



Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs
DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION AND RECREATION

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DCR Prepares for Severe Weather and Possible Flooding from Hurricane Irene this Weekend

BOSTON---The Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) is taking steps to prepare for the high winds and heavy rainfall that are predicted this weekend as Hurricane Irene passes through the Commonwealth. During the course of Friday and Saturday, DCR is undertaking measures to institute a phased closure of its facilities statewide.

In light of the forecasted storm, DCR is taking the following actions:

DCR Parks, Recreational Facilities, Day Use Areas, and Waterfront Areas: Beginning at noon on Saturday, August 27, DCR will close all parks, recreational facilities, day use areas, and waterfront areas statewide. DCR anticipates that these areas will remain closed throughout the weekend and on Monday, August 29. Following an assessment of each facility and weather conditions, DCR will make efforts to begin re-opening its facilities on Tuesday, August 30.

These closures include DCR's Boston Harbor Islands and Waquoit Bay's Washburn Island. Visitors to the Boston Harbor Islands who had reserved seats on the Harbor Islands ferries will receive a full refund or the opportunity to book another date. DCR recommends calling 617-222-6999 for ferry service information. Service to the Islands is anticipated to resume on Tuesday, August 30.

Also closed as of noon Saturday are the Division of Water Supply Protection's fishing areas. DWSP anticipates that these areas will also reopen to the public on Tuesday, August 30.

Due to the possibility of rip tides, there will be no bus service from Fall River to Horseneck Beach on Friday or Saturday. Fall River to Horseneck Beach bus service will resume its regular schedule on Wednesday, August 31.

Additionally, unlike other beaches that will be open on Saturday morning, Salisbury Beach and Horseneck Beach will not open at all on Saturday due to the increased expectation of rip tides. DCR asks that the public refrain from visiting these areas prior to and during the storm.

DCR Campgrounds: DCR will close all campgrounds statewide beginning at noon Saturday, August 27. Campgrounds will remain closed on Sunday and Monday. Campers already at these campgrounds must leave by noon on Saturday and will be required to take all camping equipment with them. DCR anticipates that campers will be able to return or begin stays starting again at the normal 1 p.m. check-in time on Tuesday, August 30. However, DCR recommends visitors contact individual facilities prior to beginning their trip.

Campers whose reservations are being canceled by DCR's closure on Saturday, Sunday, and Monday will be given the opportunity to receive a full refund or the ability to transfer their reservations. To cancel or change a reservation, please call ReserveAmerica at 877-422-6762.

DCR Pools (spray decks, wading pools and deep water pools): DCR spray decks, wading pools and deep water pools will be closed statewide on Saturday, August 27, Sunday August 28, and

Monday, August 29. Any pool that was previously scheduled to conclude the summer season on August 28 will not reopen. However, those spray decks, wading pools and deep-water pools that were scheduled to remain open through Labor Day will reopen on Tuesday, August 30.

Watershed and Dams: To help prevent flooding along the Charles and Mystic rivers, DCR will lower the river elevation behind the New Charles River Dam on the Charles River and the Amelia Earhart Dam on the Mystic River to create additional flood-water storage capacity in those rivers.

DCR engineers are inspecting pump stations, drainage culverts, and storm drains along DCR roadways to ensure adequate drainage flow and minimize flooding.

DCR is also closely monitoring more than 30 dams in Massachusetts that are rated high or significant hazard (meaning there could be loss of life or property downstream if they failed) and that are in poor or unsafe condition. The agency has contractors on standby in case they are needed.

Asian Longhorn Beetle Management and Prevention: DCR would like to remind residents living in Asian Longhorn Beetle (ALB) regulated areas not to move host materials. Any wood over one inch in diameter is considered regulated material and must be disposed of properly. When in doubt, if the downed tree is one of the ALB host species, err on the side of caution and contact the ALB hotline number at 866-702-9938. (Species preferred by the invasive insects include: Maple/boxelder, horsechestnut/buckeye, birch, willow, elm, mimosa/silk tree, katsura tree, ash, london plane tree, poplar, european mountain-ash, and golden rain tree.)

In an effort to help with pending storm cleanup, the Commercial Wood Processing yards in both Worcester (Ararat Street) and Boston (Washington Street) will have extended hours, Monday – Friday 7:30 a.m. – 5 p.m. next week. The site is open to contractors with a valid compliance agreement, as well as to all municipal and state cleanup crews.

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The Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR), an agency of the Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs, oversees 450,000 acres of parks and forests, beaches, bike trails, watersheds, dams, and parkways. Led by Commissioner Edward M. Lambert Jr., the agency's mission is to protect, promote, and enhance our common wealth of natural, cultural, and recreational resources. To learn more about DCR, our facilities, and our programs, please visit www.mass.gov/dcr. Contact us at mass.parks@state.ma.us.

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