



## Hidalgo County Commissioners Court

**Richard F. Cortez**  
*County Judge*

**David L. Fuentes**  
*Commissioner, Precinct 1*

**Eduardo "Eddie" Cantu**  
*Commissioner, Precinct 2*

**Everado "Ever" Villarreal**  
*Commissioner, Precinct 3*

**Ellie Torres**  
*Commissioner, Precinct 4*

**OFFICE OF  
COUNTY JUDGE  
RICHARD F. CORTEZ**

**Public Affairs Division**

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## NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
Tuesday, February 16, 2021

### **Hidalgo County Judge declares local state of disaster related to weather; implements price controls**

**EDINBURG** – A state of disaster exists in Hidalgo County because of the bitterly cold weather, Hidalgo County Judge Richard F. Cortez declared in an emergency order that he signed Tuesday.

In conjunction with the declaration, Judge Cortez implemented price controls to address reports of price gouging in the midst of the cold weather.

“We will not tolerate people being taken advantage of during this cold spell,” Judge Cortez said. The state of disaster will be in effect as of midnight on Tuesday, February 16 and will stay in effect for seven days.

“The County Judge has determined that extraordinary emergency measures must be taken to protect the public health, safety and general well-being of County citizens, in order to alleviate the suffering of people and to protect or rehabilitate property,” the declaration says.

Judge Cortez’s declaration comes four days after Texas Governor Greg Abbott declared the entire state a disaster area on February 12 in anticipation of the winter storm.

The implementation of price controls means that the prices that were being charged for a variety of goods and services on or before February 12 shall be the most a merchant may charge during the state of emergency.

Those listed goods and services include:

- a) groceries, beverages, toilet articles, ice
- b) construction and building materials and supplies, and earthmoving equipment and machinery
- c) electrical and gas generating and transmission equipment, party and accessories
- d) charcoal briquettes, matches, candles, lamp illumination and heat unit carbides, dry batteries, light bulbs, flashlights, and hand lanterns
- e) hand tools (manual and power), hardware and household supplies, and equipment rental

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*Hidalgo County is home to one of the fastest growing regions in the nation. We provide health and justice to the over 800,000 residents of our county. We strive to be accessible and responsive to our citizens by providing excellent public service through the values of leadership, transparency, fairness, collaboration, respect and fiscal responsibility. Follow our social media feed at [www.co.hidalgo.tx.us/followus](http://www.co.hidalgo.tx.us/followus)*



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- f) automotive parts, supplies, and accessories
- g) plumbing and electrical tools and supplies
- h) apartment, duplex, multi-family dwelling, rooming house, hotel and motel rental
- i) gasoline, diesel oil, motor oil, kerosene, grease, and automotive lubricants
- j) restaurant, cafeteria, and boarding-house meals
- k) services of roofing and building contractors, plumbers, electricians, mechanics, tree surgeons, and automobile wrecker companies
- l) medicine, pharmaceutical, and medical equipment and supplies
- m) blankets, quilts, bedspreads, bed linens, mattresses, bedsprings, bedsteads, towels, and toilet paper
- n) furniture and clothing

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Attachment: Copy of the Order.