

SUBJECT: Houston & Coastal Texas Office Closures

The Federal Executive Board (FEB) in Houston expects USDA to report our operating intentions in Houston and Coastal Texas as Hurricane Ike approaches the area. Based on the recommendations of the Texas Emergency Management Department, we will report to the FEB that USDA offices in Houston and coastal areas of Texas will be closed on Friday, September 12, 2008, with the exception of essential and emergency staff. All staff members are advised to let supervisors know of your whereabouts and how you can be reached. Your individual safety is of our utmost concern. Please follow local evacuation and emergency management direction as you prepare for the storm, and take your safest course of action to preserve life and property. Protection of government assets is also of great importance. Where safely possible, move vehicles to protected locations and make every effort to protect electronic gear and personally identifiable information. The USDA Operations Center will be available all weekend and can be reached at 1 (877) 873-2720.

Boyd K. Rutherford
Assistant Secretary
for Administration