



National Emergency Management Organization *"Preserving Life and Property"*

ADVISORY # 1

BELIZE DISTRICT REMAINS UNDER FLOOD WARNING TROPICAL DEPRESSION 31 FORMS IN THE CENTRAL CARIBBEAN

THURSDAY 12TH NOVEMBER, 2020 as at 1:30 PM

The National Meteorological Services of Belize and NEMO hereby inform the general public that Tropical Depression 31 formed over the central Caribbean Sea. The depression was centered near latitude 14.2N, longitude 74.3W or about 310 miles south-southeast of Kingston, Jamaica. It was moving to the west-southwest at 7mph with maximum sustained winds of 35mph. There are no coastal Watches or Warnings at this time. TD 31 is forecast to continue moving west-south-westward through to tomorrow morning and then turn towards the west and then west-northwest later with an increase in forward speed. Strengthening is expected and this system could potentially develop into a major hurricane before it reaches the coast of north-eastern Honduras or Nicaragua late on Sunday and Monday. There is a lot of uncertainty in the track for this system after that time. Some models take it just north of Honduras while some have it making landfall and weakening. In any event, this system has the potential to bring heavy rainfall and flooding over Belize in the coming week.

Flood conditions persist in the Belize District flood as the Belize River recedes in the west. The receding water continues to flood the Belize River Valley and communities along the George Price Highway. Communities in rural Belize including Hattieville, Freetown Sibun, and Gracie Rock all the way down to miles 1, 4, 8 and 12 on the George Price Highway the flood waters are rising and are expected to continue rise. Eight shelters remain open mostly in the Cayo and Belize rural areas.

All major highways are open. Spanish Lookout and Valley of Peace are accessible. Bullet Tree bridge is open. Calla Creek is accessible from the George Price Highway and through Bullet Tree village. The entrance to Benque and Succotz on the George Price highway is accessible all the way to Arenal. The Low Lying and Iguana Creek Bridges remains impassable. The Hammock Bridge in Calla Creek has been washed away. The Coastal Road is open but not to heavy vehicles due to the Manatee Bridge.

All are advised if you live along rivers and streams relocate to higher grounds. **DO NOT STAY IN YOUR HOME** tonight if you know it is likely to flood during the course of the night. **MOVE TO SAFETY, SAVE YOUR FAMILY, LIFE COMES FIRST!** If you can shelter in your home place food and valuable items out of the reach of floodwaters. Farmers are continuously reminded to secure their livestock. **DON'T WAIT UNTIL THE LAST MINUTE.** If your home is likely to flood turn off the main power supply. Beware of the movement of wild animals and snakes in your area.

DO NOT: remain in areas where latrines are overflowing due to the floodwaters, **DO NOT PLAY** or drive in floodwaters and cross flooded creeks and rivers. **SIX INCHES OF FLOOD WATERS CAN SWEEP YOU OFF YOUR FEET. DO NOT DRIVE THROUGH FLOOD WATERS, IT CAN BE VERY DANGEROUS.** Motorists are asked to drive with extreme caution when driving the highways secondary roads. Drivers are reminded to put on their hazard light when driving through rain.

PEOPLE IN AREAS AFFECTED TO FLOOD AND PRONE TO FLOODING CONTINUE TAKE ACTION AND MOVE TO HIGHER GROUNDS. **DO NOT STAY IN YOUR HOME AND GET TRAPPED, MOVE TO A SAFE BUILDING!**

Assessments and relief operations continue in the west, south and eastern regions of the country.

..Ends...

ATTACHMENTS- NEMO's Emergency Coordinators Contact Information, COVID 19 Protocols and Preparedness Tips.

Corozal, Mr. Ronnie Hernandez at 614 7140;
Orange Walk, Mr. Aragon at 615 2264; or Mr. Leiva at 614-7177
Belize District, Mr. Alphius Gillett at 614-4735;
San Pedro, Ms. Vanessa Parham at 614 5865;
Belize City, Mr. Al Westby at 614 8604 or Mr. Pollard at 6143244;
Belmopan, Ms. Clare Moody at 614 5705; or Mr. Eiley at 624 2365
Cayo, Mr. Al Westby at 6148604 or Mr. Johnny Ramclam at 614 5891;
Stann Creek -Coastal- Dangriga including Mullins River to Independence), Mr. Kevin Flores at 604 3632
Stann Creek -Interior- Hummingbird and Southern highway communities, Mr. David Cruz at 614 8514; and for
Toledo, Mr. Kenton Parham at 614 2158 or Mr. Dennis Williams at 614 2393

COVID 19 SHELTER PROTOCOLS:

1. All persons in high-risk coastal areas are reminded IF the need arises for you to evacuate and you are (1) not COVID positive, (2) not in quarantine, (3) not awaiting a test result or (4) being contact traced, and (5) not showing symptoms, move early!
2. You must wear a mask. Know which shelter you will go to, take along your essential necessities required for you to survive. The elderly and persons with underlying health conditions must not occupy the same space with normal persons. Note, people showing symptoms will be contained in a separate section of the shelter building.
3. Hand washing /sanitizing must be done before entering a shelter. Shelter Wardens will allocate shelter space. Social distance must be adhered to and shelters must be sanitized on a regular basis. Garbage must be properly disposed of. Proper cleaning and disinfection must be done on a regular basis. Shelter Managers must monitor and correct hygiene and cough /sneeze etiquette. The Ministry of Health (MoH) will conduct daily monitoring of shelters to detect people who are sick and showing signs of COVID19. The Shelter Management Team (Public Officers/ Volunteers) MUST use PPE.

PREPAREDNESS TIPS BEFORE A CYCLONE ARRIVAL:

- (1) Avoid being near the coast if your home is not safe if you live on the cayes and along the coast be familiar with the evacuation routes. Know which shelter you will need to go to. Make early preparations.
- (2) Protect windows with plywood or shutters,
- (3) Review your family emergency plan, consider all COVID 19 measures,
- (4) If you can afford to purchase non-perishable foods and water. Store additional water.
- (5) Keep an extra supply of medication. If a member of your household is bed-ridden, seek medical advice. Notify authorities ahead of time if you have persons in your neighbourhood require special assistance to evacuate due to a medical condition.
- (6) Secure your important documents and identification. Save the emergency contact numbers for NEMO, the police, fire, and medical facility in your cell phone. Keep your phone charged.
- (7) Pets are not allowed in shelters, make plans for your pets, continue to trim trees, clear drains, and secure outdoor items. Farmers make plans to move your animals to higher ground and stockpile feed when required.