



WILLIE MELTON LAW LIBRARY NEWS

VOL 32 NUM 3 | JULY/AUG 2024

STAY IN THE LOOP WITH UPDATES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS!

AT A GLANCE

- What's going on at the Law Library!
- How you can access resources from your home or office!

HOURS

Mon	8 am - 5 pm
Tue	8 am - 5 pm
Wed	8 am - 5 pm
Thu	8 am - 5 pm
Fri	8 am - 5 pm
Sat	CLOSED
Sun	CLOSED



What's New

UPCOMING PROGRAMS



LONE STAR
LEGAL AID

- LAWYER IN THE LIBRARY -- hosted by Lone Star Legal Aid -- is EVERY MONDAY, from 8:30 am - 12:00 pm. [More Information Here](#)
- LAWYER IN THE LIBRARY -- hosted by the Earl Carl Institute is EVERY WEDNESDAY, from 8:30 am - 12:00 pm. [More Information Here](#)
- PRO SE BASICS is EVERY TUESDAY at 10 am - Learn about basic court procedures and resources.
- EXPRESS CLASSES are EVERY THURSDAY at 10 am - Learn basic legal technology.

UPDATES AND CLOSINGS

- The Virtual Court Kiosk -- through a grant by Texas Legal Services Center -- can be reserved for virtual court hearings in the mornings, from 8:30 am to 12:30 pm, and in the afternoons, from 1:30 to 5:00 pm. [Reserve the Kiosk Here](#)
- New Trellis Database is HERE!
- The Law Library and the Justice Center will be CLOSED for Labor Day on Monday, SEPT 2, and for Fair Day on Friday, SEPT 27.

**TEXAS
LEGAL
SERVICES
CENTER**



UPDATED RESOURCES

- Texas Probate System, 2024 Edition
- Qualifying and Attacking Expert Witnesses, 2024 Edition
- O'Connor's Federal Civil Forms, 2024 Edition
- Civil Process for Texas, 2024 Edition
- Texas Practice Guide, Elder Law & Jury Charge in Civil Litigation, 2024 Editions

THIS MONTH IS APPELLATE LAW MONTH!

- We have lots of resources on this topic this month! Come check them out!

Past Program Recordings

ATTORNEY LECTURE SERIES

- **"Immigration,"** given by Attorney Eduardo Franco. See the replay [HERE](#).
- **"Voir Dire,"** given by Attorney Annie Scott. See the replay [HERE](#).

Online Resources

REMOTE DATABASES

- Lexis Nexis Digital Library - Collection of ebooks from publishers LexisNexis, Matthew Bender, and James Publishing.
- Gale Legal Forms Library - Collection of Civil Forms on various topics that can be used in Texas and Federal Courts.



[Sign up for an eCard here to access](#)

PRO SE HANDBOOK - FORMS AND INFORMATION

- General Civil and Family Law Forms and Information from Texas Law Help, Fort Bend County District and County Courts at Law, Fort Bend County District and County Clerks, the Fort Bend County Willie Melton Law Library, and other Texas Governmental Agencies. [Check it out here.](#)



Featured Resource, by Andrew Bennett

Contextualising Legal Research

One of the new books at the Law Library is a new title on Legal Research. This book has a different approach than other books on Legal Research. Instead of focusing on how to do legal research, this guide attempts to provide a “methodological framework for law-in-context research design.” This means that the researcher needs to rely on more interpretive and argumentative methods to find the resources and documents needed. This includes combining doctrinal research and practical research together.

The book is written by Sanne Taekema, who is a Professor of Legal Theory at the Erasmus School of Law in Rotterdam, The Netherlands, and by Wibren van der Burg, a Professor of Legal Philosophy and Legal Theory, also at the Erasmus School of Law.

The book is broken up into multiple parts. The parts are Doctrinal Research, Interdisciplinary Doctrinal Research, and Law and Humanities. It seeks to break down the theories of legal research into digestible

portions for the researcher. In particular, the authors want to show why legal research can be improved by research studies and introducing the humanities. Because legal research lacks any context, it generally is not grounded, and the humanities can give it “reflection and direction.” While the book is geared toward those in a master’s or PhD level, it can be used by the practitioner to improve their “law-in-context” research and maybe provide a different approach that may yield more results.

The book will supplement our other legal research titles at the Law Library, and we hope this will provide another avenue to finding the resources you need as a practitioner or pro se litigant.

Copies of information from the book can be made for \$0.10 a page. You may also scan portions of the book to your email or flash drive for free. We do not have a digital copy of the book. It is only available for in-library use.

Contact the Law Library for more information.



Technology Corner, by Christine France

Law Library Social Media

Do you follow the Fort Bend County Willie Melton Law Library on Social Media? Check out the Law Library [website](#), [YouTube](#), and [Facebook page](#)!

