**Virginia Emergency Operations Center**

**HURRICANE SANDY**

**Talking Points, Oct. 26, 2012, 1 p.m.**

**Potential Impact to Virginia**

* Citizens need to prepare now for a major weather event that starts Saturday and lasts at least through Tuesday.
* The storm will have a strong wind impact.  The eastern third of Virginia could experience sustained tropical storm force winds (39-73 mph) for more than 48 hours.  Flooding in low-lying coastal areas is expected.
* Downed trees and extensive power outages are likely.
* Heavy rain will start Saturday afternoon with amounts of up to eight inches possible along coastal Virginia and extending west toward Interstate 95.
* Residents in western and southwestern Virginia could experience high wind gusts and snowfall.  All areas will have colder temperatures.

**State’s Response**

* The governor declared a state of emergency Friday, Oct. 26, to help quickly get supplies, equipment and staff to those who need it.
* At this time, there are no plans to reverse lanes on Interstate 64.

**What should residents be doing now?**

* Stay tuned to local TV and radio stations for instructions and information.
* Make sure your family members, friends and neighbors are prepared for an extended weather event.
* Have flashlights and extra batteries, a battery-powered and/or hand-crank radio and extra batteries in case power goes out.  Have food that does not need refrigeration and one gallon of water per person per day.  Other important items are a first aid kit and medications, blankets and other supplies ([www.ReadyVirginia.gov](http://www.ReadyVirginia.gov)).
* Those in eastern Virginia who live in low-lying areas should be ready to evacuate if told to do so by local officials.

**Traffic Information**

* Real-time road closures and traffic conditions are available by dialing 511 or visiting [www.511Virginia.org](http://www.511Virginia.org).
* Local weather conditions may cause bridges and tunnels to become unsafe.  Based on weather conditions, many bridges and tunnels may be physically closed to restrict their use.  If a facility is not barricaded, gated or otherwise closed to traffic, this does not mean the bridge or tunnel is safe for passage.  Motorists should consider their personal safety before using these facilities during severe weather.

**State and federal preparations**

* The Virginia Emergency Operations Center is coordinating the state’s response with increase staffing 24 hours a day.
* Virginia State Police personnel have been placed on stand-by and will be pre-positioned to the areas where they will be needed based on the projected path of the storm.  The Virginia State Police Swift Water Rescue Team is standing by.
* Chainsaw crews from the Virginia Department of Forestry are standing by with emergency response personnel to help with debris removal.
* Virginia Department of Transportation crews are ready to clear roads and ensure roads are safe for travel.
* The Virginia National Guard has been authorized to bring personnel on state active duty and begin prepositioning resources.
* The Virginia Department of Health is coordinating with hospitals and long-term care facilities to ensure they are prepared for storm impacts.

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