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## **News Release**

### **Georgia prepares for Hurricane Irma**

(ATLANTA) – Ahead of heavy rains, strong wind and potential flooding from Hurricane Irma, Governor Nathan Deal expanded his state of emergency to include all 159 counties in Georgia today. Georgia Emergency Management and Homeland Security Agency continues coordinating with partners and ensuring resources are staged and ready to provide assistance throughout the state.

Local emergency management officials are providing area-specific information regarding sheltering, evacuation and safety measures that residents are urged to follow.

As the storm moves through Florida and Georgia, officials stress the importance of not returning to evacuated areas in either state until emergency management and public safety officials advise it is safe. Returning early can pose significant safety risks and impede the recovery efforts of first responders.

As Georgia prepares for storm impacts beginning overnight, residents are urged to finalize all pre-storm preparations prior to sunset tonight and to shelter in place through Tuesday.

For updated information regarding Hurricane Irma, visit [gema.ga.gov](http://gema.ga.gov).

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*As part of the Office of the Governor, GEMA/HS works with local, state and federal governments, in partnership with the private sector and faith-based community, to protect life and property against man-made and natural emergencies. In addition, GEMA/HS employees are on 24-hour call statewide to assist local authorities when disaster strikes. GEMA/HS's Ready Georgia campaign helps Georgians prepare for disasters. Go to [www.ready.ga.gov](http://www.ready.ga.gov) or download the free Ready Georgia app for information on developing a custom emergency plan and Ready kit.*