



U.S. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
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Water Quality of Flood-Impacted Areas from Hurricane Laura

DALLAS - (August 26, 2020) – Today, The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) released the following statement in regards to the water quality of flood-impacted areas from Hurricane Laura.

“EPA is closely coordinating with state and regional partners, and we have teams standing by to support FEMA,” said EPA Administrator Andrew Wheeler. “EPA is ready to respond to anything that may occur due to Hurricane Laura.”

Releases of wastewater from sanitary sewers can occur during major flood events. The EPA, state and local agencies actively work to monitor those facilities that have reported spills, as well as conducting outreach and providing technical guidance to all other wastewater facilities in flood-impacted areas.

Floodwaters may contain many hazards, including bacteria and other disease agents. Precautions should be taken by anyone involved in cleanup activities or any others who may be exposed to flood waters. These precautions include heeding all warnings from local and state authorities regarding boil water notices, swimming advisories, or other safety advisories. In addition to the drowning hazards of wading, swimming, or driving in swift floodwaters, these waters can carry large objects that are not always readily visible that can cause injuries to those in the water. Other potential hazards include downed power lines and possible injuries inflicted by animals displaced by the floodwaters.

Federal, state and local emergency preparedness professionals are working together across Texas and Louisiana’s gulf coast with primary responsibility of the health and safety of those affected by Hurricane Laura. As we continue to prepare for this natural disaster and its devastating effects on the people of Louisiana and Texas, one of the first jobs after the storm passes is providing access to safe drinking water and ensuring waste water systems are being monitored, tested for safety and managed appropriately.

For more updates on Hurricane Laura, follow the agency on Twitter @EPA.

For more information on preparing for floods, visit <https://www.epa.gov/natural-disasters/flooding>.

For more on EPA’s emergency response program, visit <https://www.epa.gov/emergency-response>.

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