

Texas A&M University Collaborative Promotes Disaster Resilience for the Gulf Coast

COLLEGE STATION, TX – The destructive power of hurricanes, tropical storms and other natural disasters constantly pose a threat to life and property along the Gulf Coast of Texas.

Texas A&M University's Community Resilience Collaborative (CRC) is a partnership between the university's Texas Sea Grant College Program and Texas Target Communities. CRC members recognized the need to prepare coastal communities for disasters.

"We focus on assisting communities to make decisions that will help them become more resilient to storms and disasters," said Heather Wade, senior associate director for Planning and Extension, Texas Sea Grant Program and CRC's co-director.

The collaborative has several components aimed at achieving this goal, including providing technical assistance for hazard mitigation planning.

"Our first priority is helping coastal communities that have few staff and limited resources," said Wade. "Our specialists assist with the development and review of policies and the writing and updating of mitigation plans where there is a need."

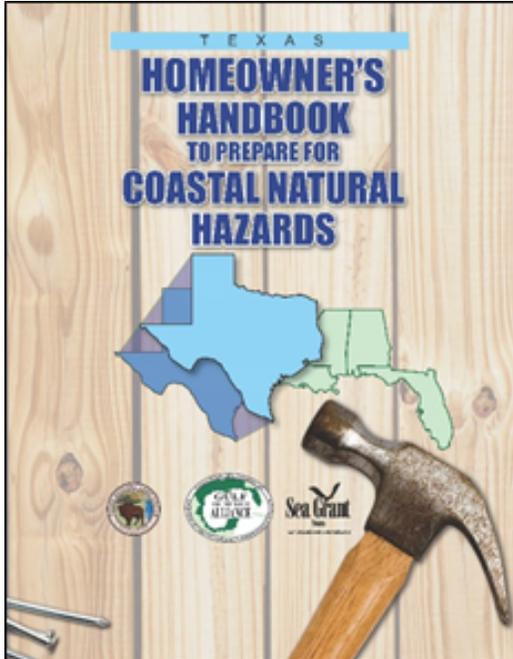
Another goal is community outreach to provide preparedness education. This is accomplished through the distribution of thousands of publications at workshops, fairs, disaster recovery centers and other public events throughout the year.

Community Planning Tools and Publications Include:

- "The Eye of the Storm," a preparedness publication, helps to prepare individuals and families before, during and after a disaster.
- "Texas Homeowners Handbook to Prepare for Coastal Natural Hazard" is CRC's most popular publication. It provides 76 pages of detailed information on individual and family preparedness. The handbook includes information on protecting property in addition to safety preparedness. Texas A&M recently partnered with FEMA to distribute the handbook to Hurricane Harvey survivors at Disaster Recovery Centers as well as hardware and home-improvement stores where mitigation specialists visit.
- Coastal Community Resilience Index is a unique tool offered by CRC. With the help of staff from the Texas Sea Grant, local community officials can complete this self-assessment index to predict if their community will maintain an acceptable level of operation and capability after a disaster.
- "Weather Ready Texas" provides weather-related information and alerts about potential hazards and appropriate actions to coastal Texans on social media (Twitter: @WeatherReadyTX and Facebook: facebook.com/WeatherReadyTX/. These accounts are affiliated with Weather-Ready Nation, a program of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), designed to improve and increase the nation's weather hazard and resilience forecasts and ultimately increase weather readiness.



Heather Wade, right, and other Texas A&M team members met with Nueces County officials to discuss hazard mitigation planning. Photo by Heather Wade.



Texas Homeowner's Handbook to Prepare for Coastal Natural Hazards

Other resources to assist recovery efforts are located on the University's Texas Sea Grant website: <http://texasseagrant.org>. The site includes links to funding resources, videos and publications to use in recovery planning.

Texas A&M University's CRC is funded by the university, NOAA and the National Sea Grant College program, which was established by the U.S. Congress in 1966 to create and maintain a healthy coastal environment and economy.

To download the Homeowners Handbook visit:

<http://texasseagrant.org/news/article/homeowners-handbook-available-to-help-texans-prepare-for-next-storm/>

For additional information visit:

- <http://Texas-Sea-Grant.tamu.edu>
- <https://disastersafety.org/hurricane/after-a-hurricane-safety-tips/>