

## Situational Awareness

### Space City Weather Predicts End of Texas Hurricane Season

On September 26, 2023, Eric Berger with Space City Weather predicted that the 2023 Texas hurricane season is over and it would be extremely unlikely for a hurricane to strike the state of Texas this late in the season. The historical odds of doing so after the date of September 24 are approximately 1-in-50. Read full post: [\*\*With the usual caveats, I'm happy to say that the 2023 Texas hurricane season is over - Space City Weather\*\*](#)

There could still be a tropical storm or a disturbance that brings us rain in October; however, those events would be mostly moisture events rather than serious wind or surge events. Because of the potential for flooding with tropical storms or other moisture events, the TGCRVOAD recommends that we continue to stress the importance of preparedness.

### SBA Announces Major Changes

The Small Business Administration (SBA) announced major changes to its disaster loan program, including:

- Increasing loan limits for primary residences from \$200,000 to \$500,000 and for personal property from \$40,000 to \$100,000.
- Removing the administrative limit on landscaping.
- Increasing the initial payment deferral period from 5 to 12 months.
- Eliminating a restriction on property owners to only use disaster loan funds to mitigate a "similar" disaster event that caused damage to their home or business.
- Clarifying collateral requirements under which blanket liens on business assets that provide no liquidity in the event of default will not be required.

- Removing the requirement that businesses submit financial statements with every reconsideration or appeal request for a previously declined application.
- Expanding eligibility to consumer or marketing cooperatives.

These changes will make it easier for disaster survivors and small businesses to access the financial assistance they need to recover from disasters

In addition to these changes, the SBA is also expanding its mitigation assistance to other types of hazards beyond the declared disaster event. This will ensure that property owners can use their disaster loan funds to rebuild stronger and more resilient against multiple types of hazards.

## **Details**

## **FEMA Disaster Resilience Zones**

### **New Screening Tools**

Nonprofits and government now have access to multiple new screening tools that aid in understanding the needs of our population.

**The Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool (CEJST)** uses economic and census data as well as the **National Risk Index (NRI)** to **identify overburdened and underserved census tracts.**

High CEJST tracts are determined by several criteria. These include climate change, which encompasses flood and wildfire risks, as well as energy usage. Health concerns such as asthma, diabetes, heart disease, and low life expectancy are also considered. Additionally, the cost of housing and lack of green space, transportation, legacy pollution, water and wastewater, and workforce

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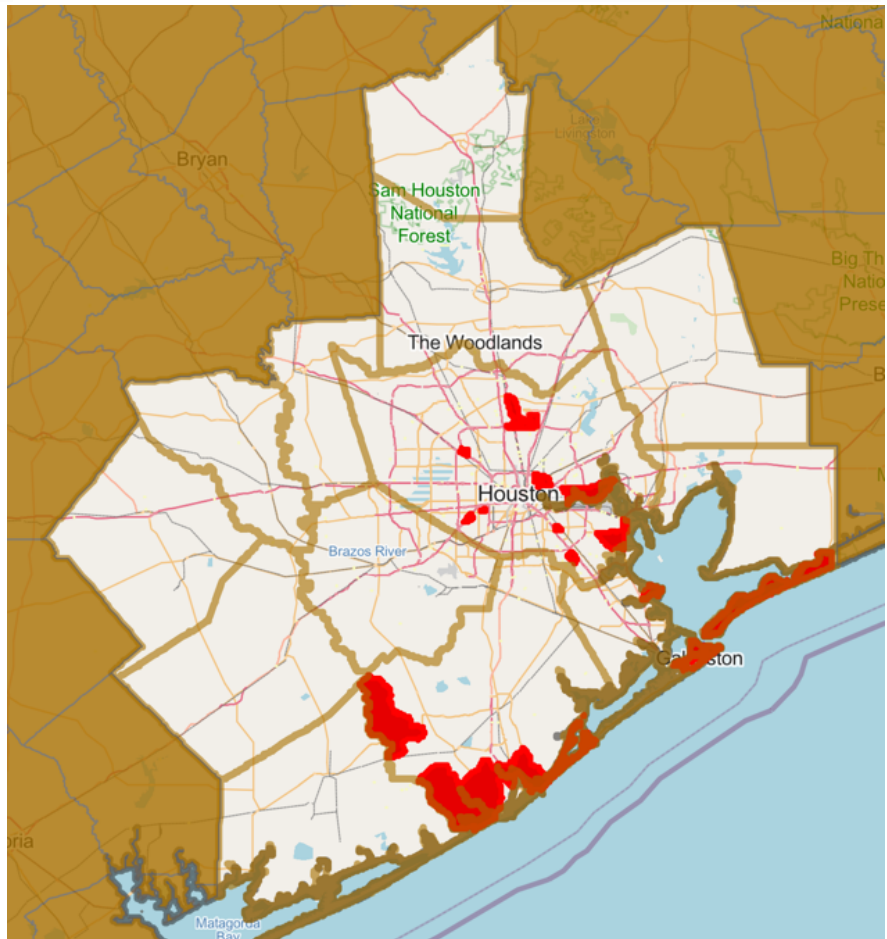
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development factors such as linguistic isolation, low income, poverty, and unemployment are considered.

