



### **Hurricane "Kate" Mock Exercise**

As part of its continuing efforts to ensure that the Coosaw Creek community remains ready for any emergency, from 6:00 PM to 8:00 PM on September 12, 2021, the POA's Disaster Preparedness Committee conducted the Coosaw Creek Hurricane "Kate" Exercise at the Clubhouse, the site of the Emergency Response Center (ERC).

A simulated exercise, the participants were provided with certain facts relating to the mock hurricane and its aftermath. Under these facts, Hurricane Kate was deemed to be Category 3 storm with winds of 111-129 miles per hour. Seventy-two (72) hours before landfall, the South Carolina Governor issued a mandatory evacuation order. At least half of Coosaw residents, including half of the block captains and CERT team members, complied with the order and evacuated. Half remained behind in their homes.

Our fictitious Hurricane Kate made landfall at 2 AM on September 12, 2021 just north of the Isle of Palms as a category 2 storm, with winds of 96-110 mph, which then moved inland in a northwesterly direction and diminishing as it went. The City of North Charleston issued an "All Clear" about 36 hours after landfall. Over the past 72 hours, about 24 inches of rain have fallen. Current weather is dry but overcast with winds gusting between 15 and 20 mph.

Within Coosaw, all power lines are intact, with power being out for about 6 hours before "All Clear." Coosaw residents are still experiencing rolling power outages even after the "All Clear." The Clubhouse, utilized as the ERC, is intact and usable but the roof needs some repairs. The Disaster Preparation trailer has just been positioned under the Clubhouse canopy and the Container at the Maintenance Building is accessible. Selected disaster assets, such as block captains and CERT team members, were pre-positioned in the Coosaw North and Coosaw South areas and in the Men's Locker room in the clubhouse.



With these stipulated facts as a framework, the exercise commenced as the Coosaw Incident Commander called for ERC staff and community volunteers to convene at the ERC for a kick-off meeting.

“Hurricane Kate”



Mock Exercise

The number of community volunteers that participated in the exercise was impressive, numbering about 40 individuals. These individuals included Disaster Preparedness Committee members, POA Directors and personnel, block captains, CERT team members, Safety & Security Committee members, Financial Affairs Committee members, security guard personnel, as well as other members of the community. Also included as observers for the exercise were emergency management personnel from outside the Coosaw Creek community.

All participants were assigned specific roles within the ERC. The main categories were Planning, Operations, Logistics and Finance Administration. Within Operations, there was a Debris Team, a Mobile Team, Block Captains and CERT team members; and within Logistics, there were Communications, Medical and Security personnel.

The first 20 minutes of the exercise were preliminary, with a welcome and explanation of the exercise and then a kick-off meeting by the Emergency Response Incident Commander, followed by the 65-minute exercise itself. The exercise consisted of 21 mock incidents which were theoretically received by the Inject Team via radio, text and email and then circulated to the participants of the exercise. These injects, as they were called, were intended to reflect the kind of real-life situations experienced by a community in the aftermath of a hurricane, such as trees down and blocking a road, homes damaged, injuries to residents and communications and security issues. Once the injects were provided to the participants, the mission was to circulate the problem to the responsible individuals for appropriate action. The emphasis was on clear and concise communications among the various sections. All the actions taken were doable, although simulated, and all community assets deployed were also simulated. The 65-minute real-time exercise was followed by section briefs to the commander and an initial action review by all participants.

Two days later, the Disaster Preparedness Committee met and engaged in a comprehensive review of the exercise, with emphasis on what went right during the exercise but, more importantly, those areas which require improvement in the future. The Disaster Preparedness Committee is planning another exercise in early 2022, before the 2022 hurricane season. The exercise will emphasize neighbors helping neighbors, involve all the community's block captains, community volunteers and CERT Team members, and involve radio communications across Coosaw with only a small number of staff manning the Coosaw Emergency Response Center sections.



## An Earthquake Guide for Coosaw Residents

Our region had three earthquakes on Monday, September 25, 2021 between early afternoon and early evening. Many of us at Coosaw experienced the 6:21 PM earthquake which shook our homes and rattled our windows but, fortunately, caused no serious damage. Others in a nearby CVS pharmacy saw items flying off the shelves and ceiling tiles dropping to the floor. The timeline of the quakes, along with their severity on the Richter scale and location, were:

12:49 PM in Summerville	2.82
12:57 PM in Summerville	2.01
6:21 PM in Centerville	3.27

The POA, through its Disaster Preparedness Committee, has formed an association with Dr. Steven Jaume of the College of Charleston's Low Country Hazard Center. Dr. Jaume has installed earthquake seismometers in the Low Country region, including one in our Coosaw Creek community. Dr. Jaume has opined that the earthquake activity which we recently experienced could either be an example of small periodic tremors or, more seriously, a precursor to a larger earthquake. After all, Coosaw is located near the Middleton Plantation-Summerville Fault Line. The local Emergency Management teams are closely monitoring the situation for any additional earthquakes which could impact our area.

