

STATE AND LOCAL

Hurricanes

Computers aid storm planning

By HADDON JOHNSTON
Reporter

SLOSH is the newest method of hurricane studies — without it, hurricane planning would not be as effective.

The National Weather Service's computer model, SLOSH, (Sea, Lake, and Overland Surge from Hurricanes), is the basis for hurricane awareness and safety along the Texas coast, and helps researchers inform others on how to lessen the effects of potentially damaging storms.

In Texas, the Governor's Division of Emergency Management (DEM), is responsible for public awareness and storm planning. However, since 1979, researchers at Texas A&M have been interpreting the mathematical models of hurricanes for the DEM.

These computer-simulated storms enable A&M researchers to estimate hurricanes' characteristics and the damage they might bring. The three study phases of hurricane forecast in Texas — vulnerability, evacuation and contingency — are studied in five designated "problem" areas along its coast.

Carlton Ruch, research scientist and director of the A&M program, says the five major bay areas which constitute hurricane basins are: Brownsville, Corpus Christi, Matagorda, Houston/Galveston and Lake Sabine.

The SLOSH models interpreted at A&M are taken from computer printouts furnished by the National Hurricane Center's office in Miami, Fla.

"The federal government came up with some programs for better planning to mitigate the effects of hurricanes and we (research division of the architecture college) became involved," Ruch says.

"The hurricane research done at A&M is unique in Texas," Ruch says, "because we prepare and coordinate studies for the DEM."

Ruch and his staff receive a series of printouts for an area, extract all relevant data from it, and prepare emergency management programs in conjunction with officials in each area. The programs are distributed along the Texas coast.

These programs aid public awareness by showing zones susceptible to flooding and damaging winds, and the time required for evacuation of each area.

Plans for evacuation and vulnerability are well developed, but the hurricane contingency plan is relatively new. All plans are updated every five years.

"We work with local governments to find out how best to organize and plan to minimize the effects of hurricanes," Ruch says.

The three study phases should be carefully considered by each emergency management director (the mayor or county judge). The director should be aware of all aids available in making any evacuation decisions, Ruch says.

The key aids are utilized by the DEM based on the research at A&M.

"We're not like a chair of wisdom with all the answers," Ruch says, "our position here at A&M is to provide state-of-the-art estimates that are better than guesses."

Bob drenches Florida coast

Associated Press

MIAMI — Tropical Storm Bob drenched the southeast Florida coast Tuesday night as forecasters warned it was not expected to dissipate during the next few days and could even gather strength over the warm Atlantic waters.

"We are not forecasting fadeout. It's hard to say where it's going to go in the next few days," said National Hurricane Center forecaster Gil Clark.

No injuries resulting from the high seas, gusts of 40-50 mph and torrential rains that caused some flooding were reported on Florida's coasts.

Bob, the first of the 1985 Atlantic hurricane season's storms to hit land, waded ashore late Tuesday morning along the southwest Florida coast.

The sustained winds of 46 mph punished beaches and temporarily closing some coastal roads before the storm moved east.

As of 9 p.m. EDT, Bob's broadening center was moving toward the Atlantic, for overnight, the weather service said.

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Professor says B-CS area's concern is rainfall

By BRETT MCGLAUN
Reporter

The heart of the hurricane season is fast approaching. Although Bryan and College Station are not as vulnerable as coastline cities, residents can take measures to prepare for bad storms.

Dr. James Scoggins, professor and head of the meteorology department at Texas A&M, says August is the month with the most hurricane activity.

"Over the past 30 years, August is the highest with September close to that," he says.

Scoggins says that by the time a hurricane has reached this area it has lost most of its energy — the only thing Bryan-College Station residents have to worry about is the heavy rainfall.

"People should be prepared for flooding and moderate winds, but the number one concern is flooding," Scoggins says.

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration suggests a check list of things to do before a possible flood:

- Keep a flashlight and candles where they can be found.

- Make sure first aid supplies are available.

- Keep a stock of food which requires little or no cooking or refrigeration.

- Make sure there is a portable radio with the candles and flashlight.

And, if a storm does develop with the potential for flooding:

- Check the status of food, flashlight batteries and first aid supplies.

- Tune in to local radio and television stations for storm progress.

- Put gas in the car — just in case.

Local radio and television stations work in cooperation with national and local weather services to keep people up to date on severe weather conditions. They use terms such as flash-flood watch and flash-flood warning to evaluate flood situations.

If a watch is issued, the potential for flooding in a specified area is present. And if a warning is issued, flooding is occurring and warrants prompt reaction.

MADD expanding free ride program

Associated Press

HOUSTON — A Houston-area chapter of Mothers Against Drunk Driving says it will expand an experimental program offering free cab rides year-round for intoxicated people.

Twenty-five local businesses that serve alcohol will participate in the program, sponsored by the Yellow Cab Co. and MADD's Harris

County chapter, said organizers for the new service.

MADD has sponsored the free cab ride program on New Year's Eve for the past four years but will now offer it throughout the year, said Bill Killingsworth, director of the project.

Local businesses that serve alcohol pay \$400 if they wish to participate in the program, Killingsworth said. The businesses then receive ride vouchers that they give to

drivers when a client needs a ride. Yellow Cab then bills MADD for the service.

The program has been offered on a test basis since February, but Killingsworth said it was so successful that MADD is trying to recruit more business members.

Last New Year's Eve, 850 people took advantage of the ride vouchers, and not one drunken driving fatality was reported for the first New Year's

Eve in several years, Killingsworth said.

Local club managers say they've found the program to be successful and financially feasible.

"We were probably paying well over \$400 a year for cab fares before we joined this program," said Henry, whose club paid for individual taxi rides before joining the MADD project.



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What's up

Wednesday

MSC GROVE 85: presents "Animal House" at 8:30 p.m. at The Grove. Admission is \$1 with a student ID and \$1.50 for non-students.

STUDENTS AGAINST APARTHEID: is meeting at 7:30 p.m. in 120 Heldenfels. Plans to increase local awareness of the problem of apartheid in South Africa will be discussed.

MSC OPEN HOUSE COMMITTEE: is having a meeting for anyone interested in membership in 352 MSC at 7:30 p.m. Leadership positions are available.

TAMU SAILING CLUB: is meeting at 7 p.m. in 601 Rudder. New and old members are welcome. Dues are \$13 for the summer session.

Items for What's Up should be submitted to *The Battalion*, 216 Reed McDonald, no less than three days prior to desired publication date.

Texas AFL-CIO begins labor meeting today

Associated Press

AUSTIN — National Democratic Party chairman Paul Kirk is among those scheduled to speak this week to the Texas AFL-CIO convention, which opens today.

The four-day meeting will draw some 1,500 delegates from 900 local unions.

Kirk, longtime aide to Sen. Edward Kennedy, D-Mass., was elected in January to help rebuild the party after the overwhelming 1984 election losses.

Among his first acts as chairman was to travel to Atlanta to meet with Democratic Party leaders from 13 Southern states, where Republicans have been making inroads in once-solid Democratic territory.

Several state officials also will address the delegates, including Gov. Mark White, Lt. Gov. Bill Hobby, Agriculture Commissioner Jim Hightower, Land Commissioner Garry Mauro, Comptroller Bob Bullock, Attorney General Jim Mattox and U.S. Rep. Henry B. Gonzalez of San Antonio, who as a young man was a union organizer.

MSC GROVE 85

At-A-Glance

July 24-30

- wed Animal House
- thu 48 Hours
- fri Beach Party "Blue Hawaii"
- sat "Muppet Movie"
- sun Top Hat
- mon
- tue

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