Census tracts with the highest CEJST scores in Harris, Brazoria, and Galveston County are **designated** as "**Community Disaster Resilience Zones.**" Community Disaster Resilience Zones (**shown in red**) aim to build and strengthen community resilience across the nation by driving federal, public, and private resources to the most at-risk and in-need communities.



High CEJST tracts are highlighted in blue shading on the detailed maps below. These tracts are generally the same as tracts with an **SVI** > 0.7500, but not always.

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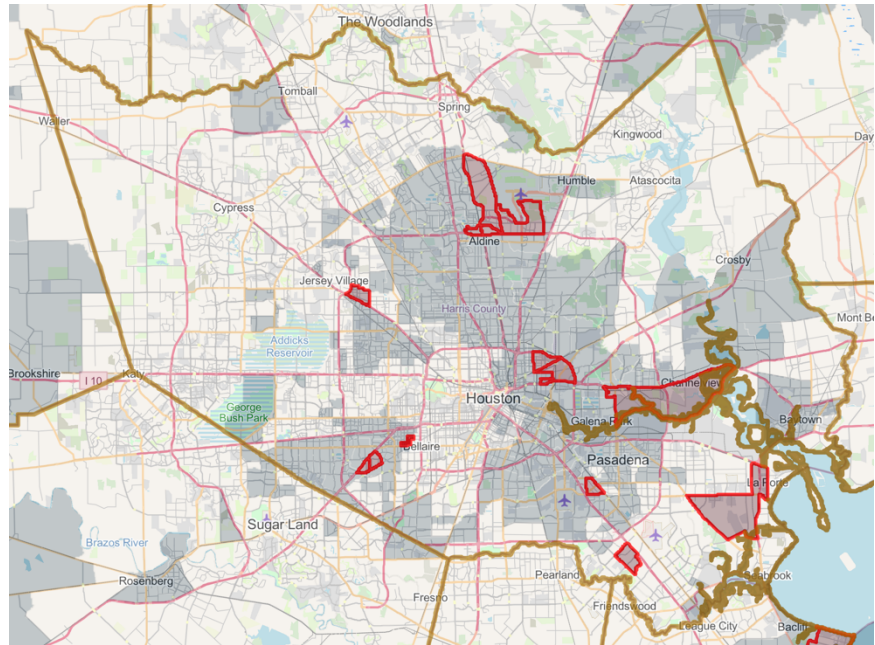
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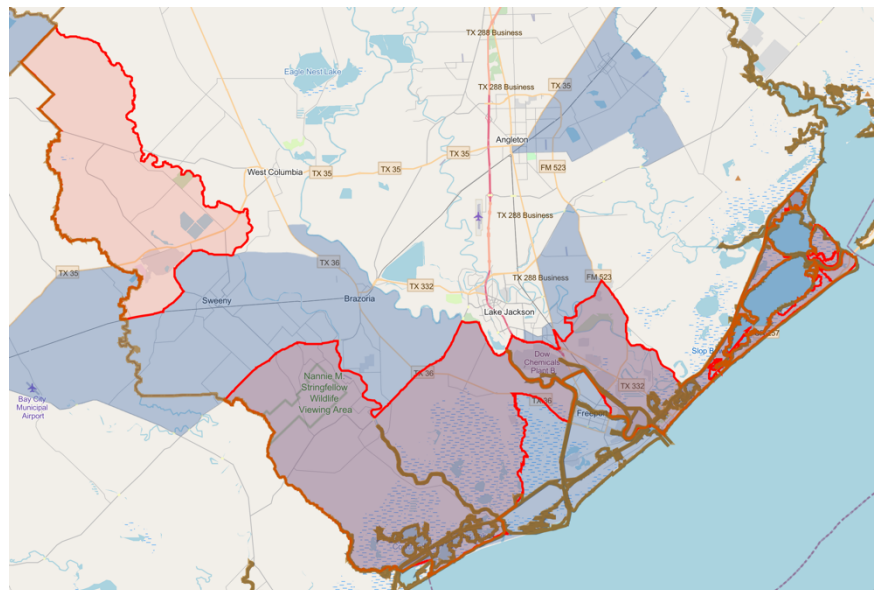
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## Harris County



