



## City of Mexico Beach Citizen Update As of 11/6/18

### Essential Information

- A mandatory boil water notice remains in effect for Mexico Beach
- Enhanced checkpoints remains in effect for Mexico Beach
- A burn ban remains in effect for Bay County
- No curfew is in place at this time

### Important Contact Information

#### Mexico Beach City Hall

To contact City Hall, please call the numbers below:

1-252-996-0660

1-252-996-0662

1-850-648-5700

Due to limited resources, our temporary phone lines tend to go in and out. We thank you for your patience and encourage you to keep trying these numbers until you get through. We have increased staffing of these phone lines.

#### Florida Department of Financial Services Insurance Consumer Helpline

If you have questions about insurance, contact the Insurance Consumer Helpline at 1-877-693-5236.

### Checking Homes for Habitability

City building inspectors have been assessing the habitability of all structures, which is the first step in assessing damage. The inspector will place a green, yellow, or red sticker on your front door. Green means the structure is habitable, yellow means the structure may be habitable but the inspector cannot completely determine, and red means the structure is not habitable.

On Monday, November 5th, the City will begin the process of Substantial Damage Estimation which is simply the estimate of damage to the structure and is required of every home in the community as part of the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP). The team has projected they will complete about 150 home assessments per day. If your home's damage is more than 50% of the market value as of the Jan 1, 2018 (less land value) then you will be required to bring your home up to the current code in our land development regulations. Homeowners can appeal the Substantial Damage Estimate and we will work with the owner as necessary. Our goal is to get you back in your homes and to help you navigate this process while protecting the community from future risk.



**Beginning Monday, November 5th, certain additional repair contractor types will be allowed in the City to begin minor repair work.** Repairs and maintenance are permitted to protect the integrity of the structure and prevent further damage. At this time, the following categories of contractors and professionals are allowed entry into Mexico Beach when they have authorization from the homeowner to do remediation or repair work: Structural engineers and related professionals, Electricians, Roofers, and Plumbers.

All contractors should be registered with the City of Mexico Beach and licensed in the state of Florida. Unlicensed contractors are always an issue in the aftermath of disasters. Report unlicensed contractors at 1.866.532.1440. Contractors must have professional credentials and a contract or work order authorized by the owner they are working for in order to gain access at the checkpoint.

As for new construction or reconstruction, the City will have to place a moratorium on new construction or reconstruction until we can determine new base flood elevations and any strengthening of wind load code to mitigate damage for the future. We are working quickly to determine necessary changes so owners and businesses can begin rebuilding as soon as possible, but appreciate your patience as we recover from this catastrophic event.

#### **Utilities Bill Notice**

We understand that this is a very difficult time for us all as we pick up the pieces of our homes and lives after Hurricane Michael. We have been overwhelmed by the love and support we have received, and we are working hard to restore utilities to the City.

All utility bills including water, sewer and sanitation services were suspended as of Wednesday, October 10, 2018. Customers will not receive utility bills until restoration is complete. You will not be billed for any services during the outage period.

Additionally, the October 1, 2018 bill that was issued before the storm (due 10/20) will not be subject to late fees.

We anticipate that services will be restored soon and expect to render the next bill in December for services from September 21, 2018 through November 20, 2018. Again, customers will not be billed for any services during the outage period.

The outage period ends once service is restored to your area. If you do not have any usage, you will not be billed, even after restoration occurs.

For those whose homes were destroyed or are inhabitable, please call City Hall to disconnect your utility services. The City will not disconnect until notified by the owner. Contact us at 1-252-996-0660, 1-252-996-0662 or 850-648-5700.



Please review the City letter posted on our website for more information. This notice is being mailed out to customers.

Again, we thank you for your support and understanding. We are making great progress thanks to the incredible utility crews from across the state who are working tirelessly to restore our City. The next time you see a worker, take some time to thank them for all they have done. They are miracle workers!

### **Power**

Power has now been restored to all homes in Mexico Beach where it is safe to do so. Many experts predicted it would take many months to restore power, water and sewer. We are so grateful for the endless hours by power and utility crews from across the country to get us up and running.

As Duke Energy began to restore power, city inspectors (through EPCI) marked homes green or red to indicate whether power could be safely turned on or not. **Green** means the home has been inspected and can safely receive power. **Red** means we either could not tell if it was safe because the homeowner wasn't there and it was in area that received a lot of water, or it was inspected and found that the home needed an electrician to do work to make the electrical system safe.

It is not safe to receive electrical service until your home has been inspected. Damage to your home's electrical system can result in fire if not repaired properly.

Duke is now going back to check all meters they installed. The City has advised that if they find power on a meter marked red, it should be removed until the home has been inspected. If there wasn't a main breaker outside the home and accessible to the crews, we had to pull the meter. After the destruction of Hurricane Michael, the last thing we need is to have houses catch fire. If you have a red dot on your meter, you need to have it inspected and you may need an electrician to repair wiring or systems. Any home where salt water reached the electrical outlets should have an electrician check all electrical systems to make sure it is safe. This is a frequent cause of fire after flooding. We know it is inconvenient but we must ensure public safety. We are working as quickly as possible to perform inspections after homeowners contact us, so let's move from red to green safely!

Go to <https://www.myfloridalicense.com/wl11.asp> to check the status of any electrician you may be considering

### **Water and Sewer**



The Mexico Beach water tower suffered a fatal blow during the storm. It will soon be picked up by a scrap steel vendor. We are hoping to be able to save the City logo from the tower and place it in a prominent area at a later date.

