



# Coast Guard Sector Houston-Galveston Marine Safety Information Bulletin 22-21

Date: 05/24/21

Time: 1803

## Severe Weather Safety Planning For All Vessels And Facilities

The 2021 Hurricane Season officially starts on June 1, 2021. All facilities and vessels in the Houston-Galveston Captain of the Port (COTP) zone are encouraged to review their severe weather plans and begin preparations for the hurricane season.

Sector Houston-Galveston instituted a new Port Condition Matrix last season with two “tracks” designed to clearly communicate with the port community whether the COTP intends to close the port fully due to the intensity or likelihood of a tropical storm. Regardless of track, the COTP will issue Marine Safety Information Bulletins (MSIBs) and broadcasts declaring the Port Condition with further requirements and instructions for vessels and facilities. The Port Conditions are:

Heavy Weather Port Condition Matrix			
	Warning	Modified Track	Traditional Track
Triggers	Heavy weather predicted for COTP Zone.	Certainty below 20% of any tropical storm conditions or any chance of only low intensity tropical storms.	Certainty above 20% of any tropical storm condition except low intensity tropical storms.
MSIB		<b>Modified WHISKEY (72 hrs):</b> -Implement preventive measures -Complete & submit Remain In Port Checklists prior to PortCon XRAY	<b>WHISKEY (72 hrs):</b> -Implement preventive measures -Complete & submit Remain in Port Checklists prior to PortCon XRAY -Establish temporary safety zone -Vessels seek shelter outside port -Facilities & vessels initiate conversations regarding cargo operations & vessel departure
		<b>Modified XRAY (48 hrs):</b> -Establish temporary safety zone	<b>XRAY (48 hrs):</b> -Temporary safety zone in effect -Ocean-going vessels begin making plans for immediate departure in anticipation of PortCon YANKEE -Smaller vessels seek shelter
		<b>Modified YANKEE (24 hrs):</b> -Temporary safety zone in effect -Clear vessels from Bolivar Anchorage -Suspend bunkering & lightering -Suspend all cargo transfers w/winds over 40mph -Disconnect transfer hoses/arms w/winds over 50mph	<b>YANKEE (24 hrs):</b> - Temporary safety zone in effect -Clear vessels from Bolivar Anchorage -Suspend bunkering & lightering -Suspend all cargo transfers w/winds over 40mph -Disconnect transfer hoses/arms w/winds over 50mph -No inbound ship transits; towing vessels authorized
			<b>ZULU (12 hrs):</b> -Port closed to all vessel movements & facility cargo operations -Any barge fleeting shifts shall be coordinated through Vessel Traffic Service Houston

- **Port Condition Whiskey** – 72 hours prior to arrival of tropical storm force winds associated with tropical cyclone activity
- **Port Condition X-Ray** – 48 hours prior to arrival of tropical storm force winds associated with tropical cyclone activity
- **Port Condition Yankee** – 24 hours prior to arrival of tropical storm force winds associated with hurricane force storm

For a current list of MSIBs within the COTP Houston-Galveston Zone visit: <https://homeport.uscg.mil> and select Houston-Galveston under the Port Directory.

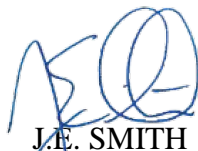
- **Port Condition Zulu** – 12 hours prior to arrival of tropical storm force winds associated with hurricane force storm
- **Post-Storm Recovery** – COTP will set once port conditions allow, after the storm has passed

When in the traditional track, the COTP will direct all capable sea-going vessels to make timely departures for open sea on the approach of heavy weather. For both the traditional and modified track, commercial self-propelled vessels greater than 500 gross tons and oceangoing integrated tug and barge combinations intending to remain in port will be required to submit a “Declaration of Intent to Remain in Port” form prior to Port Condition X-Ray. Submitting a declaration will not guarantee the ability to remain in port, but will provide this office situational awareness of what vessels are in port for post storm accountability, and ensure facilities are aware of the vessels at their docks intending to remain in port. When in the traditional port condition track, the declaration is also used by this office to conduct engineering review of the vessel’s stay in port plan. Following a storm passing and once a port is re-opened, vessels will need to resubmit Notice of Arrival as per 33 Code of Federal Regulations Part 160 and this office will rescreen vessels prior to reentry. Commercial fishing vessels shall also leave port or find shelter inland to avoid damage during a storm’s passage, tie off adequately to fixed or moored structures, and submit the “Hurricane Evacuation Report” form.

Facilities with storage tanks, missile hazards, dangerous cargo and container or pallet stacks shall secure or remove these entities to prevent damage due to severe winds and storm surge. Pressed up tanks sustain less wind damage. All general cargo containers shall not be stacked more than 4 high and hazardous material containers shall be stacked no more than 2 high. All containers stored near flood-prone areas should be moved prior to Port Condition Yankee. The responsibility to survey berths rests with each facility. Waterfront facilities are encouraged to conduct an annual pre-hurricane survey. Facilities should be prepared to conduct an emergency survey of their docks as soon as practical after a hurricane passes if there is reason to believe that bottom conditions have changed. The surveys help determine whether water depths have been reduced and whether ship traffic is able to safely proceed. **All regulated waterfront facilities** shall fill out a “Facility Pre-Storm Checklist”. Post hurricane, facilities may be required to fill out the Facility Post Storm Self-Assessment Checklist.

This and all MSIBs are posted on Sector Houston-Galveston’s [HOMEPORT](#) page and emailed via the Sector Houston-Galveston MSIB GovDelivery distribution list. To be added to this GovDelivery distribution list, send your name and email address to [houstonwwm@uscg.mil](mailto:houstonwwm@uscg.mil). All documents (checklists, forms, etc) mentioned in this MSIB can be found on Sector Houston-Galveston’s [HOMEPORT](#) page under [Local Contingency Plans](#). If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Sector Houston-Galveston at (281) 464-4800.

This MSIB shall remain active until December 1, 2021.



J.E. SMITH  
Captain, United States Coast Guard  
Captain of the Port

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