Many people are unaware of how common earthquakes are in South Carolina. Approximately 10 to 15 earthquakes are recorded annually in South Carolina with 3 to 5 of them felt or noticed by people. About 70 percent of South Carolina earthquakes are in the Middleton Place-Summerville Seismic Zone. The two most significant historical earthquakes to occur in South Carolina were the 1886 Charleston/Summerville earthquake and the 1913 Union County earthquake. The 1886 earthquake in Charleston was the most damaging earthquake to ever occur in the eastern United States. In terms of lives lost, human suffering and devastation, this was the most destructive United States earthquake in the 19th century.

Earthquakes in South Carolina have the potential to cause great and sudden loss because devastation can occur in minutes. While there have not been any large-scale earthquakes in South Carolina in recent years, a 2001 study (Comprehensive Seismic Risk and Vulnerability Study for the State of South Carolina) confirmed the state is extremely vulnerable to earthquake activity. The study, based on scientific research, provided information about the likely effects of earthquakes on the current population and on contemporary structures and systems, including roadways, bridges, homes, commercial and government buildings, schools, hospitals and water and sewer facilities.

The following guide describing how to prepare for, and respond to, an earthquake is reprinted from the South Carolina Emergency Management Division's website. The website is a valuable resource for any resident of South Carolina who wishes to learn more about disaster preparedness

## BEFORE AN EARTHQUAKE

Earthquakes strike suddenly, violently and without warning. Identifying potential hazards ahead of time and advance planning can reduce the dangers of serious injury or loss of life from an earthquake. Repairing deep plaster cracks in ceilings and foundations, anchoring overhead lighting fixtures to the ceiling and following local seismic building standards will help reduce the impact of earthquakes.

### Six Ways to Plan Ahead

#### Check for Hazards in the Home

- Fasten shelves securely to walls.
- Place large or heavy objects on lower shelves
- Store breakable items such as bottled foods, glass and china in low, closed cabinets with latches
- Hang heavy items such as pictures and mirrors away from beds, couches and anywhere people sit
- Brace overhead light fixtures
- Repair defective electrical wiring and leaky gas connections. These are potential fire risks
- Secure water heaters by strapping them to the wall studs and bolting them to the floor.
- Repair any deep cracks in ceilings or foundations. Get expert advice if there are signs of structural defects
- Store weed killers, pesticides and flammable products securely in closed cabinets with latches and on bottom shelves

#### Identify Safe Places Indoors and Outdoors

- Under sturdy furniture, such as heavy desks or tables
- Against inside walls
- Away from where glass could shatter around windows, mirrors or pictures and where heavy bookcases or other heavy furniture could fall
- In the open, away from buildings, trees, telephone and electrical lines, overpasses or elevated expressways

#### Educate Yourself and Family Members

- Practice “Drop, Cover, and Hold On” drills
- Teach children how and when to dial 9-1-1, police or fire departments and which radio stations broadcast emergency information
- Teach all family members how and when to turn off gas, electricity and water

## BEFORE AN EARTHQUAKE

### Have Disaster Supplies on Hand

- Flashlight and extra batteries
- Portable battery-operated radio and extra batteries
- First-aid kit and manual
- Emergency food and water
- Non-electric can opener
- Essential medicines
- Cash and credit cards
- Sturdy shoes

### Develop an Emergency Communication Plan

- In case family members are separated from one another during an earthquake (a real possibility during the day when adults are at work and children are at school), develop a plan for reuniting after the disaster
- Ask an out-of-state relative or friend to serve as the "family contact." After a disaster, it's often easier to call long-distance. Make sure everyone in the family knows the name, address and phone number of the contact person

### Help Your Community Get Ready

- Publish a special section in your local newspaper with emergency information on earthquakes. Localize the information by printing the phone numbers of local emergency services offices, the American Red Cross and hospitals
- Conduct a week-long series on locating hazards in the home
- Work with local emergency services and American Red Cross officials to prepare special reports for people with functional needs on what to do during an earthquake



The "Great Shake" of August 31, 1886, was one of the largest earthquakes ever recorded on the East Coast. Its epicenter was in Summerville, but shocks were felt as far away as Boston. Much of Charleston was left in ruins. During rebuilding, many of the brick structures were stabilized with iron rods secured on the outside walls by "gib plates." Though the jury's out on the hardware's effectiveness, they remain a treasured element of Holy City architecture.



