

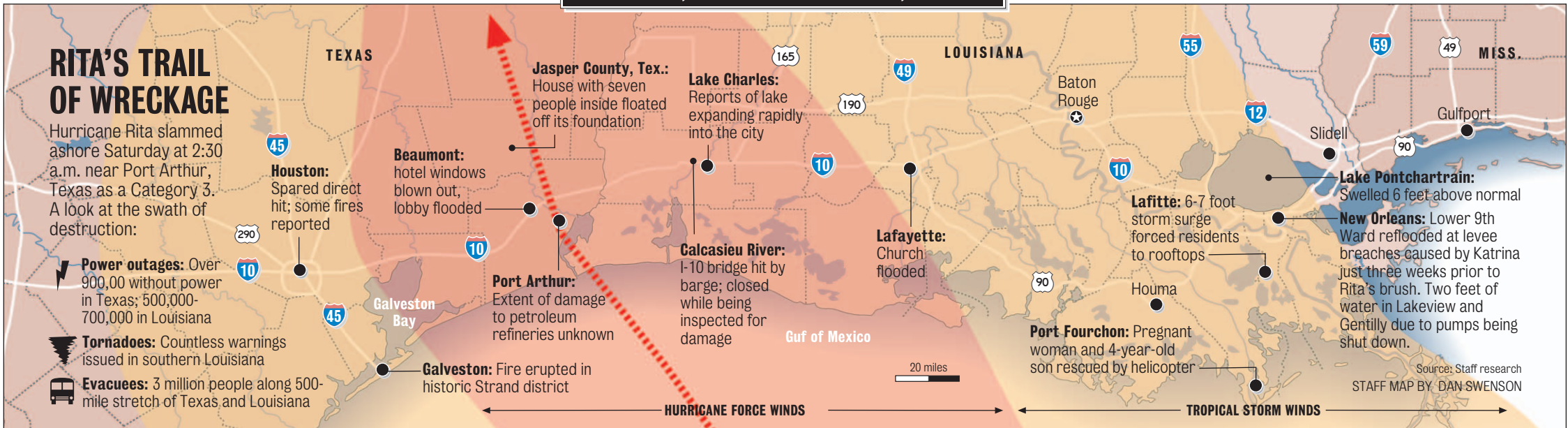
The Times-Picayune



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HURRICANE EDITION



SWAMPED

FLOODWATERS SET BACK 9TH WARD, ST. BERNARD RECOVERY
 TEXAS, SOUTHWEST LOUISIANA DRENCHED, BUT DAMAGE FAR LESS THAN EXPECTED



STAFF PHOTO BY ALEX BRANDON

NEW ORLEANS: Police Superintendent Eddie Compass surveys the damage Saturday in the Lower 9th Ward, which includes a submerged school bus. New Orleans Mayor Ray Nagin said Lower 9th Ward flooding rose to as high as 12 feet.

By Jeff Duncan
 Staff writer

Flood waters from Hurricane Rita continued to pour into New Orleans' 9th Ward on Saturday, overwhelming the beleaguered Army Corps of Engineers and threatening to inundate St. Bernard Parish while delaying recovery efforts in the already crippled city.

New levee breaches also swamped parts of Myrtle Grove in south Plaquemines Parish and Jean Lafitte in south Jefferson Parish, areas that were generally dry from Katrina.

In addition to the canal breaches, Rita's 5-foot storm surge and heavy rains flooded parts of Orleans and St. Tammany parishes. Rising water in Lake Pontchartrain also flooded low-lying parts of St. Tammany Parish, from Madisonville to Eden Isles.

Areas of Lakeview and Gentilly were under 1 to 2 feet of water, mainly because the pump stations that normally drain the areas are temporarily shut down to lighten the load on the Corps' makeshift dams on the 17th Street and London Avenue canals. Both dams held strong against the storm surge and were not in danger of flooding, officials said.

"We are working as hard and as fast as we can," said Lt. Col. Richard Waggenaar, the New Orleans district commander for the Army Corps of Engineers. "There's only so much we can do against the forces of Mother Nature. At some point, it just

See **NEW ORLEANS**, A-26

In Lafitte, Rita does what Katrina couldn't

By Paul Purpura and Kate Moran
 Staff writers

After ignoring a mandatory call to evacuate, hundreds of Lafitte residents were plucked from their homes by boat and helicopter Saturday after Hurricane Rita's winds pushed the waters of Bayou Barataria into the low-lying community.

"We misjudged it," said Paul

Bailey, who fled his home with cousin George Bailey in a 16-foot flatboat.

"It's rising tremendously," George Bailey added.

Lafitte and the Harvey Canal, the so-called Achilles' heel of the West Bank, kept Jefferson Parish officials on edge throughout the day as crews rushed to the industrial

See **LAFITTE**, A-28



STAFF PHOTO BY DAVID GRUNFELD

NEW IBERIA: Jace Marceaux, front, Juan Migues, center, and Toby Provost collect items including hunting bows, guns and paper towels from Migues' mother's flooded house on Avery Island Road.

Battered border area cautiously exhales

By Jan Moller and Steve Ritea
 Staff writers

Hurricane Rita slammed ashore early Saturday along the Texas-Louisiana border, dumping several feet of water into the southwest corner of the state and driving some residents to their rooftops to await rescue, although officials said widespread evacuations undoubtedly

saved many lives.

"We don't anticipate a large number of deaths" in Louisiana from Rita, said Col. Jeff Smith, deputy director of the state Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness. "Most people chose to heed the governor's call to evacuate."

Aides to Gov. Kathleen Blanco cautioned that it was difficult to

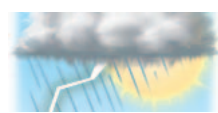
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