



Physical Oceanographic Real-Time System

PORTS®

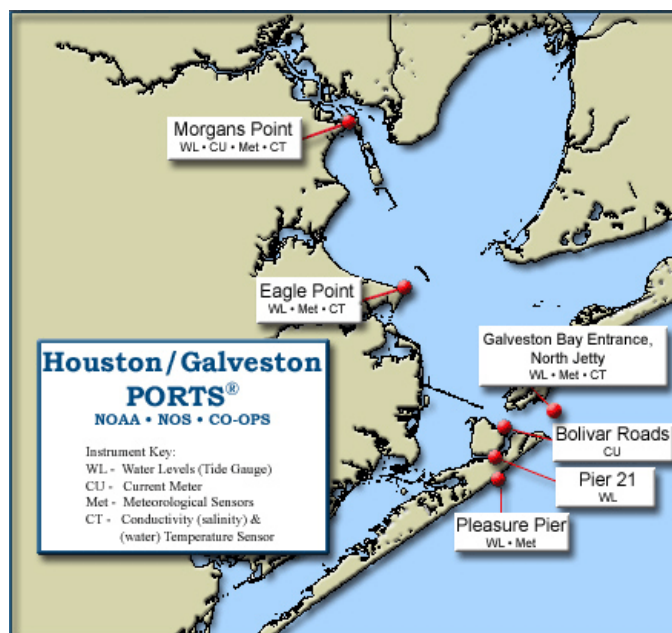


Internet: <http://co-ops.nos.noaa.gov> (select PORTS)
Voice Data Response: 866-HG-PORTS

The Physical Oceanographic Real-Time System (PORTS®) is a National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), National Ocean Service (NOS) partnership program designed to provide the maritime community with high quality, real-time oceanographic and meteorological data. PORTS® is a decision support tool which improves the safety and efficiency of maritime commerce, assists coastal resource management, and aids recreational boaters.

Funding for this system was provided to NOAA through a congressional budget add-on in 1995. The system became operational in June 1996. A second Congressional add-on to the NOAA budget in FY1997 funded the operation and maintenance of the system through September 30, 1999. The Port of Houston Authority assumed responsibility for funding the system operation and maintenance as of October 1, 1999. The funding is provided to NOS who outsources the operation and maintenance of the PORTS®.

NOAA's contributions to this partnership include the development of national PORTS® standards, technical support and oversight of the design, installation and operation of PORTS®, and data quality control. In addition, NOAA continues to develop, test, and evaluate new sensors, data collection, and data telemetry systems that enhance real-time measurement capabilities.



For Further Information Contact:
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The PORTS® includes five water level measurement systems, four of which are equipped with meteorological sensors and two bottom-mounted current profilers. Information is collected from each sensor every six minutes by a centralized data acquisition system located at the USCG Vessel Traffic Service in Houston, Texas. NOAA's Continuous Operational Real-Time Monitoring System (CORMS), located in Silver Spring, Maryland, provides 24 hours/day, 7 days/week quality control of the data to ensure that only accurate, reliable information is disseminated to users. The real-time information is provided to users via local graphics displays, Internet, and through a telephone voice data response system.

The Galveston Bay PORTS® is an invaluable tool that supports a wide range of needs, including marine navigation, coastal resource protection, and recreational activities. The NOAA Galveston Bay PORTS® internet site receives over 250,000 visits per month.

