



TEXAS EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT ONLINE

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The Texas Division of Emergency Management is accepting article submissions for The Texas Emergency Management Online (TEMO) newsletter. If you have an idea for a topic or would like to submit an article, contact [Mike Jones](#) at 512-424-7050.

MESSAGE FROM THE CHIEF – February 2016

Although Texas is famous for its hot and sunny weather, no other state has experienced more deadly and costly severe weather events. With December's "Goliath" blizzard and the deadly Christmastime tornadoes, you don't have to look back very far to be reminded that severe weather can happen anywhere and at any time. Severe weather can take any of us by surprise in its size, its scope, and its intensity. No person or place in Texas is immune to the effects of devastating severe weather.

Last year alone, millions of Texans endured historic severe weather events. Following an unprecedented and lengthy drought along with the worst wildfire season ever witnessed, severe weather events caused widespread destruction, loss of life and led to over 100 Texas counties being designated major disaster areas.

The Texas Division of Emergency Management along with the National Weather Service, local officials and emergency managers across the state join together each year in a public awareness campaign to encourage all Texans to prepare for severe weather events.

This year **Severe Weather Awareness Week in Texas is March 6-12, 2016**. Most long-time Texans are aware that severe weather events can happen anywhere and at any time in the state, but, tragically, too many people are still unprepared when severe weather threatens.

This year, be one to set an example for severe weather readiness, and pledge:

- To learn how to recognize the signs of severe weather and the risks in your area
- To have the resources for severe weather notification, even during power outages
- To build emergency supply kits for your home and auto
- To obey road barriers and highway warnings during flash flood events
- To spread the word about the dangers of severe weather and how to be prepared for them

Severe Weather Awareness Week materials are available on our website for you to use to help get the message out in your community. Severe weather can happen to you!

[Be Prepared. Make a Plan](#)

[Flood Safety](#)

[Emergency Supply Kits](#)

[Weather Ready Nation](#)

Driver License Disaster Response Unit

Since Hurricane Katrina, the Driver License Division has provided special services to Texas residents impacted by a disaster. In 2011, a formal Disaster Response Unit (DRU) was created, and enables Driver License employees to travel to any location in the state to provide Driver License (DL) or Identification Card (ID) replacement for those who lost their identity documents due to a disaster.

Driver License Disaster Response Unit



online services
www.texas.gov

Driver License Division

To obtain a replacement, the person must already have a Texas DL or ID card on file, and it cannot be expired more than two years. The DRU staff will confirm the person's identity against the existing DL or ID card photo and issue a temporary license to be used until the new card can be mailed. An application for an original card can also be processed if the person has all the required documents. The list of required documents can be viewed [here](#). Transactions for disaster victims will be processed free of charge for a limited period of time following the disaster.

The DRU is normally deployed at an established Multi-Agency Resource Center (MARC), or any other location specified by the local emergency manager, provided there is adequate internet access.



The DRU provides services during hours when a local driver license office may be unavailable and to improve convenience for disaster victims. DRUs typically remain until the services are no longer needed or until the MARC is closed. The DRU services are available as part of the Texas All Hazard Plan, and requests for these services should be made to the Disaster District Committee Chair, who coordinates with the Texas Division of Emergency Management and the Driver License Division for assistance.

During the past several years, the DRUs have been deployed to assist the citizens impacted by the Bastrop fires, the West fertilizer plant explosion, flooding on two separate occasions in both Hays and Travis counties, and most recently by the Dallas-area tornadoes. The Driver License Division is committed to serving the citizens of Texas and to helping during a time of need.



The STEAR System Will Soon Be Three Years Old

March 15, 2016 will mark the end of the third year that the State of Texas Emergency Assistance Registry (STEAR) system has been available to Texas citizens and local governments. During these three years, the STEAR system has evolved and now offers more registration options for individuals and more capabilities for local planners to obtain information that will assist them in better understanding the needs of individuals within their communities.

STATE OF TEXAS EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE REGISTRY

REGISTER TODAY

Online at: <https://STEAR.dps.texas.gov>

Call 2-1-1 or use your video phone relay option

Electronic Form: Obtain at www.dps.texas.gov/dem/stear.public.htm

The STEAR program was developed by the state of Texas to assist coastal local governments with obtaining information on the needs of its citizens during a hurricane evacuation. The program provides emergency managers detailed information on citizens who may require additional assistance during a disaster or emergency, such as individuals with disabilities, special medical needs or unique transportation challenges.

