

Storm Update:

Wednesday, August 30, 2017

As Hurricane Harvey Finally Dissipates, Crawford Catastrophe ServicesSM Accelerates its Response

The rains associated with Hurricane Harvey have finally ceased, though not before dumping up to 50 inches of rain in some areas, making Harvey one of the most catastrophic storms to ever hit the Texas coast.¹ Though we do not have accurate totals for the cost of the damages right now, an early estimate theorizes that damages could exceed \$30 billion².

Crawford's Catastrophe ServicesSM team began watching the storm carefully as it grew from a tropical storm to a CAT 4 hurricane.

"We mobilized early, even before the storm made landfall, sending adjusters into the area to support early property and auto claims volume," said U.S. Property & Casualty CEO, Ken Tolson.

Temporary operations have been set up in Austin, Texas. This strategy proved critical in the aftermath of Superstorm Sandy in 2012, reducing delay and enabling us to avoid bottlenecks caused by publicly imposed travel restrictions. Now that the storm has dissipated, the team will move to Houston as soon as conditions permit.

"Our number one priority is to ensure we are positioned to respond quickly and in a highly coordinated fashion," said Tolson. "Our thoughts and prayers go out to those who have suffered losses, and we are doing everything we can to help people return to their homes, communities and businesses as soon as possible."

Of particular concern is the effect Harvey is having on the crude oil and gasoline industry. Houston is responsible for up to 25% of oil production and more than 10% of the country's refining capabilities. Crawford is advising its commercial clients to keep in close contact with risk management teams across both upstream and downstream supply chain partners.

"Crawford has a comprehensive roster of 5,000 adjusters, a network of over 3,000 contractors, 35,000 Lookers® and 2,000 drone operators available to support customers," said Rohit Verma, global chief operating officer. "Our teams have been alerted and are ready to respond."

"Based on what we are seeing, we expect the highest wind claims volume to come from Nueces County, and the highest flood claims volume to come from Harris and Galveston counties. However, wind damage is expected to be minimal, with most of the rebuilding work due to flooding," continued Verma.

“Large parts of Houston are still inaccessible, but we are looking for ways to access these areas as quickly as possible.”

As part of its mobilization strategy, Crawford is using an established induction program to provide onsite instruction to all adjusters based on carrier-specific processes and systems, making sure that all claims are addressed. As assignments are made, adjusters are immediately making contact with policyholders to obtain initial status and let them know that their needs are being addressed.

“Our call center has received nearly 10,000 calls, but we expect this volume to increase significantly as the storm dissipates and policyholders return to their communities,” said Tolson.

“We have a control center with the senior management of the organization carefully monitoring the situation to leave no stone unturned to help our customers,” continued Tolson. “Sadly, the storm emphasizes the vulnerability of key infrastructure to mitigate the effects of catastrophic weather.”

In addition to traditional claims adjusting, Crawford is supporting customers through our WeGoLook® network of over 35,000 Lookers®, who can initiate policyholder contact and gauge the scope of loss before the adjusting phase. Once the Federal Aviation Administration lifts flight restrictions, our drone network will be used to help assess damage to roofs and other properties.

“We are also heavily involved in assessing auto and heavy equipment damage caused by the storm,” said Verma. “In addition, Contractor Connection®, Crawford’s managed repair network, is already receiving claims and is providing water mitigation, board up, tree removal, roofing, and temporary housing service requests, among other needs. Once the storm moves out, Crawford is also prepared to receive requests for forensic accounting services to support business interruption analyses.”

For assistance with Hurricane Harvey or other catastrophic events, contact our 24-hour ClaimsAlert® call center at 1-877-346-0300.

Sending employees to areas affected by Harvey? Broadspire Chief Medical Officer Dr. Marcos Iglesias tells you what you need to know about protecting against waterborne diseases and other risks. [Learn more.](#)

Crawford ClaimsAlert

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1 Weather.com "Tropical Storm Harvey Total Rainfall Could Reach 50 Inches in Texas" Retrieved 8/28/17 from <https://weather.com/storms/hurricane/news/tropical-storm-hurricane-harvey-rain-flood-forecast-texas-louisiana>

² Bloomberg Markets "Harvey Costs Seen at Catastrophic Levels with Many Uninsured" Retrieved 8/28/17 from <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2017-08-27/harvey-s-cost-reaches-catastrophe-as-modelers-see-many-uninsured>