## DURING AN EARTHQUAKE

Be aware that some earthquakes are actually foreshocks and a larger earthquake might occur. Minimize your movements to a few steps to a nearby safe place and if you are indoors, stay there until the shaking has stopped and you are sure exiting is safe.

### If Indoors:

- DROP to the ground; take COVER by getting under a sturdy table or other piece of furniture; and HOLD ON until the shaking stops. If there isn't a table or desk near you, cover your face and head with your arms and crouch in an inside corner of the building
- Stay away from glass, windows, outside doors and walls and anything that could fall, such as lighting fixtures or furniture
- Stay in bed if you are there when the earthquake strikes. Hold on and protect your head with a pillow, unless you are under a heavy light fixture that could fall. In that case, move to the nearest safe place
- Use a doorway for shelter only if it is in close proximity to you and if you know it is a strongly supported, load-bearing doorway
- Stay inside until the shaking stops and it is safe to go outside. Research has shown that most injuries occur when people inside buildings attempt to move to a different location inside the building or try to leave
- Be aware that the electricity may go out or the sprinkler systems or fire alarms may turn on
- DO NOT use elevators

### If Outdoors:

- Stay there
- Move away from buildings, streetlights and utility wires
- Once in the open, stay there until the shaking stops. The greatest danger exists directly outside buildings, at exits and alongside exterior walls
- Ground movement during an earthquake is seldom the direct cause of death or injury. Most earthquake-related casualties result from collapsing walls, flying glass and falling objects

### If trapped under debris:

- Do not light a match
- Do not move about or kick up dust
- Cover your mouth with a handkerchief or clothing
- Tap on a pipe or wall so rescuers can locate you
- Use a whistle if one is available
- Shout only as a last resort. Shouting can cause you to inhale dangerous amounts of dust

### If in a moving vehicle:

- Stop as quickly as safety permits and stay in the vehicle
- Avoid stopping near or under buildings, trees, overpasses and utility wires
- Proceed cautiously once the earthquake has stopped
- Avoid roads, bridges or ramps that might have been damaged by the earthquake

## AFTER AN EARTHQUAKE

- Expect aftershocks. These secondary shockwaves are usually less violent than the main quake but can be strong enough to do additional damage to weakened structures and can occur in the first hours, days, weeks or even months after the quake
- Listen to a battery-operated radio or television. Listen for the latest emergency information
- Use the telephone only for emergency calls
- Open cabinets cautiously. Beware of objects that can fall off shelves
- Stay away from damaged areas. Stay away unless your assistance has been specifically requested by police, fire or relief organizations
- Return home only when authorities say it is safe
- Be aware of possible tsunamis if you live in coastal areas. These are also known as seismic sea waves (mistakenly called "tidal waves"). When local authorities issue a tsunami warning, assume that a series of dangerous waves is on the way
- Stay away from the beach
- Help injured or trapped persons. Remember to help your neighbors who may require special assistance such as infants, the elderly and people with disabilities. Give first aid where appropriate. Do not move seriously injured persons unless they are in immediate danger of further injury. Call for help
- Clean up spilled medicines, bleaches, gasoline or other flammable liquids immediately. Leave the area if you smell gas or fumes from other chemicals
- Inspect the entire length of chimneys for damage. Unnoticed damage could lead to a fire
- Inspect utilities. Check for gas leaks. If you smell gas or hear blowing or hissing noise, open a window and quickly leave the building. Turn off the gas at the outside main valve if you can and call the gas company from a neighbor's home. If you turn off the gas for any reason, it must be turned back on by a professional
- Look for electrical system damage. If you see sparks or broken or frayed wires or if you smell hot insulation, turn off the electricity at the main fuse box or circuit breaker. If you must step in water to get to the fuse box or circuit breaker, call an electrician first for advice
- Check for sewage and water lines damage. If you suspect sewage lines are damaged, avoid using the toilets and call a plumber. If water pipes are damaged, contact the water company and avoid using water from the tap. You can obtain safe water by melting ice cubes