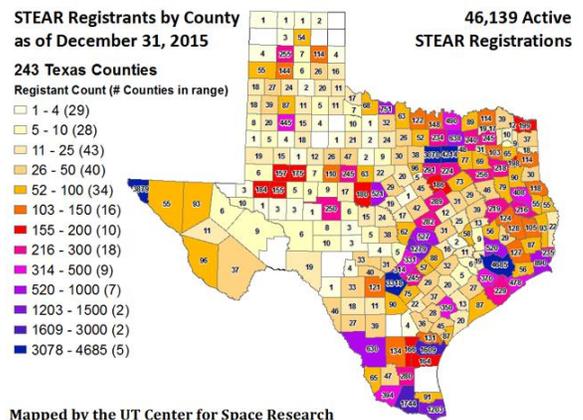
The information can be used for preparedness and response activities and is free to local governments and individuals. Below are some of the highlights of the improvements made.

During 2013, the first year of the STEAR program, the Texas Information Referral Network (TIRN) 2-1-1 call center specialists entered 17,526 registrations into the data base. Also during that year, 112 jurisdictions, representing 62 cities, 49 counties and one regional organization, appointed local data custodians.

In 2014, STEAR web services were expanded to permit individuals to self-register online. As a result, many home health services have incorporated online STEAR registration of clients into their business practice. Local data custodians were able to review the registrations in their localities and update their STEAR records through the use of new secure web-based tools. They continued to have the option to download individual registration lists in spreadsheet form and gained the option to download nursing homes and assisted living facility registrations. Local data custodians obtained the capability to view dynamically updated statistics and graphs representing information about their jurisdiction, including registration rates and recent activity. Building on the questions developed originally for coastal evacuation zones, refined STEAR questions now capture information useful for statewide purposes.

In 2015, the option to register individuals for local data custodians using the STEAR online form was completed. TDEM's district coordinators now have access to STEAR data as well. Each district coordinator can view information about data custodian activity and STEAR registrations in their area, and new fields were added to capture e-mail addresses, mailing addresses as well as information about safe rooms and storm cellars.

From January 1, 2015 through December 8, 2015, 31,637 new registrations had been made; 5,539 of these were self-registrations by citizens, 123 were registered by local data custodians and the remainder were registered with 2-1-1 call specialist assistance. An additional 14,638 registrations were carried over as active registrations from 2014 at the decision of local data custodians. Currently 135 jurisdictions have appointed local data custodians, representing 69 cities, 62 counties and four regional organizations in Texas.



During the flood events of May and June, 2015, STEAR data were geocoded and delivered to search and rescue teams working in Wichita Falls, the Dallas-Fort Worth Metroplex and

other impacted areas. As recently as October 2015, the district coordinator responsible for Navarro County provided STEAR data for that county, which had experienced heavy rainfall and extensive floods. STEAR data is now used in many jurisdictions far from hurricane impact areas, because the need to know where vulnerable residents are located is necessary during flood, wildfire, severe weather and other emergency events.

STEAR data not only provides local planners with location information but also provides

Active STEAR Registrations through Dec 31 2015 11:59 PM	Response Count	Percentage
Total registrants statewide	46,139	100.0%
Speaks English	37,520	81.3%
Speaks Spanish	7,640	16.6%
Speaks other language	979	2.1%
Uses sign language	467	1.0%
Is visually impaired	3,081	6.7%
Has a communication barrier	7,421	16.1%
Is a minor	1,813	3.9%
Has a caregiver	22,985	49.8%
Caregiver evacuates with registrant	15,216	33.0%
Has a service animal	1,118	2.4%
Has pet(s)	10,110	21.9%
Needs transportation assistance	26,921	58.3%
Needs moving assistance	20,876	45.2%
Needs assistance to get to evacuation point	19,405	42.1%
Has functional need(s)	28,394	61.5%
Requires medical treatment from doctor/nurse	8,841	19.2%
Needs assistance for daily living activities	21,709	47.1%
Has provider help for daily needs	13,016	28.2%
Needs a gurney/bed for transportation	6,422	13.9%
Weighs more than 350 lbs.	742	1.6%
Requires oxygen	5,603	12.1%
Needs power for life-sustaining device	5,279	11.4%
Requires wheelchair	12,261	26.6%
Has motorized wheelchair	3,262	7.1%

valuable planning tools for many types of events. The information shown in the table is an overview of the current statistics for the state.

Local data custodians can obtain access to this information as well as individual information on their registered citizens. Having this type of information becomes instrumental when determining the needs of individuals within their community who have registered for assistance. If your city or county does not have a means to obtain this type of information, consider participating in this program.

