

3. Bridge Operations:

The Bridge Operations Manager shall notify each of the four bridge operators on duty of the “hurricane watch” advisory. The Bridge Operations Manager will also notify each off-duty operator of the advisory and place them on alert.

As the storm approaches, normal operation of each bridge will continue until the wind velocity or water level in the Inner Harbor - Navigation Canal prohibits safe operation, or until the Orleans Levee District closes floodgates leading to the bridge, as follows.

a. Seabrook Railroad Bridge

When wind velocity exceeds 40 MPH, operation of the Seabrook Railroad Bridge will cease and the bridge will remain locked in the “fully lowered” position. When such conditions exist, the bridge may be raised only at the discretion of the Bridge Operations Manager, with approval of a Division Director.

When the water level of the IH-NC reaches +5.0 feet NVGD, the Seabrook Railroad Bridge will be closed to marine traffic and the bridge will remain locked in the “fully lowered” position (this is the elevation of the locking bar electrical conduit).

When the Orleans Levee District closes floodgates at the railroad approaches of the Seabrook Railroad Bridge (W39 & E15), the Bridge Operations Manager will advise Norfolk Southern Railroad, the U. S. Coast Guard, and the IH-NC Lockmaster that “the bridge will be locked in the “fully lowered” position, closed to all rail and marine traffic, and bridge operations will be suspended”. The Bridge Operator will then be allowed to leave the bridge unless the U. S. Coast Guard informs the Bridge Operations Manager that one or more vessels require transit through the bridge prior to suspension of operations, upon which the Bridge Operator will remain until these vessels have passed the bridge.

Prior to vacating the Seabrook Railroad Bridge, the Bridge Operator must lock the bridge in the “fully lowered” position and make the proper notation in the bridge log book. Then all power to the bridge will be shut off, all doors and gates to the Bridge Operator’s House and Machinery House will be locked, and barricades will be placed across the two access roadways (near France Road at the west side of the IH-NC, and on the protected side of Floodgate E14 at the east side of the IH-NC).

When floodgates at the railroad approaches of the Seabrook Railroad Bridge are re-opened, weather conditions permit, and the Bridge Operator’s House is accessible, the bridge will be inspected and normal operations will resume if approved by bridge maintenance personnel and the Bridge Operations Manager. Upon completion of the inspection, the Bridge Operations Manager will advise Norfolk Southern Railroad, the U. S. Coast Guard, and the IH-NC Lockmaster of the status of bridge operations.

b. Almonaster Avenue Bridge

When wind velocity exceeds 40 MPH, operation of the Almonaster Avenue Bridge will cease and the bridge will remain locked in the “fully lowered” position. When such conditions exist, the bridge may be raised only at the discretion of the Bridge Operations Manager, with approval of a Division Director.

When the water level of the IH-NC reaches +5.0 feet NVGD, the Almonaster Avenue Bridge will be closed to marine traffic and the bridge will remain locked in the “fully lowered” position (this is the elevation of the locking bar electrical conduit).

When the Orleans Levee District closes floodgates at the vehicular approaches (W31 & E9) and railroad approaches (W30 & E8) of the Almonaster Avenue Bridge, the Bridge Operations Manager will advise CSX Transportation, Inc., New Orleans Public Belt Railroad, the U. S. Coast Guard, and the IH-NC Lockmaster that “the bridge will be locked in the “fully lowered” position, closed to all rail and marine traffic, and bridge operations will be suspended”. The Bridge Operator will then be allowed to leave the bridge unless the U. S. Coast Guard informs the Bridge Operations Manager that one or more vessels require transit through the bridge prior to suspension of operations, upon which the Bridge Operator will remain until these vessels have passed the bridge.

Prior to vacating the Almonaster Avenue Bridge, the Bridge Operator must lock the bridge in the “fully lowered” position and make the proper notation in the bridge log book. Then all vehicular traffic gates and barriers will be lowered, all power to the bridge will be shut off, all doors and gates to the Bridge Operator’s House and Machinery House will be locked, and barricades will be placed across the east-bound and west-bound roadways (near France Road and Jourdan Road).

When floodgates at the vehicular approaches and/or railroad approaches of the Almonaster Avenue Bridge are re-opened, weather conditions permit, and the Bridge Operator’s House is accessible, the bridge will be inspected and normal operations will resume if approved by bridge maintenance personnel and the Bridge Operations Manager. Upon completion of the inspection, the Bridge Operations Manager will advise CSX Transportation, Inc., New Orleans Public Belt Railroad, the U. S. Coast Guard, and the IH-NC Lockmaster of the status of bridge operations.

c. Florida Avenue Bridge

When wind velocity exceeds 40 MPH, the Florida Avenue Bridge will not be raised higher than 41 feet above its “fully lowered” position (at this height, the elevation of the bottom of the lift span is at +45 feet NVGD, but vertical clearance for marine vessels will vary with the water level in the IH-NC). When such conditions exist, the bridge may be raised above 41 feet only at the discretion of the Bridge Operations Manager, with approval of a Division Director.

