

August 29th, 2020

PRESS RELEASE - FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Dear Citizens of Sulphur,

Many of you are beginning to return to the area to check on damage and secure your homes, and on behalf of Mayor Danahay and the Department of Public Works, I would like to update you on the current status and path forward of the infrastructure of the City of Sulphur following the devastation of Hurricane Laura. Mayor Danahay, Police, Fire, and Public Works crews rode out the storm in various City buildings to be able to assess damages as soon as it was safe. The following are the damage assessments related to infrastructure as of today, August 29, 2020.

Water:

The City of Sulphur suffered significant damages to both water plants including wells, tanks, and generators. Water capabilities were completely lost during the storm, but the Water Plant, with the help of Maintenance and Wastewater, has been working around the clock to bring these facilities back online. As of the middle of the night last night 8/28/2020-8/29/2020, both facilities are functioning but at minimal capacity. Service may be intermittent, but we are working to make the service more stable. The City will have reduced flows off and on to rebuild pressure to the system, but please know that we have people working 24/7 to maintain and restore all water services to full capacity.

The boil advisory is extended until further notice. Once the facilities and pressures are stable and the Louisiana Department of Health has obtained samples and tested, we will notify the public when the advisory is lifted.

Due to the catastrophic damage associated with Hurricane Laura, some water mains, as well as hundreds of homeowner service lines were damaged. This has led to leaks throughout the City. Public Works Maintenance and the Fire Department continue to canvas the City looking for and shutting off these leaks. You can continue to submit leaks to the action line on the City's website. Response times will be extended.

We are asking citizens who have returned to conserve water until further notice.

Wastewater:

The Regional Wastewater Plant that services the City of Sulphur, City of Westlake, and some parts of Unincorporated Calcasieu was not accessible until early yesterday due to large transmission lines covering the only entrance and exit to the plant. The wastewater plant has sustained structural and electrical damages. The main generator to the plant is

functioning, but due to the electrical damages, different components of the plant will need their own generators to function. Wastewater Plant employees have been able to secure large generators that are in route to the plant and should arrive early next week.

As access is made, the dozens of wastewater lift and pump stations are being assessed. Once assessments are made, the Wastewater employees will begin the process of getting them back up and running as soon as possible.

There are pump trucks that are coming in to help take some load off these stations. Conservation of water will also help alleviate some of the strain on our wastewater system.

Streets:

After an initial push by the City, the City's debris contractor has begun working and is currently making their way throughout the City. The City and our contractor will not be able to push electrical poles or lines. This is something that Entergy Contractors will address while they are in the area. Please do not handle electric lines, poles, or equipment and watch out for low-lying poles or lines when traveling down streets. Traffic signals are not working. Remember that in accordance with LA RS 32:232.1: Vehicle approaching intersection in which traffic lights are inoperative: Unless otherwise directed by a law enforcement officer, when a traffic control signal is not functioning at an intersection, and the signal lights are completely dark, the intersection shall revert to an all-way stop.

Electricity:

Entergy is continuing to canvas the area and assess damages. An estimated restoration time will be available once their assessments are complete sometime this weekend or early next week. Once we receive this information, we will notify the public. After communicating with Entergy, restoration of services could be an extended period of time.

Natural Gas:

CenterPoint Energy is working their way through the area and shutting down leaks. If you smell a gas leak leave the area and contact 911.

Public Works Maintenance, Water Plant, Wastewater Plant, and Shop are continuing to work together around the clock to bring back essential services. We appreciate your patience and understanding through these times and hope you all remain safe and well.

Thank you,

Stacy Dowden
Director of Public Works

