



Justin W. Lewis

P.O. Box 457
Hillsboro TX 76645

HILL COUNTY JUDGE

(254) 582-4020
countyjudge@co.hill.tx.us

Date: February 16, 2021 - For Immediate Release

Contact: Wendy Ellis, wellis@co.hill.tx.us

Press Release

Hill County, TX – Another round of winter storms and heavy precipitation are expected overnight, so power outages and road conditions will continue to be a major concern across the region. Hill County is continuing efforts to provide warming stations and meet other critical needs with the limited resources available.

“Unprecedented times feels like an overused phrase after the last 11 months, but it now seems to be the best way to describe this weather event as well. We are not out of this yet, and we won’t be for several more days,” said Hill County Judge Justin Lewis. “As we have been doing throughout the pandemic, we are relying on Hill County Residents to take care of one another. We will get through this, too,” stated Lewis. “I can’t say enough about how much I appreciate the efforts of our local power utilities employees, water systems employees, first responders and essential personnel to help us get through this storm. Our infrastructure is simply not built for these extreme conditions.”

“In discussion with our power companies, historically, the peak usage times for electricity are from 5 to 9pm, and we are anticipating that this evening. Any efforts to conserve energy during those times is especially important, so please help out where you can,” said Lewis. “Also, keep in mind that power is required to treat water, which means, limited electricity availability can also affect our water supply. Conserving water is another area where residents can help ease the load on those working to keep things running,” stated Lewis.

Steps that each household can take to help conserve electricity include:

- Every degree counts. Lower your thermostat to at least 68 degrees.
- Lower the maximum temperature on your water heater to 120 degrees because your water heater can account for as much as 25 percent of the energy consumed in your home.
- Unplug any appliances and devices not in use. Even off but plugged in they are pulling power from the system.
- Use towels or other materials to block drafts around windows and doors.

In addition to conserving electricity and water, please stay off the roads to minimize traffic and reduce wrecks. Our first responders are taxed already, and we do not need them working more than necessary. Unfortunately, many of the traffic accidents this week, have taken out power poles and other pieces of critical infrastructure, putting additional strain on the systems. If possible, stay home.

“When electricity goes out, people are taking extreme measures to keep homes warm. However, please be aware that using devices not designed for use indoors, such as a propane grill, to provide heat can create a fire hazard and possibly lead to carbon monoxide poisoning,” said Lewis. “Please do not make a bad situation worse by burning anything inside the home that is not designed to serve as an indoor heat source. Several jurisdictions have set up warming stations for people dealing with long-term power outages at their homes, and I want to encourage you to keep yourself safe by utilizing these resources if you need to,” finished Lewis.

For residents or travelers left without power, the following is a list of warming stations, but please call ahead for operational status before heading to any of these locations. Operating statuses are subject to change depending on changing conditions.

Warming Stations in Hill County – **Please call ahead before traveling to a warming station because operations are subject to change depending on power availability.** While these are warming stations, bring blankets with you. Blankets are in limited supply and the buildings may not be as warm as your own personal comfort level.

Location: Hill County Fairgrounds, 205 Stadium Drive, Hillsboro, TX

Need to Know: Bring food and water if possible. Pets are only allowed if in a crate

Contact Information: Hill County, 254-582-2023

Location: City of Whitney Annex, 102 N Colorado St, Whitney, TX

Need to Know: Will not be operational until later this afternoon. Bring food that does not require cooking and water if possible. No pets allowed.

Contact Information: Whitney Police Department, 254-694-2638

Location: First Baptist Church, 501 N Magnolia Ave, Hubbard, TX and First United Methodist Church Harrelson Center, Hubbard, TX

Need to Know: Bring food that does not require cooking and water if possible. Other locations may also be available with various policies in place, so please call ahead before planning to arrive in Hubbard for shelter at any of the warming stations.

Contact: City of Hubbard, 254-205-6211

Location: HILCO Civic & Event Center, 1000 S Files St, Itasca, TX

Need to know: Operational status of this warming station is unknown at press time. Please follow Itasca Emergency Management on Facebook for the latest status updates.

People interested in monitoring updates from Hill County on the situation will find the most current information on the Hill County Emergency Management Facebook Page. The County will also provide regular updates to *KHBR 1560 AM Radio* and the *Hillsboro Reporter*.

In addition, the County has an emergency notification system. If you would like to receive phone call, text or email updates as warranted, you can register with the Hill County Emergency Notification System. Visit the Office of Emergency Management website at www.hilloem.com, scroll to the bottom of the home page and click on emergency alerts. Follow the prompts to set up your account.