To find out more information on this program, go to [State of Texas Emergency Assistance Registry](#). To assign a data custodian, fill out and

submit the Data Custodian Appointment Form found at the website above.

Please feel free to contact the TDEM point of contact for this program at [Denita Powell](#) or 512-424-7948.

STEAR Data Custodians

- Confirm registrants are located within a jurisdiction
- Confirm registrant's information is current and accurate
- Review new registrations with a frequency that reflects the population of the jurisdiction
- Identify registrants who are deceased or no longer in the jurisdiction
- Confer with neighboring jurisdictions' data custodians to resolve problems
- Share geocoded information
- Take steps to encourage registration
- Report problems with the system to University of Texas Center for Space Research
- TDEM provides training for data custodians
- Jurisdictions can register more than one data custodian
- Can now register individuals within their community
- [Data custodian appointment form](#)

A Christmas to Remember – Neighbors Helping Neighbors DPS Region 1 Tornado Response

The December 2015 Christmas storms impacted a wide portion of the state of Texas. In particular, areas in Region 1 were devastated by a series of tornadoes that touched down on the evening of December 26. The strongest tornado produced [EF4](#) damage in the city of Garland as well as EF3 damage in Rowlett. This tornado produced a continuous path of damage for approximately 13 miles in Dallas and Rockwall counties. The tornado caused nine fatalities, most of which occurred near the intersection of Interstate Highway 30 and the President George Bush Turnpike.



Another tornado produced EF3 damage in rural parts of Ellis County before turning north through the cities of Ovilla and Red Oak and crossing into the city of Glenn Heights. This tornado also produced a continuous path of damage for approximately 13 miles in Ellis and Dallas counties.

Two tornadoes also were confirmed in Collin County. One produced EF2 damage near Copeville and another produced EF0 damage near Blue Ridge. These two tornadoes resulted in three fatalities, two in Copeville and one in Blue Ridge.

In total, there were nine confirmed tornadoes and 12 fatalities during the afternoon and evening of December 26.

Emergency management partners from across the region came together, forming one response unit to aid their neighbors in the hour of need. Representatives from the surrounding local jurisdictions, the North Central Texas

Council of Governments, regional public works emergency teams, emergency operations center support teams, the regional Citizen Corp emergency response teams as well as many state partners including among others Texas A&M Forest Service, Texas Military Forces, Texas Highway Patrol, Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, Texas Task Force 1, Texas Task Force 2 and Texas Division of Emergency Management, rallied support and services to the impacted areas.

As clean up began and the needs of the impacted citizens were assessed, the cities of Garland and Rowlett as well as the Dallas County Volunteer Organization Active in Disaster established a Joint Disaster Management Resource Center (JDMRC) in Garland. The Ellis County Office of Emergency Management established a Multiagency Resource Center just outside of their impacted communities. Both centers served three functions: volunteer reception, donations management and client disaster service. It was a place for volunteers to register and assist with relief efforts and for organizations to receive and distribute donations to tornado survivors. The DPS Driver License Disaster Response Unit joined the JDMRC to issue replacement licenses and state-issued IDs on the spot to impacted individuals. To date, both centers have assisted more than 775 families.





As the impacted jurisdictions transition into long-term recovery, TDEM is leading a joint effort to conduct damage assessment to determine the financial scope of the incident, and the road to rebuilding even more resilient communities has begun. This disaster serves as a reminder to all Texans about the importance of being prepared for disasters. Make a plan with your family and your community, and don't forget your pets. Plan how to stay safe and be able to communicate during any disaster that can affect your community.

Enhanced Fujita Scale

Fujita Scale		EF Scale	
Fujita Scale	3-Second Gust Speed (mph)	EF Scale	3-Second Gust Speed (mph)
F0	45-78	EFO	65-85
F1	79-117	EF1	86-109
F2	118-161	EF2	110-137
F3	162-209	EF3	138-167
F4	210-261	EF4	168-199
F5	262-317	EF5	200-234

February 2016 News Briefs

Save the Date:

[2016 Texas Emergency Management Conference!](#)

Tuesday, April 5 – Friday, April 8, 2016

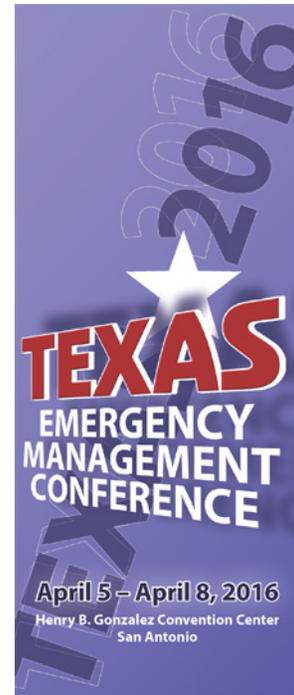
Henry B. Gonzalez Convention Center, San Antonio, Texas

