



Hidalgo County Commissioners Court

Ramon Garcia
County Judge

David L. Fuentes
Commissioner, Precinct 1

Eduardo "Eddie" Cantu
Commissioner, Precinct 2

Joe M. Flores
Commissioner, Precinct 3

Joseph Palacios
Commissioner, Precinct 4

Public Affairs Division
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NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Monday, March 26, 2018

2018 SOUTH TEXAS ALL HAZARDS CONFERENCE MARCH 28-29

MCALLEN – The sixth annual South Texas All Hazards Conference will focus on the emergency response events that made our state Texas Strong this past year. The conference will be held Wednesday, March 28 and Thursday, March 29 at the McAllen Convention Center.

The All Hazards conference is the second largest training conference of its type in the State of Texas and is the only conference offered at no charge to the invited participants. More than 1,900 emergency responders are expected to attend.

The conference follows the National Incident Management System (NIMS) in organization and execution, which has become a model for others. NIMS is a standardized approach to incident management developed by the Department of Homeland Security to facilitate coordination between all responders. Hidalgo County Public Health Coordinator Nancy Pearl Treviño and Hidalgo County Emergency Management Coordinator Ricardo "Rick" Saldaña will serve as Incident Commanders during the conference.

"In this day and age, we must take every opportunity to train, not only our first responders, but also the support staff, in the unified command structure because during an emergency NIMS ensures that crucial information is communicated," said Saldaña. "All you have to do is watch the news to know that emergencies can come in any form and from any source – school and church shootings, a serial bomber, hurricane Harvey, Zika – the list goes on."

The theme "Texas Strong" reflects the emergency response to last year's devastating Hurricane event. When Hurricane Harvey hit Houston, Rockport and other areas across the state, Hidalgo County, the City of McAllen and our regional partners stepped up to help our neighbors in the north by sending staff, machines and resources to help those flooded areas.

The conference is split into six educational tracks: Public Health and Hospitals; Emergency Response; Law Enforcement; Educational Institutions; Faith Based and Non-Profits; and COOP Continuity of Operations Planning for Business with more than 65 presenters from the Texas Division of Emergency Management, U. S. Custom & Border Protection, National Weather Service, Texas Department of State Health Services, Texas Department of Public Safety, FEMA and other federal, state, local and non-profit agencies.

Due to NIMS protocol, the workshops and training sessions will be closed to media and the public. However, news professionals are invited to the general session and news conference Wednesday, which will include most of the key presenters and organizers.

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MEDIA AVAILABILITY: News professionals with press passes issued during registration are invited to record the general session, which begins at 8:30 a.m. Wednesday, and the news conference immediately following the general session.

News media who pre-registered may pick up their press passes and media kits at the registration desk in the Palm Lobby. Those who did not pre-register are invited to register beginning at 7:30 a.m. Wednesday.

Guest speakers and emergency management officials will be available for interviews during the news conference. News media who want B-roll and photographs will be escorted to the exhibit hall.

Please respect the NIMS protocol during this training exercise.

CONTACTS: PIO Julia Sullivan (956) 207-4354 (Hidalgo County Public Affairs Director) and Deputy PIO Xochitl Mora (956) 662-9269 (City of McAllen Communications Director.)

SPEAKERS: Texas Department of State Health Services Commissioner John William Hellerstedt, MD; FEMA Region VI Regional Administrator Tony Robinson; DPS Texas Division of Emergency Management Chief Nim Kidd; gang expert Maryanne Denner; Jim "Mattress Mack" McIngvale; Hidalgo County Judge Ramon Garcia; McAllen Mayor Jim Darling, Hidalgo County Health and Human Services Director Eddie Olivarez; and Hidalgo County Emergency Management Coordinator Ricardo Saldana will be available for interviews during the news conference.

The registration packet includes speakers' bios, conference schedule and more.

DETAILS: Wednesday, March 28 at the McAllen Convention Center

7:30 a.m. Registration (Look for the Media/Speaker Booth)
Palm Lobby

8:30 – 10 a.m. All Hazards General Session
Grand Ballroom

10 – 10:20 a.m. News Conference and interviews
Grand Ballroom Lobby (west side of the Convention Center)

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