About 45% of residences are still without water/sewer and those properties are on the west end of town. The destruction was significant and we are working diligently to restore service as soon as possible. All water/sewer service has been restored from 22nd Street east to the County line.

Even when your water comes on, please understand that the whole system is not fully up. We are testing the water system for broken lines and leaks. Please use water conservation measures at this time. Lift stations are on generators or bypass.

### **Boil Water Notice**

A Boil Water notice is in effect until further notice. The water plant and chlorination station are 100% operational. The City has now tested water quality twice and if the last test is clear, we hope to be able to lift the boil water notice very soon.

- If you have utility power or generator power, bring the water to a rolling boil for at least three minutes
- If you do not have power, use bottled water or eight drops of regular, unscented household bleach per gallon of water to prepare it for cooking use
- For drinking, cooking, washing wounds, and brushing teeth, use bottled water or boiled water. Water should be held to a rolling boil for one minute.
- Bottled water is widely available throughout the City

### **Private property debris removal**

The City of Mexico Beach has submitted a request to FEMA to help pay for private property debris removal and are awaiting final approval. If approved, once the City completes debris collection on right of ways, public land, and waterways, we will begin offering to collect large debris on private property. The owner will be required to complete a right of entry waiver before the debris contractor can begin. Very soon we will have the waiver form available at City Hall and on the City's website for out-of-town owners. Stay tuned for that announcement on Facebook and the website. We are also working to identify and schedule volunteer organizations with experience in private property debris removal who may be able to assist.

### **White Goods**

The City is collecting white goods (appliances, etc.) which will be stored at Pier Road until they are decommissioned. Once decommissioned that debris will be moved out of the City.

### **Boats and Cars**



We are working to have a location permitted for housing automobiles and boats until the owners can come and claim them. The police department will be tracking the vehicles and vessels in order to quickly help owners with recovery. Any vehicles/vessels not claimed will be moved out of the City.

### **Enhanced Checkpoints**

Enhanced checkpoints remain in effect. The City will only be open to the following:

- Residents, Property Owners and Property Management Companies: You must have evidence of property ownership or residency (driver's license, deed, utility bill, etc.) to get your credentials. The City will provide you with a pass for your vehicle and a wristband that should be worn while in Mexico Beach. If you are already in the city, you can get a wristband and vehicle permit at City Hall beginning Tuesday, Oct. 23 in the afternoon
- Insurance Adjusters: Insurance adjusters must have a copy of their state-issued license, evidence of the company they work for and the specific appointment they are going to. Insurance adjusters will be given a single day pass
- Debris haulers who are part of the team contracted through the City of Mexico Beach: No other debris haulers will be credentialed or admitted. Credentials will be provided to the main contractor
- Credentialed volunteer teams and charities who have been approved to be in Mexico Beach: Credentials will be provided by the Volunteer Coordinator

Federal, state and local credentialed recovery officials: You will need to show evidence of your credentials but you will not need a specific Mexico Beach credential.

If you are a homeowner with a question about outside contractors, contact City Hall. Exceptions will be made in certain circumstances.

Anyone other than those in these approved groups **WILL BE TURNED AWAY** at the checkpoints.

### **Resources**

- Camp Happy Tummys, 111 22nd St. (next to City Hall) - Hours: Breakfast 8:30 a.m.; dinner at 4 p.m.
- Mango Marley's/Just Another Day in Paradise food truck (3102 US-98) - Hot meals served from sunrise to sunset, ice, and supplies
- First Baptist Church (823 N 15th St) - Tarps, clothing, supplies, Verizon wifi, medic station
- AT&T (7th Street) - Free charging station
- Catholic Charities USA (7th Street) - Free laundry facility
- Samaritan's Purse (15th Street) - Chaplains



- Florida Department of Health (15th Street) - Medical care and immunizations, Monday-Friday, 10 a.m. - 3 p.m. (CST)
- Bathrooms - There are port-a-lets located throughout the City

### **Garbage**

Pickup has resumed. Household garbage cans placed by the street and dumpsters are collected daily Monday through Friday. Be sure your can is by the street in order to be collected. Do NOT put construction debris in garbage cans - it will not be picked up.

### **Mail**

If you have a mailbox, mail delivery service has started back. If you do not want mail delivered there, you must have your mail forwarded. If you no longer have a mailbox, the Post Office will hold your mail for 30 days from the date of the storm (Oct. 10). By Nov. 10, by law they have to return your mail.

### **Personal Safety**

During national disasters, the risk of disease is increased due to unsanitary conditions and dangerous conditions.

- Use hand sanitizer, wear gloves, and take other measures to avoid infection
- Watch out for nails, sharp objects and be careful where you walk
- Many items, such as rugs and rug backing may have chemicals that will irritate your skin
- Drink plenty of water so you will not get dehydrated
- Take care of yourself and others. Watch for signs of overheating, exhaustion and dehydration

### **Volunteers**

All volunteers have been screened and vetted to protect our residents. They will be identifiable by their t-shirt logos and they will have a team leader with them. Please note that these are volunteers only and no one will ask you for payment or credit card information. Be wary of contractors coming door-to-door. These volunteers will do the same work for free.

If you or someone you know is interested in volunteering, please contact Volunteer Florida at 1-850-414-7400 or the City of Mexico Beach Volunteer Coordinator at [volunteer@mexicobeachgov.com](mailto:volunteer@mexicobeachgov.com).

### **Check for updates on Facebook and Twitter**

The City of Mexico Beach will use its Facebook (@CityofMexicoBeach) and Twitter (@MexicoBeachGov) pages to update residents on the latest advisories and information. Like and follow our pages to stay up to date on what's happening in our recovery. Please note that these are the only official city information pages.