Registration opens Monday, April 4, 2016

**New family track workshops are coming!

Avoiding Road Rage

Aggressive driving includes potentially dangerous actions such as tailgating, erratic lane changing and illegal passing. According to the AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety, up to 56 percent of fatal crashes result from some type of aggressive driving. Extreme cases of aggressive driving become road rage incidents. AAA Foundation looked at 10,000 road rage incidents over the last seven years and found that they resulted in at least 218 murders and 12,610 injury cases. Texas witnessed several high-profile cases of road rage recently, including the murder of a college student who was shot to death in a road rage incident.



One. Don't Offend

- Cutting Off. When you merge, make sure you have plenty of room. Use your turn signal to show your intentions before making a move.
- Driving Slowly in the Left Lane. If you are in the left lane and someone wants to pass, move over and let them by. You may be "in the right" because you are traveling at the speed limit—but you may also be putting yourself in danger by making drivers behind you angry.
- Tailgating. Drivers get angry when they are followed too closely. Allow at least a two-second space between your car and the car ahead.
- Gestures. Almost nothing makes another driver angrier than an obscene gesture. Keep your hands on the wheel. Avoid making any gestures that might anger another driver.

Two. Don't Engage

- Steer Clear. Give angry drivers lots of room. A driver you may have offended can "snap" and become truly dangerous.
- Avoid Eye Contact. If another driver is acting angry with you, don't make eye contact. Looking or staring at another driver can turn an impersonal encounter between two vehicles into a personal duel.
- Get Help. If you believe the other driver is following you or is trying to start a fight, get help. Do not get out of your car. Do not go home.

Three. Adjust Your Attitude

- Forget Winning. For too many motorists, driving becomes a contest. Allow more time for your trip. You'll be amazed at how much more relaxed you feel when you have a few extra minutes. So instead of trying to "make good time," try to "make time good."
- Put Yourself in Other Driver's Shoes. Instead of judging the other driver, try to imagine why he or she is driving that way. Someone speeding and constantly changing lanes may be a volunteer fireman, or a physician rushing to a hospital. Someone who jerks from one lane to another may have a bee in the car or a crying baby. Whatever their reason, it has nothing to do with you.

- If You Think You Have a Problem, Get Help. Courses in anger management have been shown to reduce heart attacks. Drivers who successfully “reinvent” their approach to the road report dramatic changes in attitude and behavior.

[AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety](#)
[How to Avoid Aggressive Driving Brochure](#)

E-cigarette Ads and Youth

About 2.4 million middle and high school students were current (past 30-day) users of electronic cigarettes, or e-cigarettes, in 2014. Most e-cigarettes contain nicotine, which causes addiction, may harm brain development, and could lead to continued tobacco product use among youth. Tobacco product advertising can entice youth to use tobacco, and spending to advertise e-cigarettes has increased rapidly since 2011. About 69 percent of middle and high school students were exposed to e-cigarette advertisements in retail stores, on the Internet, in magazines and newspapers or on TV and movies. Exposure to e-cigarette advertisements may be contributing to increases in e-cigarette use among youth. Efforts by states, communities, and others could reduce this exposure.

<http://www.cdc.gov/vitalsigns/ecigarette-ads/>

U.S. May Lack Resources to Treat Children during Disasters

According to an article published by [HealthDay](#) News, there may not be enough of the right kind of resources available for children during a major public health emergency in the U.S.

The medical requirements for children often are very different than what is needed for adults. Drugs meant for use during large biological or chemical incidents are generally only developed and tested on military personnel, so formulations and dosing and safety information has not been addressed for use with children. Young children also have difficulty swallowing pills or drinking fluids because of how they taste.

The American Academy of Pediatrics’ Disaster Preparedness Advisory Council published a statement addressing the special needs of children during major emergencies and possible remedies for ensuring communities are prepared to protect and care for children with disaster strikes.

"Children represent nearly a quarter of the U.S. population, but they are affected disproportionately by most disasters and public health emergencies," the AAP team said. "The recommendations outlined in this statement should be used to guide pediatricians; federal, state, and local government agencies; and others in addressing this need."

The statement was published online January 4 and will appear in the February print issue of the journal Pediatrics.

[American Academy of Pediatrics; Children & Disasters](#)
[FDA Drug Research and Children](#)
[CDC: Caring for Children in a Disaster](#)

February 2016: Credits

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