



For Immediate Release:
September 9, 2017

External Affairs
externalaffairs@gema.ga.gov
(404) 635-7000
@Georgia EMA
Facebook.com/GEMA.OHS

News Release

State of Emergency extended, mandatory evacuations begin

(ATLANTA) – On Friday, Governor Nathan Deal expanded his state of emergency to a total of 94 Georgia counties, ensuring state resources are available for those potentially affected by Hurricane Irma. Georgia Emergency Management & Homeland Security Agency is monitoring the storm, working with local governments, and coordinating with state, public and private sector partners to prepare for potential impacts.

Mandatory evacuations began this morning at 8 a.m. for all areas east of I-95, Chatham County, and areas west of I-95 that could be impacted by storm surges and other storm hazards. In an effort to assist with these evacuations, contraflow operations began this morning ahead of the 8 a.m. evacuation. This lane reversal ensures all traffic from Savannah to Dublin is westbound.

“We urge those preparing for Hurricane Irma to stay alert and prepared, whether they are evacuating or sheltering in place” said GEMA/HS Director Homer Bryson.

During evacuations, travelers are encouraged to use the 511 phone number to receive updates on roads and traffic. Text and email alerts are available through the 511 system by registering on GDOT’s 511 website at www.511ga.org.

Residents are still encouraged to prepare their Ready kits, make their family communications plans, and follow their local media and authorities for information in their area.

For current information on evacuations, shelters, contraflow operations, and preparedness, visit the GEMA/HS website at www.gema.ga.gov or follow us on Facebook and Twitter.

###

As part of the Office of the Governor, GEMA/HS works with local, state and federal governments, in partnership with the private sector and faith-based community, to protect life and property against man-made and natural emergencies. In addition, GEMA/HS employees are on 24-hour call statewide to assist local authorities when disaster strikes. GEMA/HS’s Ready Georgia campaign helps Georgians prepare for disasters. Go to www.ready.ga.gov or download the free Ready Georgia app for information on developing a custom emergency plan and Ready kit