

**Texas Department of State Health Services
NEWS RELEASE
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DSHS: Galveston Island Not Safe Place To Live Following Storm

The Texas Department of State Health Services joins local officials in urging citizens of Galveston to leave the island temporarily due to conditions that pose a risk to their health.

“I have toured Galveston Island and other areas along the coast to view the conditions,” said Dr. David Lakey, Commissioner for the Texas Department of State Health Services. “I do not believe Galveston Island is a suitable place for people to live safely at this time because it does not have the basic resources to support citizen health.”

Lakey pointed to conditions in Galveston that present a risk to the population’s health.

- No running water
- No wastewater service
- Toilets that have not been flushed for almost a week
- Limited or no electrical power
- No medical care with the exception of temporary urgent care.

“These conditions present a serious health situation,” Lakey said. “No electricity or gas means you can’t boil water or cook your food. Little or no power means no refrigeration and no air conditioning. Without running water, you can’t properly wash your hands or clean utensils. Lack of a sewer system creates conditions that breed diseases. And few doctors and health facilities mean that medical conditions and injuries cannot be treated quickly.”

Lakey noted that residents are at risk of things such as:

- Infectious diseases including diarrheal illnesses caused by bacteria such as salmonella and shigella and viruses such as norovirus.
- Overheating
- Foodborne illnesses.

“People should listen to and follow the recommendations of local authorities about not remaining in the community,” Lakey said.