



Post-Hurricane Laura and Tropical Storm Beta Beachfront Construction: Frequently Asked Questions

Please contact the Coastal Resources Division at CoastalResources@galvestontx.gov or (409)797-3660 for questions not addressed in the Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) document.

Q1: When is a Beachfront Construction Certificate/Dune Protection Permit required for repairs or clean up?

A: A [Beachfront Construction Certificate/Dune Protection Permit \(BCC/DPP\) permit](#) is required for proposed construction of building, bulk heading, filling, clearing, excavation, disturbing the ground, or substantial improvement to land or the size of the structure, or it involves construction activities that impact sand dunes or dune vegetation.

Provided these activities do not result in enlarging, expanding, or redesigning the existing structure routine repairs, maintenance, and upkeep of existing structures can be exempted from the [BCC/DPP permit](#) requirements.

Please [email](#) photos and a brief written description of the proposed construction activity if you need clarification regarding what is considered routine repairs or maintenance.

Q2: What kind of activities are covered under the Emergency Rules?

A: The General Land Office (GLO) informed the City on September 1, 2020 that emergency rules were adopted and are in effect for 120 days, or until December 30, 2020. These rules allow local jurisdictions, such as the City of Galveston, to expedite the beachfront construction and dune protection permitting process for emergency dune restoration activities.

On October 2, 2020, in response to Tropical Storm Beta, the GLO informed the City that additional [emergency rules](#) were adopted and effect for 120 days, or until January 29, 2021. In addition to the previously adopted emergency rules regarding emergency dune restoration activities, these additional emergency rules allow the City of Galveston to authorize emergency repairs for stabilization and repair of damaged habitable structures.

The Coastal Resources Division website provides information about how to submit an application to complete an emergency dune restoration or stabilization and repair project: <https://www.galvestontx.gov/560/Coastal-Resources-Division>. Authorization from the City is required **before** any emergency dune restoration projects or stabilization/repair of damaged habitable structures begins.

Submit complete applications to the following email address: CoastalResources@galvestontx.gov

Emergency Dune Restoration Projects must consist of **beach quality sand** which has a similar grain size and mineralogy as the surrounding beach, and **organic brushy materials** can also be used (such as seaweed). If you are proposing to use beach quality sand from another property, verification that you have that owner's permission is needed, and the property owner will need to demonstrate that they are complying with the **Excavation** requirements of the [City of Galveston Land Development Regulations](#) (Sec. 2.326).



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Emergency dune restoration repairs can only be placed in areas where dunes were located pre-Hurricane Laura or Tropical Storm Beta or in areas no more than 10 feet seaward of a habitable structure if no dunes existed before the storms.

Habitable Structure Stabilization and Repair projects may be permitted when the action is necessary to make the structure habitable, to prevent further damage, or to protect public health, safety, and welfare. Examples of allowable repairs are:

- Placing beach quality sand or a sandy clay mixture beneath the footprint of a residential structure, only if stabilization of the structure is required to prevent foreseeable undermining of the habitable structure and if the sandy clay mixture is covered with at least 12 inches of beach quality sand, where practicable.
- Repairing or constructing an enclosed space under a habitable structure if it is constructed of breakaway walls or louvered walls and is consistent with the local dune protection and beach access plan and the National Flood Insurance Program.
- Construction of wooden decking or stairs under or directly adjacent to the footprint of the habitable structure only as necessary to make the house accessible.
- Installation of new pilings or repair of existing pilings.
- Placement of beach-quality sand on the lot in the area up to ten feet seaward of a habitable structure where necessary to prevent further erosion due to wind or water.

Q3: Will the City be rebuilding the dunes?

A: Many dunes on Galveston Island are located on private property; the city is unable to use public money to repair those dunes.

Q4: My dune walkover was damaged and now extends beyond the line of vegetation, or no longer safely reaches the beach. What should I do?

A: If the dune walkover requires minor repairs consisting of replacement of a couple of stairs or a few boards, and otherwise does not increase or alter the existing footprint of a dune walkover, it would not require a permit. Submit before and after photographs to the coastal resources division to document the repair activity. coastalresources@galvestontx.gov

The General Land Office (GLO) will notify the City of their dune walkover assessment if any walkovers extend too far beyond the line of vegetation and if the dune walkover will need to be shortened or removed.

Q5: The storm washed sand on our street and/or drainage ditches. What will be done with that sand?

A: The Department of Public Works has been working to remove washed up sand from streets and/or drainage ditches. If the sand can be picked clean of trash, debris, and road materials, Public Works will return the sand to the dry beach area. If the sand is contaminated and can no longer be considered beach quality sand, then it will be removed from the streets and it will not be deposited on the beach.

Residents and property owners are not permitted to remove sand from streets or drainage ditches and use it to fill their own property or rebuild dunes.



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Q6: The storm washed sand onto my lot, driveway, or property. Can I remove it? Are permits required?

A: A [BCC/DPP permit](#) is required to fill, clear, excavate or make substantial improvements to land. We recommend [emailing](#) photos of the area with a written description of the location of the sand to the Coastal Resources Division in order to evaluate the request. In most instances, removal or redistribution of sand from a lot does require a permit.

Moving or redistributing sand that Hurricane Laura or Tropical Storm Beta washed up into areas seaward of the Dune Protection Line¹ is permissible. If it is beach quality sand and does not contain materials inconsistent with the beach, then it can be placed back onto the beach in areas above the mean high tide line. If you are interested in using this sand for a dune restoration project, see the answer to **Question #2** above. It is **prohibited** to remove sand from areas seaward of the Dune Protection Line to an area landward of the Dune Protection Line.

Q7: Can we install a sand fence?

A: A [BCC/DPP permit](#) is required to install sand fencing. Sand fencing must comply with the GLO's rules and guidelines. See the GLO's Dune Protection Manual for more information on best practices:
<https://www.glo.texas.gov/coast/coastal-management/forms/files/dune-protection-manual-gpb.pdf>

¹ **Dune Protection Line:** a line located at the north toe 25 feet landward of the north toe of the critical dune area. Where no dunes exist on beaches west of the western most terminus of the Galveston Seawall, the line shall be located 200 feet landward of the vegetation line.