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TOWN OF KURE BEACH

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Dear Citizens of Kure Beach –

At the beginning of Hurricane season I would like to take a minute of your time to talk about **Hurricane planning and the individual citizen**. As a resident of a coastal community – the Hurricane threat is a real issue that requires you to have a plan of action for you and your family. **While it may not have seemed it – we as a community were very fortunate that Hurricane Isaias impacted Kure Beach as a strong Tropical Storm in 2020. Sustained winds of only 73 mph were measured in the area – with the max gust of 99 mph. Recognize that even with that small of a storm, the town was without power for almost 24 hours.** Please take the time to fully read this letter and then spend time with your family discussing the actions that you plan to take in the event the town is threatened by a Hurricane. A key portion of your personal plan should consider what circumstances would prompt you to evacuate, where you would evacuate to and what you would take. Additionally, the COVID 19 issue should again be considered as you make your plan. **You should have alternate locations built into your plan – and update them as Hurricane Advisories occur to ensure that you are protecting your family.**

Why evacuate? A Hurricane is the strongest force of nature on the planet with an impact area of hundreds of square miles. While the building codes have continued to make our homes stronger – it only takes a small piece of debris to compromise the structure which can result in leaving the occupants at the mercy of the elements. During the storm, non-evacuees are completely on their own as the Emergency Services personnel will not be able to respond for assistance due to the danger involved. Following the storm – there will be an extended amount of time with no Electricity, possibly no water, and for 2-3 days (Cat 2/3), up to 5 days (Cat 4) or longer (Cat 5) – no outside assistance. This means that non-evacuees must be prepared to provide their own first aid, food, shelter, and water for this length of time with temperatures 5-10 degrees hotter than normal and typically no breeze. Curfews will be in effect – this is to protect the property of those who wisely chose to evacuate meaning that during the recovery phase – non-evacuees will be confined to their property. The recovery efforts will be focused on clearing downed power lines, debris removal and maintaining the integrity of the town's water system – during Hurricane Fran in 1996 this resulted in the majority of

oceanfront homes being shut-off due to water pressure concerns. The emergency personnel do not maintain adequate supplies for citizens who elect to not evacuate and therefore a decision to stay means that you must have adequate supplies for you and your family. Postponing the evacuation decision may result in being unable to leave as the Snow's Cut Bridge will be closed by the NC Highway Patrol when sustained winds make it unsafe to cross.

What does the town do? As the storm approaches – Town Officials will closely coordinate with NHC Emergency Management to issue voluntary or mandatory evacuations. Town employees and volunteers will prepare the town's infrastructure for the storm – boarding up public buildings, renting and hooking up generators to the town's wells to protect the water system, getting supplies for the emergency services personnel and conveying information door-to-door to ensure that citizens are informed. For larger storms – isolating water to the oceanfront homes, preparing to evacuate town equipment from the island and securing public buildings. Town employees and volunteers will lock-in during the storm at the Fire, Police, Public Works and Town Hall buildings unless the storm severity requires evacuation of emergency personnel inland. Following the storm landfall they will quickly begin the process of recovery to restore vital services, protect property and remove debris. Assessment teams will visit damaged property to perform initial damage assessments required by the State and Federal governments. Curfews will be in affect to ensure that the property of citizens who evacuated is protected. Co-ordination with the New Hanover County Emergency Management and Carolina Beach will occur to restore access to the public as soon as conditions are safe for return.

What if I stay? While this decision is not recommended – if you do decide to stay – **YOU ARE ON YOUR OWN**. During the storm – you must be prepared to perform emergency repairs to your home if necessary, trained and confident to perform first aid on yourself or others staying in the home, have supplies for an extended period of time and be ready for the oppressive heat that follows a storm. The days from landfall until public access is restored will be spent on your property, with no electricity (unless you have a generator), the sounds of generators, debris removal, and the still air and heat that follows a storm – eating the supplies that you prepared for the storm with and drinking hot drinks.

As the Emergency Manager – life safety is the primary focus of the Emergency Response. I encourage you to carefully consider your actions in the event of a Hurricane threat to Kure Beach and to plan accordingly now – so that the pressure of the moment, the bravado of people telling you that it is no big deal and the inopportune timing do not result in a poor decision for you and your family. For more information on personal planning go to www.fema.gov and www.weather.gov/os/hurricane/resources/. For more details on the Hurricane actions taken by the Town of Kure Beach please review the information presentation posted on the town website at <https://www.townofkurebeach.org/emergency-information>. I encourage every citizen to create a Family Disaster Plan to be prepared.

If you have any questions or comments please contact Town Hall at 458-8216 and leave a message for me or email me at d.heglar@tokb.org .

David W. Heglar, PE

Emergency Response Coordinator/Emergency Manager
Town of Kure Beach