocate in the event an evacuation is ordered.

"The message to the public remains the same: take this storm seriously, and prepare yourselves in case conditions turn out to be more serious than the current forecast predicts," said Joseph Thomas, Sussex County EOC

Continued

Continued from previous page

director. “We still expect this storm to spare the region its greatest effects, but forecasts can change very rapidly, so everyone should make the necessary preparations while they still can.”

Forecasters believe Hurricane Earl’s current predicted track will keep the heaviest rains and winds well of the coast, but some minor tidal flooding is possible in low-lying areas along the oceanfront and near the mouth of Delaware Bay. Rough surf, rip currents and beach erosion continue to pose the greatest threat to the area, beginning in advance of Earl and lasting throughout the weekend as the storm departs and Tropical Storm Fiona churns farther out in the Atlantic.

Sussex County reminds residents and property owners to secure loose objects, such as lawn chairs and trash cans, to prevent storm winds from turning those items into potential projectiles. Also, residents in low-lying tidal areas should make sure submersible pumps are working and check storm drains to ensure they are clear of debris.

The Sussex County EOC encourages residents and visitors to continue monitoring the tropics and conditions as they deteriorate. For updates, stay tuned to local television and radio stations, the Sussex County EOC Web site at www.sussexcountype.gov/services/storm, and the County’s Twitter feed at www.twitter.com/sussex_pio. The public should also monitor the National Weather Service, at www.nws.noaa.gov/er/phi, for the latest forecast.

Sussex County is encouraging those planning to visit the area for the upcoming holiday weekend to carefully monitor conditions and exercise caution if going out onto local beaches. Swimming may not be advisable in the days ahead. For those who do venture into the water, always swim where lifeguards are present and obey any advisories or closures.

For helpful tips on what to do in preparation for a hurricane, including evacuation maps and preparedness brochures, visit www.sussexcountype.gov/services/storm.

For more information, please contact the Sussex County EOC at (302) 855-7801.

###

Media calls should be directed to EOC spokeswoman Debra Jones at (302) 855-7801 or Sussex County Chief of Public Information Chip Guy at (302) 854-5000.