

COMMUNITYMANAGER

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Back-to-Back Storms

Hurricanes devastate the Houston area and threaten Florida; 2017 Large-Scale Managers Workshop canceled due to storm damage, flooding.

BY JULIE WARREN

Sienna Plantation and First Colony Community Association—both in the southwestern Houston suburbs and the planned site of this year’s Large-Scale Managers Workshop—were among numerous communities in coastal Texas that suffered record-breaking rainfall, devastating floods, mandatory evacuations, and damaging high winds from Hurricane Harvey in late August.

Although Harvey was quickly downgraded to a tropical storm, weather patterns stalled the hurricane’s remnants over the greater Houston area for days, bringing more than 50 inches of rain and severe flooding

to several neighborhoods, including Sienna Plantation in Missouri City and First Colony in nearby Sugar Land.

Dozens of Sienna Plantation homes suffered wind damage from a tornado spawned by the hurricane. And like others in the greater Houston area, Sienna Plantation residents, along with many in First Colony, were required to evacuate their homes because of high water.

ASSOCIATIONS KICK INTO GEAR

Levees that protect First Colony and Sienna Plantation communities “worked as they should have,” according to Sandra K. Denton, CMCA, LSM, PCAM, »

4 Take Note
CAI news and upcoming events.

6 All Hands On Deck
A complicated restoration.

11 EXECUTIVE INSIGHTS
News and information for senior management.

20 Common Area
Extinguishing the flames.

22 Global PMDP
CAI partners with Saudi organization.



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Houston officials reported dozens of deaths and thousands of water-related rescues across south Texas due to the storm and its aftermath.

Disaster Resources

For the most up-to-date information on what's happening in communities affected by hurricanes Harvey or Irma, visit the specific state or municipality's website. CAI also will update general resource information regularly at www.caionline.org/DisasterResources. To participate in online conversations about what's needed and how you can contribute, CAI members also should visit The Exchange, CAI's open forum, at <https://exchange.caionline.org>. Resources for debris removal, water damage remediation, and other restoration services are available through CAI's Professional Services Directory at directory.caionline.org.

» Additional CAI resources are available on p.21 of this issue.



general manager of Sienna Plantation Associations. Cary Kelley, CMCA, AMS, LSM, PCAM, First Colony's executive director, also credits the levee system with minimizing flood damage within his community. But, Denton adds, "the amount of rain was beyond anything ever planned." Sienna Plantation suffered some of the worst flooding in Fort Bend County, according to a report in the *Houston Business Journal*.

Kelley says that First Colony maintenance staff were hard at work to remove debris from common areas as well as assisting homeowners by offering community trailers to move rubble off of private yards within days. "(First Colony) has suspended deed restriction enforcement and collection actions for 60 days," Kelley says. "And our Community Standards staff have been working with community members ... to identify their needs."

As well as recovery is going, however, limited access to transportation, shelter, and other resources after the deadly Category 4 hurricane compelled the cancellation of the Large-Scale Managers Workshop, which was originally scheduled for Sept. 13–16.

Texas is home to more than 4 million residents in nearly 20,000 community associations, according to the recently updated *National and State Statistical Review for 2016* (see p. 4).

Officials reported dozens of deaths and thousands of water rescues across south Texas due to the storm and its aftermath. Communities in nearby Louisiana and other states also were impacted.

ANOTHER THREAT

As heroic rescue and recovery efforts got underway in the greater Houston area over the Labor Day weekend and immediately after, another powerful storm—Hurricane Irma—threatened communities throughout Florida with 185 mile-per-hour winds, gusts of up to 200 miles per hour, and record storm surges. Florida Gov. Rick Scott quickly declared a state of emergency in every county and activated the National Guard.

Days before Hurricane Irma was expected to reach Florida, communities there were preparing emergency shelters and planning recovery efforts as residents stocked up on water, nonperishable food, and gasoline. Even though the storm's track remains uncertain as *Community Manager* goes to press, many south Florida residents were already evacuating and coastal communities in Georgia and the Carolinas were initiating emergency plans.

COURAGE, KINDNESS ENCOURAGED

Home to nearly 10 million residents in 48,000 community associations, Florida



has more common-interest communities than any other U.S. state. Texas has the third highest number.

“As countless Texas and Florida residents are trying to save their own lives and property, many also are taking responsibility through their roles in their associations for the lives and properties of others in their communities,” says Thomas M. Skiba, CAE, CAI’s chief executive officer. “Our members and community associations in these areas will be in the process of recovery for weeks, months, and possibly years.”

In a statement on CAI’s Greater Houston Chapter Facebook page, Pamela Bailey, CMCA, AMS, PCAM, chapter president and president of Chaparral Management, AAMC, encouraged community association professionals, particularly in affected communities, to “show our best side, our kindest and most compassionate sides” by suspending “compliance demands, threats of fines, and legal action” during September.

“This is the time for us to reach out and help our residents with water, lunch, bleach, or a hug,” Bailey wrote. “Allow us to be caring, compassionate souls to

our neighbors; if you want to make the 6 o’clock news, let it be a story of your goodness.”

Julie Warren is editor of Community Manager.

Texas Storm Relief and How to Help

CAI’s Houston Chapter Executive Director Stephanie Ferrante says the chapter is recruiting volunteers for its newly launched CAI Community Outreach Committee to assist Houston-area residents in need. Interested CAI members are asked to contact Chris Archambault at carchambault@daughtryjordan.com or Ferrante at stephanie@caihouston.org to donate resources or to volunteer.

“CAI is first and foremost about ‘community,’ ” Ferrante says, “and with so many of our friends and neighbors needing help, it’s time to give back and make a difference. Please let us know your specific need or the resources you are willing to provide, and we will coordinate efforts.”

To learn other ways to help residents and communities devastated by Hurricane Harvey, visit www.caionline.org/CAISupportsTexas. Other sites with information about recovery efforts include:

- emergency.portal.texas.gov
- transportation.gov/2017-hurricanes
- fema.gov/hurricane-harvey
- nvoad.org/
- safeandwell.communityos.org/cms