

Valerie & Ted – Thank you both very much for helping to get the word out on important storm-related and City matters. – Cathie

Here is the latest info...

Important clarification: Some City Public Works crews will be out Sunday clearing leaves and debris **only around storm drains** in an effort to keep them clear for when it rains in the hopes of avoiding flooding (or at least to minimize it to the degree possible).

The City will not be out collecting leaves. All residents should ensure that any leaves they have raked **are not** in the streets, as this will only cause problems when the rain starts and storm drains may become clogged from leaves travelling from piles in the streets to the storm drains. If leaves you have raked travel and clog storm drains near your home you are more likely to get flooding in the area and water in your home.

On Saturday, the City contacted the two major political parties in the State to let them know that City Public Works crews on Sunday will, among other tasks, be picking up all political signs, as a safety precaution. Any City residents who have signs in their yards will want to get them and bring them inside until after the storm has passed. Signs collected by the City will be stored at the Public Works Dept. (Trolley Barn, 900 Wilmington Rd.), and may be collected by candidates and/or their representatives after the storm.

When the storm reaches here predictions are for 45 to 55 mph sustained winds and gusts up to 65, and this may be constant for the time period from Sunday to Tuesday. The storm is moving at only 7 to 12 mph, which is why it will be stalled over our area for an extended time, and as predicted before, will be here for six high tide cycles.

Current rainfall predictions are lower than earlier ones, expecting four to eight inches of rainfall over the five day period. This still means, however, that flash flooding is possible and likely to occur.

The full moon on Monday is expected to produce the highest tide levels for the duration of the storm event. Monday's high tide time here in the City is right about noon, and the next high tide after that is a little after midnight on Tuesday. The tide level is expected to be between 8.5 to 9 feet. This compares to the record high tide we experienced back in April, 2010, when the high tide was 9.5 feet.

Gov. Markell declared a limited state of emergency beginning at 8 pm on Saturday. Evacuations are ordered and should be completed no later than 8 pm on Sunday. The City neighborhoods subject to the mandatory evacuations are: Washington Park, Dobbinsville, Riverbend, Penn Valley, Buttonwood and from the River shoreline to 4th Street. City VIPS personnel will be distributing paper notices door to door Sunday morning.

Two shelters in New Castle County will be open at William Penn and Middletown high schools. Evacuees are encouraged to stay with relatives or friends outside of the coastal areas, and shelters are available as a last resort for persons with nowhere to go. Persons going to shelters should bring sleeping bags and/or bedding, as floor space will be provided for sleeping. Pets will be accepted at the shelters, however housed in a separate area from the general population.

A 2-1-1 helpline has been established for residents to call to obtain information and assistance for anything of a non-emergency nature. Of course, all persons with emergencies or needing assistance from EMS or law enforcement should call 9-1-1.

Mayor Reese has decided that non-essential City personnel should not report to work on Monday, so standard City operations and services will be closed. Of course, Police and Public Works personnel will be working throughout the storm event. The status of the schedule for non-essential City workers and City operations for Tuesday shall be decided at a later time.

The City has suspended trash collection services for Monday and Tuesday and will be collecting trash instead on Thursday and Friday, in lieu of recycling collection. Also, the Lion's Club Halloween Parade planned for Tuesday evening has been cancelled.