



**DALLAS COUNTY
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
OFFICE OF PUBLIC INFORMATION**

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For Immediate Release September 8, 2008

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DCHHS Offers Suggestions for Persons Evacuating to Dallas
Agency Gears up Response Efforts for Hurricane Ike

September 8, 2008 (Dallas) — Emergency evacuation is a very stress filled event. To help persons that may be evacuating to Dallas from potential hurricane impacted areas, Dallas County Health and Human Services (DCHHS) is offering recommendations to improve their stay in temporary housing. All shelter locations provide basic items to all shelter residents; however, there are other items that can make the stay more comfortable. Persons evacuating to a temporary shelter to bring the following items: shower shoes (flip flops, sandals); prescription and over the counter medications for each family member; formula, powdered milk, and baby food; diapers; disposable wipes; eyeglasses or contacts; personal and feminine hygiene products; list of allergies; photo ID; and list of important phone numbers and account numbers. Parents may also want to bring a favorite item to help with their children's transition.

“DCHHS has learned many lessons during our recent hurricane response efforts, including tips to help those making the transition to temporary shelters,” said Zachary Thompson, DCHHS Director. “Persons who plan ahead and bring personal items they may need with them are more comfortable and better able to deal with the temporary inconveniences. The suggestions we offer apply whether people plan to stay in a hotel, temporary shelter or the home of a friend or family member.

DCHHS is again gearing up to assist with the sheltering of persons evacuating from areas in the possible path of Hurricane Ike. The Dallas County Medical Reserve Corps (MRC) and the Dallas County Medical Operations Center (DMOC) have been placed on stand-by. DCHHS Environmental Health and Epidemiology Assessment Team are conducting site visits of potential shelter facilities as a part of its on-going shelter surveillance program which monitors sanitary conditions in the shelters. Later in the week, DCHHS will move supplies from its stockpile to the shelters. DCHHS is also coordinating with the State of Texas about the potential evacuation of hospital patients, nursing home residents and other special needs individuals from areas in the path of the hurricane. DCHHS is a part of a coalition of local, regional and state emergency management, public health, and hospital preparedness from across the state of Texas. Hurricane Response efforts are coordinated on daily conference calls.

“The experts are predicting this will be a very busy hurricane season. DCHHS wants the public to know that we are ready, at a moment's notice, to respond to such emergencies by providing medical assessments and assistance, monitoring sanitation conditions of temporary shelters, and controlling any possible disease outbreaks,” Thompson concluded.