

McClatchy Washington Bureau

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Mississippi paper, recalling Katrina, urges Texans to flee

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The following editorial was posted on the Web site of the Bilxoi Sun Herald today:

For whatever reason it now appears that thousands, perhaps tens of thousands, of the residents of Galveston Island, and untold others along the Texas Coast have chosen to stay and face the wrath of Hurricane Ike. As your neighbors in South Mississippi, who have watched the deadly surge of Katrina destroy virtually every mile of our coast, we care for your survival, and beg you to leave now. You should know further that in a nighttime storm your chances will be further reduced.

The hours dwindle, but it is not too late for you to flee and save your lives. There is something deceptive about the idea that Ike is only a Category 2 hurricane. The developing science of Integrated Kinetic Energy (ironically IKE), which expresses the destructive power of a hurricane's surge, shows that Ike represents a force exceeding even Katrina's surge, which was the largest ever seen against an American Coast.

The people of the Mississippi Coast know all of the excuses to stay "hunkered down" in their homes and comfort zones.

They survived the previous big storm (Camille, for us) there was no place for their pets, they were old, sick, tired, etc. Some were just skeptical. Many of them now lie in the sandy soil of their homeland, victims of the storm surge.

We ask our citizens to join us in this heartfelt mission to save those who may otherwise die where they are making their stand against Ike. If you know someone in Galveston or the South Texas Coast, please call them or e-mail them and tell them your stories of Katrina. Pass along this editorial and the links to our Katrina photos and stories. Make your comments on the reader commenting opportunity with this editorial.

It is not too late but with every passing hour your possibility of evacuating to safety is diminished. We implore you – do not become a casualty of Ike. Its deadly surge is coming, and no seawall, no plywood nor your false notion of safety will save you from its destructive force.