**Transcript for Hurricane Storm Surge**

NARRATOR:

Powerful winds aren’t the only deadly force during a hurricane. The greatest threat to life actually comes from the water – in the form of storm surge.

Storm surge is water from the ocean that is pushed toward the shore by the force of the winds swirling around the hurricane. This advancing surge combines with the normal tides and can increase the water level by 30 feet or more.

Storm surge combined with waves can cause extensive damage. It can severely erode beaches and coastal highways.  The pounding waves can take out boats and buildings. As the waters move inland, rivers and lakes may be affected, and add to the rising flood levels. While we can’t prevent storm surge, we do have a system that can warn us of the incoming threat.

As a hurricane develops over the open ocean, forecasters at the National Hurricane Center closely monitor its path to evaluate the risk of a coastal strike. They use a computer model called SLOSH to predict storm surge heights. The model depends critically on the hurricane’s track, intensity, and size.

SLOSH uses water depths, land elevations, and barriers to the flow of water to compute surges as they move inland. This data helps determine which areas may need to be evacuated.

When a hurricane slams our coast, it’s important to be aware of all the dangers.  As a reminder, emergency managers want us to run from the water and hide from the wind.  Don’t take unnecessary risks during a storm.  Conditions can change in the blink of an eye.

Storm surge is a dangerous event during a hurricane, where furious winds are driving deadly flows of water from our seas to our shores.