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**Austin residents return to homes ruined by floods**

AUSTIN (AP) — At least 49 families in southeast Travis County were tallying up flood damage Sunday after a swollen creek washed away cars and property and flooded highways and homes.

The families were forced to evacuate their homes after up to 14 inches of rain fell late Friday and early Saturday, said Diane Wheeler, a spokeswoman with the American Red Cross.

"The caseworkers will work with them on a one-to-one basis," Wheeler said. "A lot of them lost cars. We'll see who needs food and clothes."

Wheeler said 21 homes sustained major damage, while another 28 suffered minor damage in the Thoroughbred Farms subdivision and two areas in Garfield.

Though no injuries were reported, emergency workers helped people out of trees, off of car tops and away from flooded homes.

The heavy rains stemmed from a mixture of tropical air from the south and a cool front from the

north, Jim Dugan of the National Weather Service said. The two systems met over Central Texas and touched off the widespread, slow-moving thunderstorms.

There was at least a 50 percent chance for more rain Sunday, the NWS said.

In the Thoroughbred Farms subdivision, a row of duplexes — many leased to people who qualify for government rent subsidies — was swamped by Dry Creek floodwaters.

Water rose 4 feet inside many of the duplexes, washing away furniture and belongings. Rats, snakes and ants floated in the water beside the fleeing residents.

About 42 people were evacuated from the southeastern part of the county by Austin and volunteer fire departments, and about 10 were rescued by the EMS helicopter, authorities said.

Airport officials said rainfall of 11 to 14 inches was reported to the volunteer fire department by residents of the southeastern part of the county.

**Houston population to hit 5 million by 2010**

HOUSTON (AP) — The Houston metropolitan area population will exceed 5 million by the year 2010, predicts a task force organized under the auspices of the Houston-Galveston Area Council.

The task force, made up of private and public sector representatives from seven area counties, estimated the population of the region will grow by two million people by 2010. The report uses 1980 figures for comparative purposes.

"Diversification and a maturing economy will be the reason we would continue to grow at all," HGAC data planner Carl Willeford said.

Harris County is expected to recover from the economic slump about 1988, with about 2 percent annual growth beginning in 1990, he said.

The number of employed workers in the area also is expected to increase from 1.5 million in 1980 to almost 2.5 million by 2010.

Recently released U.S. Census Bureau estimates pegged the metropolitan area's population at the end of 1985 at 3.6 million. The task force predicts the population to be 3.59 million in 1990.

Harris County's population is projected to jump from 2.7 million in 1990 to 3.7 million in 2010. The extra million people will be employed primarily by industries outside the energy sector, Willeford predicted.

The task force's predictions aren't infallible, Willeford acknowledged.

But Majorie Landry, a HGAC report participant and economic development analyst for Houston Lighting & Power Co., said she believed the best data available went into the report.

"Looking at the average national ratio of jobs to person, we felt the economy would become healthy enough for ours to at least equal that, if not go above it," Landry said.

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