
SHA is Prepared for Hurricane Earl

- The Maryland Department of Transportation's State Highway Administration (SHA) is taking precautions to protect travelers and communities as Hurricane Earl approaches Maryland's Eastern Shore.
- In advance of the storm, SHA crews are clearing storm drains, checking equipment and inventorying signs that may be needed in the event of downed trees or roads closed due to high water.
- Round-the-clock operators are monitoring the storm at the Statewide Operations Center (SOC) near BWI Thurgood Marshall Airport.
- During hurricanes, snow storms and other crises, the SOC doubles as SHA's Emergency Operations Center and coordinates closely with the Maryland Emergency Management Agency ([MEMA](#)) in Reisterstown.
- Personnel at the EOC will manage storm operations and potential cleanup on State maintained roads using a combination of technology and front line personnel.
- Maryland's Eastern Shore is expected to sustain high winds, heavy rains and storm swells that may cause significant flooding.
- Many roads on the lower Eastern Shore, including Coastal Highway (MD 528) in Ocean City, are prone to flooding during minor rain events. Any significant rain will flood lower shore roads and drivers should expect travel delays due to road closures as a result of high water.
- SHA urges motorists to exercise extreme caution as weather conditions change. If you must drive, please buckle up and obey posted speed limits.

Here are some tips for motorists:

- Do not try to cross a flooded roadway. Eighty percent of flood-related deaths occur in vehicles. Two feet of rapidly moving water can float a bus and six inches can knock a person off his or her feet.
- Avoid downed or damaged power and transmission wires and cables.
- Keep alert for animals, such as deer, that will be fleeing dangerous areas and crossing roadways.
- Stay alert for traffic signal issues related to power outages. Remember the rules of the road.
- Prepare your vehicle by filling the gas tank, checking tire pressure and washer fluid, charging your cell phone and bringing snacks for the kids.

To keep traffic moving smoothly, SHA will:

- **Provide real-time traffic information and storm-related road closures at www.roads.maryland.gov, then click on CHART.**
- Suspend construction work requiring lane closures along Maryland State highways. Roadwork is suspended for the Labor Day Holiday weekend.
- Program overhead Variable Message Signs and Traveler Advisory Radios to inform motorists of crashes, delays and route diversions.

Other SHA precautionary actions include the following:

- Fueling emergency generators;
- Acquiring additional fuel;
- Checking chain saws, wood chippers and other equipment;
- Clearing roadside drainage systems;
- Notifying contractors SHA may need their services;
- Placing signal technicians on stand-by.