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SCEMD

Office of the Adjutant General

State Emergency Operations Center
2779 Fish Hatchery Road, West Columbia, SC 29172

Hurricane Matthew

NEWS RELEASE #1

Immediate Release

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South Carolina Should Prepare for Hurricane Matthew

Columbia, S.C. (Sunday, October 2, 2016) - The S.C. Emergency Management Division has begun initial preparations for Hurricane Matthew, currently a **category four hurricane** that could affect the East Coast U.S. in the coming days. Based on the storm's projected strength and uncertain movement over the next week, SCEMD has recommended that members of South Carolina's Emergency Response Team begin reviewing plans and notifying response staff.

This weekend, SCEMD Director Kim Stenson conducted conference calls with county emergency managers, SERT agencies and local National Weather Service offices. The agencies on these coordination calls shared current status information and discussed emergency plans in advance of any response to the storm.

"It's too soon to rule out any possibilities," Stenson said "Hurricane Matthew has quickly strengthened into a dangerous storm and its projected path could put South Carolina in harm's way. Fortunately, people in South Carolina have time. While we hope we never see a hurricane head our way, we all need prepare for the possible effects."

Forecasters with our local NWS offices predict that even if Hurricane Matthew remains at sea, the state's coast could see tropical storm-force winds and flooding. People in potentially vulnerable areas should review personal safety plans, become familiar local evacuation zones in coastal counties and locate the nearest hurricane evacuation routes. This information is detailed in the 2016 S.C. Hurricane Guide, currently available at all Walgreen's stores statewide, at all rest areas along interstates and for download at scemd.org.

The Division has increased operational readiness to Condition 4. OPCON 4 is the next highest response level above normal, day-to-day activities, and emergency managers make initial preparations for the possibility of any hazardous situations. Select personnel from SCEMD's Operations and Preparedness sections continue to monitor Hurricane Matthew from the State Emergency Operations Center in West Columbia.

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"South Carolina's emergency management program minimizes loss of life and property damage from all hazards."