When the water level of the IH-NC reaches +5.0 feet NVGD, the Florida Avenue Bridge will be closed to all rail, vehicular, and pedestrian traffic (at this level, the water/waves of the IH-NC produce a “lifting” force on the span and the bridge cannot be fully seated and locked in position).

When the Orleans Levee District closes floodgates at the vehicular approaches (W20 & E1) and railroad approaches (W21 & E2) of the Florida Avenue Bridge, the Bridge Operations Manager will advise Norfolk Southern Railroad, the U. S. Coast Guard and the IH-NC Lockmaster that “the bridge will be closed to rail traffic, raised and locked at a height of 41 feet above its “fully lowered” position, and bridge operations will be suspended”. The bridge will then be raised to 41 feet and the Bridge Operator will be allowed to leave the bridge unless the U. S. Coast Guard has informed the Bridge Operations Manager that one or more vessels requiring additional vertical clearance need to pass through the bridge prior to suspension of operations, upon which the Bridge Operator will remain until these vessels have passed the bridge.

Prior to vacating the Florida Avenue Bridge, the Bridge Operator must lower all vehicular traffic gates and barriers, raise the bridge to a height of 41 feet above its “fully lowered” position, ensure that all brakes are set, and make the proper notation in the bridge log book. Then all power to the bridge will be shut off, all doors and gates to the Bridge Operator’s House and Bridge Towers will be locked, and barricades will be placed across the roadway (outside Floodgates W20 & E1, near France Road, and near Jourdan Road).

When floodgates at the vehicular approaches and/or railroad approaches of the Florida Avenue Bridge are re-opened, weather conditions permit, and the Bridge Operator’s House is accessible, the bridge will be inspected and normal operations will resume if approved by bridge maintenance personnel and the Bridge Operations Manager. Upon completion of the inspection, the Bridge Operations Manager will advise Norfolk Southern Railroad, the U. S. Coast Guard, and the IH-NC Lockmaster of the status of bridge operations.

b. St. Claude Avenue Bridge

When wind velocity exceeds 40 MPH, operation of the St. Claude Avenue Bridge will cease and the bridge will remain locked in the “fully lowered” position. When such conditions exist, the bridge may be raised only at the discretion of the Bridge Operations Manager, with approval of a Division Director. In addition, when the Corps of Engineers ceases operation of the IH-NC lock, for any reason, including too high a water level in the IH-NC, the St. Claude Bridge will cease operations and the bridge will remain in locked in the “fully lowered” position.

At no time before, during, or after a tropical storm event will the St. Claude Avenue Bridge be closed to vehicular or pedestrian traffic. However, such traffic will be temporarily halted to allow passage of marine vessels in advance of an approaching storm and after the storm has passed.

Upon suspension of operations at the Florida Avenue Bridge, the Bridge Operations Manager will advise the U. S. Coast Guard and the IH-NC Lockmaster that “the St. Claude Avenue Bridge will be locked in the “fully lowered” position and closed to marine traffic, bridge operations will be suspended, and the bridge will be vacated”. Any vessels in the process of entering or exiting the IH-NC Lock will be allowed passage through the bridge, then the Bridge Operator will be allowed to leave the bridge unless the U. S. Coast Guard informs the Bridge Operations Manager that one or more vessels require transit through the bridge prior to suspension of operations, upon which the Bridge Operator will remain until these vessels have passed the bridge.

Prior to vacating the St. Claude Avenue Bridge, the Bridge Operator must lock the bridge in the “fully lowered” position and make the proper notation in the bridge log book. Then all power will be shut off and all doors and gates to the Bridge Operator’s House and Machinery House will be locked. All vehicular traffic gates and barriers will be left in the raised position to allow continuous evacuation and passage of emergency vehicles.

When weather conditions permit, the St. Claude Avenue Bridge will be inspected and normal operations will resume if approved by bridge maintenance personnel and the Bridge Operations Manager. Upon completion of the inspection, the Bridge Operations Manager will advise the U. S. Coast Guard and the IH-NC Lockmaster of the status of bridge operations.

After a storm has passed, any bridge may be left in the “fully raised” or “fully lowered” position at the discretion of the Bridge Operations Manager and the Director of Port Development due to its structural, mechanical and/or electrical condition, availability of bridge maintenance and operations personnel, and needs of the community, emergency agencies, mariners, and the railroads.