Harris County OHSEM published an analysis of the DRZs in Harris County, available [here](#).

## Brazoria and Galveston Counties



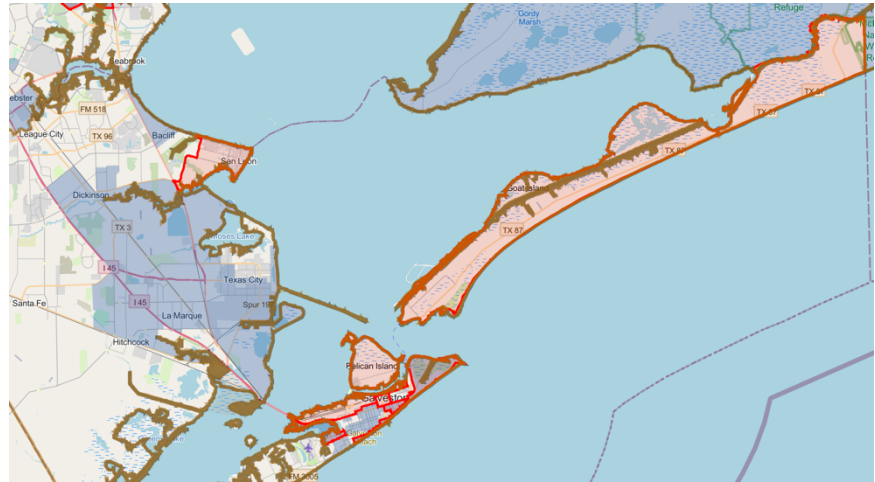
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Twenty-five census tracts in the HGAC area have been designated as DRZs, with a combined population of just under 110,000 people. All but one of these tracts have cited climate change (specifically flood risk) as a significant burden. Workforce development was also mentioned as a burden in most tracts affecting 81% of the population in the DRZs. Legacy pollution was found to be affecting 41% of the population, followed by housing (30%), health (27%), transportation (27%), waste and wastewater (19%), and energy (11%).

We encourage our members to thoroughly examine the details provided by these new tools to gain a better understanding of the factors that affect our community. While statistics can be helpful, it is always best to get to know our communities and clients personally. We hope that this data will spark further conversation and a deeper understanding of the challenges our communities face.

**Harris County has more FEMA-designated 'disaster resilience zones' than anywhere else**

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## Calendar

**November 8, 2023**  
**9:30 - 11:00**

**General Membership Meeting**  
**Greater Houston United Way**  
**50 Waugh Drive**  
**Houston TX 77007**

During this meeting, we will be accepting nominations for the positions of Chair and Secretary. Elections will take place in January 2024 and the elected members will serve a two-year term from 2024 to 2026. Nominations will also be accepted from the attendees during the January meeting.

