



# MEMORANDUM

TEXAS GENERAL LAND OFFICE • GEORGE P. BUSH • COMMISSIONER

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**Date: October 2, 2020**

**Subject: Emergency Rules for Hurricane Laura and Tropical Storm Beta Recovery**

The Texas General Land Office (GLO) has adopted emergency rules that enable coastal counties and municipalities affected by Hurricane Laura and now, Tropical Storm Beta, to expedite the beachfront construction and dune protection permitting process. Specifically, 31 Texas Administrative Code § 15.18 (Emergency Dune Restoration and Stabilization and Repair of Damaged Habitable Structures) allows the authorization of dune restoration and emergency stabilization and repair of habitable structures following a storm. The rules proposed are in response to the vulnerability and danger to public health, safety, and welfare caused by the widespread damage to dunes and habitable structures along the upper Texas Coast. These rules replace previous emergency rule 31 TAC § 15.19, which addressed damage from Hurricane Laura only.

The new emergency rules provide local governments in Brazoria and Galveston Counties with the ability to authorize emergency dune restoration projects and emergency repairs to habitable structures outside the standard beachfront construction and dune protection permitting process, which normally requires GLO review. Under the emergency rules, local governments are required to maintain a written record of the authorizations, which are valid for 6 months from issuance.

This rule allows the authorization of certain activities and include prohibitions on what is allowed. The emergency rules will be effective for 120 days from October 1, 2020 and may be extended once by the GLO for not longer than 60 days.

In an effort to assist property owners on the coast with immediate repair and clean-up activities due to damages from Hurricane Laura and Tropical Storm Beta and in the midst of an active hurricane season, the emergency rules:

- Allow property owners to restore dunes to minimize further threat or damage to coastal residents and littoral property; and
- Allow homeowners to undertake emergency stabilization and repair of a home to prevent further damage.

New construction and activities not described in the rules will be required to go through the standard permitting process.