

From: Town of Bluffton <kchapman@townofbluffton.com>
To: Veldran, KatherineKatherineVeldran@gov.sc.gov
Date: 11/23/2015 10:30:33 AM
Subject: A Message from Mayor Sulka

Living on a tidal river, such as the May River, can have its ups and downs (pun intended). A few weeks ago our local tides were so high that things changed from the May River being a part of Bluffton to Bluffton being a part of the May River. Tidal flooding occurred throughout many of our community's low-lying areas. Places like the Bluffton Oyster Company found people wading through knee-high water.

What we experienced is commonly referred to as a King Tide. "King Tide" is a non-scientific term used to describe seasonally abnormal tides. These tides are naturally occurring, predictable events that typically take place when a spring tide coincides when the moon is closest to the earth during its twenty eight day cycle, known as perigee. Although there is no specific numerical standard, tides over a foot higher than the normal highest daily tide are generally considered a King Tide. In our state the South Carolina DHEC office forecast King Tides when tides are predicted to be 1.19 feet above a normal high tide in the Charleston Harbor.

This past King Tide was a particularly interesting one. The extremely high tide of 10.3 feet, a little over two feet higher than normal, on Tuesday, October 27th was the third highest locally recorded tide. Additionally, according to DHEC's "SC King Tide Recap," King Tides were observed from October 24th to November 1st along South Carolina's coast, making the event three days longer than initial predictions.

According to DHEC, the next King Tide is predicted to take place from November 24th to the 28th. Tides are supposed to be about six inches lower than last time, but it is still important that everyone is prepared and takes the necessary precautions. Water levels are projected to be the highest (9.9 feet) during the morning high tides of November 25th and 26th.

Fortunately for us, most of Bluffton is at a high enough elevation that we do not face the same flooding issues that can be seen in places like Charleston. However, we should still be aware of and prepared for potential coastal flood risks. The Town's Stormwater Management Division has developed a model using high resolution elevation and local tidal data to map areas at risk of coastal flooding during future extreme high tides. To view these maps please visit www.neighborsforcleanwater.org or "Like" Neighbors for Clean Water on Facebook.

More information on King Tides in South Carolina can be found at the Department of Health and Environmental Control's webpage (<http://www.scdhec.gov/HomeAndEnvironment/Water/CoastalManagement/KingTidesHelp/>) or the My Coast: South Carolina webpage (<http://mycoast.org/sc>).

Happy Thanksgiving Bluffton!

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