We will also elect a new Vice-Chair to serve out the balance of Paige LoBue's term (2024) in January. Paige recently accepted a new position which takes her out of the disaster world. So, in January 2025 we will elect a Vice-Chair and Treasurer to serve from 2025-2027.

*On a personal note, it is my intent to step down as TGCRVOAD Chair in January. I have thoroughly enjoyed serving as your Chair and look forward to supporting the TGCRVOAD in whatever capacity I am requested to serve in the future.*

*- Gary*

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## Announcements

### Getting it Right

**Getting it Right** is a virtual all-inclusive Emergency Planning workshop series. It is intended for Emergency Managers, Planners, Operational Positions, Disability Communities, Disability Advocates, Non-Profit Partners, VOAD, Social Services Organizations, Clinicians, Hospitals, and Contractors (wheelchair, oxygen, etc.) [\*\*Register Here.\*\*](#)

**Tuesday  
October 17th  
10 AM - 11 AM**

### **EMERGENCY & DISASTER PREPAREDNESS: COORDINATING FOR DME**

Mark Gowen, *CPA, COF, CFO/Controller Angel Medical Supply*

Victoria Peterson, *President TexMEP Association*

**Wednesday  
October 18th  
10 AM - 11 AM**

### **ESRD PLAN, LEARN, AND PLAN AGAIN**

Mary Albin, *BS, CPHQ Executive Director Alliant Health Solutions*

### **EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS FOR DIALYSIS**

H. Doc Berryhill *Director of Group Biomed Services - Galaxy DaVita Biomed*

**Thursday  
October 19th  
10 AM - 11 AM**

### **HOUSTON COMMISSION ON DISABILITIES (HCOD)**

Meridith Silcox, *HCOD Chair*  
Angel Ponce, *MOPD Director*  
Ricky Harris, *HCOD Co-Chair*

### **FEMA REGION 6 DISABILITY INTEGRATION**

Logan Perkes *Portfolio Disability Integration Specialist  
FEMA Region 6 Texas Integration and Recovery Office*

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## Consensus of Engagement

On May 10<sup>th</sup> the General Membership adopted a revised version of the Consensus of Engagement.

Members should **download the Consensus of Engagement**, sign it, scan it, and email it to [sonya.meyers@hopedrtx.org](mailto:sonya.meyers@hopedrtx.org).

## Positions Open!

**COMMUNICATIONS Chair** - responsible for the website, newsletter, situational awareness, internal communications, and external Communication Support

**INDIVIDUAL, FAMILY, & COMMUNITY RESOURCES Chair** - membership directory, resources by county, gap analysis

**OPERATIONAL COLLABORATION Chair** - support enhancement of Functions in Disaster; interface with the LTRCs

Contact [chair.tgcrvoad@icloud.com](mailto:chair.tgcrvoad@icloud.com) for more information!

## Meet Tonya Clark

Tonya serves as the Regional Voluntary Agency Liaison for our region and is a member of the Incident Support Task Force. The Regional Voluntary Agency Liaison role supports volunteer and donation management, VOAD coordination in addition to creation, education, mentorship and integration of Long-Term Recovery and COAD groups.



Tonya began her career in emergency management by receiving her bachelor's degree in Emergency and Disaster Management. Before joining TDEM, Tonya was an Emergency Management Specialist in the city-county of El Paso, where she collaborated with VOAD groups, non-profits, and faith-based organizations, during the COVID-19 pandemic and migrant crisis.

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Tonya joined the TDEM team as a Recovery Coordinator for Harris and Chambers counties, assisting jurisdictions, private non-profits, and special districts in identifying post-disaster resources and federal and state funding opportunities through the Public Assistance process.

Tonya has cultivated specialized experience supporting vulnerable populations by providing mass care services, transportation coordination, and volunteer and donations management assistance in times of crisis. Tonya is passionate about collaborating with communities to build resiliency by creating and implementing sustainable whole-community practices.

Please join us in welcoming Tonya!

## **Situation Briefs Published**

None this period