

August 27, 2011

Dear Residents,

As Hurricane Irene approaches, I wanted to provide a brief update.

Overnight parking rules have been suspended for the duration of this storm. Residents who live in low-lying areas should move their vehicle to higher ground. By now most of our residents have taken the necessary precautions to secure their personal property. Many have made arrangements to leave their homes and have a place to go during the storm. For those residents who do not have a safe location to evacuate to, I will remind you of the following available locations.

* The Westwood Community Center on Jefferson Ave. will be open after 8:00 PM on Saturday, August 27. The Community Center will have space available for families and pets. If you believe that you may need to come to the shelter with your pet(s), it is requested that you provide a crate for the safety of your pet and the others at the shelter. We have 25 cots with bed blankets and pillows for those who arrive early.

* St. Andrew's RC Church on Washington Ave. will be open throughout the night for anyone that may seek shelter there. Pets are not permitted, and residents are asked to supply their own blankets and pillows.

* Bergen County will be operating shelters at Northern Valley Regional High School on Knickerbocker Road in Demarest and at Bergen Community College on Paramus Road in Paramus.

The Borough of Westwood is prepared for this weather emergency on every front. All of our emergency service personnel are ready to respond as necessary. Your safety is our top priority. This is a dangerous storm and I urge you to use caution and suggest that if you live in an area that is susceptible to flooding that you consider leaving your home prior to a mandatory evacuation notification.

If you do leave your home, please contact the Westwood Fire Department at (201)664-0526 where we will keep a master list of all residents who VOLUNTARILY advise us of their evacuation. Please provide your name, address and a phone number where you can be reached or the location you will be staying. This information will be kept strictly confidential and will only be used to facilitate the Fire Department's emergency operations.

Finally, we understand that this has been a difficult and stressful time for our residents. On behalf of the Governing Body and all of our Borough departments, please know that we are doing, and will continue to do, everything in our power to ensure your safety. I am grateful to the many residents that have banded together to help each other prepare for this emergency. We will have a long night and difficult day ahead tomorrow. The Borough Website will be updated with additional information as it becomes available. E-mail, phone and text messaging notifications will also be made as necessary. Please check www.westwoodnj.gov for updates. My home phone number is (201) 722-5809. If you have an emergency, dial 911 or call our police dispatch at (201) 664-7000.

Sincerely,

Borough of Westwood
John Birkner, Jr. - Mayor