



Wortham Theater Center closed until May, 2018 after damages from Hurricane Harvey

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Houston, TX (September 18, 2017) – Due to the extensive water damage from Hurricane Harvey, Houston First Corporation announced today the **Wortham Theater Center** will be closed for repairs until May 15, 2018 in a best case scenario.

On August 27, water from Hurricane Harvey filled the basement of the Wortham with 12 feet of water. In addition, water filled the tunnel that connects the Wortham to the Theater District Parking Garage. While the building was powered down before the worst of the storm, initial assessments revealed potentially dangerous conditions and a clear threat to the mechanical and electrical equipment and building contents. To prevent further damage, Houston First immediately retained Gilbane Reconstruction Services to begin pumping out the water and stabilizing the building.

At this point, it does not appear that the building has suffered structural damage, but there has been extensive damage to at least one-third of the building's 60 air handling units and to the elevators. Houston First and Gilbane continue to work hand-in-hand to complete an evaluation of the critical building systems. That work should be complete in 2-3 weeks. To find out more about Wortham Theater Center recovery, [click here](#).

Meanwhile at **Jones Hall**, air quality and structural reports are in and the building is cleared for occupancy, but before public performances can be scheduled, accessible restrooms required by the American Disabilities Act (ADA) must be reconstructed. Damage was sustained in the courtyard level entrance hallway, and offices of the Houston Symphony, Society for the Performing Arts and Houston First; repairs will begin this week which include painting and replacing drywall. The rehearsal room, which sustained the most damage, still needs to have the floor, walls and mirrors replaced, however that work will not impact the ability to open the building to the public for performances.

Performances at Jones Hall have been cancelled or relocated elsewhere through the end of September. As soon as the building meets all city code requirements, it will be reopened for events. To find out more about Jones Hall recovery, [click here](#).

Contractors have finished pumping water out of the **Theater District underground parking garages** and are removing silt. Once that process is complete, workers will begin sanitizing the

garages. While a full assessment of damage is not complete, it is likely most electrical and mechanical components will need to be replaced. A projected date for reopening will be set once assessment is complete. To find out more about the underground parking garages recovery, [click here](#).

“We appreciate the patience and support of our resident performing arts partners, as well as their patrons and supporters. We are steadfastly committed to seeing that everyone is back on their home stage as soon as possible,” said Dawn Ullrich, president and CEO, Houston First Corporation.

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About Houston First Corporation

Houston First operates the city's finest convention and arts facilities to position Houston as a world-class destination. In 2014, Houston First and the Greater Houston Convention and Visitors Bureau aligned operations to create a single voice representing the city under the brand Visit Houston. Houston First owns the Hilton Americas-Houston hotel, manages the George R. Brown Convention Center and 11 city-owned properties and is the driving force in developing the new Avenida Houston entertainment district. Learn more at HoustonFirst.com and VisitHouston.com.