Our **website** allows you to access our legal databases and to sign up for our Pro Se Basic, Express, and Attorney Lecture Series classes. All you need is a Fort Bend County Libraries card -- which is free -- to start your legal research online. Attorneys and non-attorneys are welcome to attend our classes, which range from beginner to advanced levels. Some of our Pro Se Basic and Express Class topics cover Family Law, Probate, Courthouse basics, as well as technology classes on Westlaw, Lexis, and Trellis. Some classes even offer Continuing Legal Education credits for lawyers and paralegals!

If you can't make it to our classes in person or virtual, check out our YouTube page. The Law Library YouTube page allows you to view our previously recorded classes when and where it is convenient for you.

The Law Library **Facebook page** is also a great resource to keep up to date on our upcoming classes, learn how to get free legal advice, and hear about upcoming library closures.

Don't miss out on the opportunity to continue to learn and obtain help with your legal matters online!



Librarian Musings, by Jonathan Briggs

Weathering the Storm: Governmental & Legal Resources

I hope this writing finds you and yours well and safe. Fort Bend County and the greater Houston metro area have again experienced a catastrophic weather event with deaths, property damage and monetary loss, days without power, discomfort and suffering, disruption to work and business, etc. They seem to be occurring more frequently and with greater negative effect -- from Hurricanes Ike and Harvey to The Great Freeze of 2021, and now Hurricane Beryl, along with many other weather issues of varying degrees. For a frame of reference, in 1983, Hurricane Alicia (a category 3 storm) came through metro Houston, including Sugar Land. We lost power, but it was restored within much less than 24 hours and things got back to normal fairly quickly. Hurricanes Ike (Cat. 2) and Beryl (Cat. 1) resulted in power loss at my home for 8 days and 2 days, respectively, and resulted in major disruptions to life.

The Fort Bend County Law Library, like most county offices, was closed for business for the entirety of the week following Beryl's landfall. As I was contemplating and drafting this article, I initially got into analysis of these issues, their causes, and what is exacerbating these situations. But then I remembered that it is not my job as a law librarian, nor we as a law library, to publicly opine on the causes, effects, or solutions to these problems. Law librarians are about providing useful, on-point information to address situations. So, I went through a couple of drafts to finally provide you this and I hope it is helpful and beneficial.

Many people are struggling, and they are looking to be prepared for and deal with the aftermath of these weather-related events. This is not a discussion of generators or stocking up on supplies or on deciding whether to stay or evacuate. This is about governmental, legal, and other resources that may aid you in keeping you informed and prepared.



Librarian Musings, by Jonathan Briggs

Tracking the storms and watching the weather:

- National Hurricane Center (NHC):
<https://www.nhc.noaa.gov/>
- Space City Weather – a good weather blog:
<https://spacecityweather.com/>
- Federal Emergency Management Administration:
<https://www.fema.gov/>

Before the storm:

- Flood insurance. [Click here.](#)
- Windstorm insurance. [Click here.](#)

After the storm – claims for damages (for lost food, etc.):

- <https://www.disasterassistance.gov/>
- <https://www.fema.gov/assistance/individual>
- Texas Department of Insurance.
[Click here.](#)
- TDI Recovery Tips. [Click here.](#)

- Fort Bend County Office of Homeland Security & Emergency Management. [Click here.](#)
- State Bar of Texas disaster-relief information for the public and attorneys. [Click here.](#)
- Texas Attorney General.
[Click here.](#)
- Disaster and Emergency Scams.
[Click here.](#)
- Disaster Counsel Legal Advice.
[Click here.](#)
- Lone Star Legal Aid: Beryl Recovery Resources. [Click here.](#)



Librarian Musings, by Jonathan Briggs

Additionally, following various entities via social media can be a good resource (as long as your phone is charged of course!) such as your city and county of residence, media outlets for weather and other pertinent news, information from other local residents on conditions and resources (such as discussions of where power has been restored, gas stations and grocery stores that are open, etc.). Also, to the extent it may be actually useful or up to date, your power company's website to track outage and restoration. There are also sites sharing information about travel, accommodations, resources for ill and elderly persons, and so much more. It is a lot to think about. If we had some level of assurance that the power outages would be of a shorter and manageable duration, much of this would be unnecessary, but now we are having to deal with the disaster itself of a strong storm and then the subsequent disaster of the now regular and prolonged infrastructure failures.

I'm sure there are resources I missed, but hopefully this column gets you thinking about tackling the aftermath of Beryl and being prepared for the next weather disaster.

Thank you to my fellow Fort Bend County employees and officeholders who -- before, during, and after Beryl -- worked to keep us safe, provide us information and resources, and keep essential services and governmental operations running. A huge thank you to the lineman -- both local and from out-of-state -- who have worked so hard in difficult circumstances to get our power back on. Thank you to the grocery-store workers, gas-station employees, restaurant staff, and everyone else who have worked to keep us all going. And thank you to everyone (neighbors, friends, co-workers, family, even strangers), who -- in their own way -- contributed to the greater good during this time.

I wish you all well, and if there is ever anything I can do for you, contact me at 281-341-3718 and jonathan.briggs@fortbend.lib.tx.us.