



Florida Division of Emergency Management



“On September 18, 1926, the Great Miami Hurricane swept across South Florida with estimated winds of 131-155 mph,” reads the opening line of a new historical marker dedicated at the site of the old U.S. Weather Bureau office in downtown Miami. Officials from the National Weather Service, Florida Emergency Management, and the city of Miami were on hand for the dedication.

DIVISION OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT NEWSLETTER

GOVERNOR
CHARLIE CRIST

DIRECTOR
W. CRAIG FUGATE

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MESSAGE FROM OUR DIRECTOR



THE 2007 HURRICANE SEASON IS FAR FROM OVER!

October has arrived and while we are on the downside of historical peak of tropical storm and hurricane activity, Hurricane Humberto's rapid development from a batch of clouds into a Cat. 1 hurricane in 24 hours should remind all of us that the 2007 season is far from over.

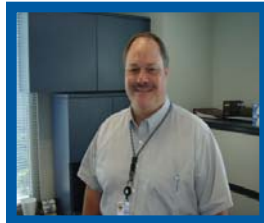
While the science of hurricane forecasting has greatly increased in accuracy, forecasters still have difficulty gauging the impacts of rapid-intensifying systems, such as the types we see as the Gulf waters remain a perfect breeding ground for the next several months.

As emergency managers, we must stay on task and not let our guard down. I urge you to make sure your team is ready to go because the next batch of clouds on the trailing edge of a "cold" front may have a Florida destination as a landfall. Remember when it comes to meeting the needs of our residents, **"Failure Is Not An Option."**

Finally, I want to thank those of you who have made the trip to Tallahassee for our annual Current Issues in Emergency Management seminar and welcome each of you who plan on joining us next week. We hope this time will be considered well spent with your colleagues on the State Team.

W. Craig Fugate

NEW IN PREPAREDNESS



Byron has over 24 years of experience providing public service in both the governmental and private sectors. He has worked serving low income, handicapped, unemployed and medically needy individuals through federal grant and contract management with the Florida Departments of Labor and Employment Security (AWI), Community Affairs (DCA) and Health (DOH). He has a wealth of experience in implementing and monitoring federal health programs statewide and applying Assessment Protocols for Excellence in Public Health (APEX) quality improvement models to their operation. He

also received a Distinguished Service Award from the Governor and Cabinet for his public health care management and leadership in Miami-Dade County following Hurricane Andrew.

Please join us as we welcome Byron Underwood to the Division of Emergency Management's team.

NEW IN MITIGATION



Miles has over 30 years experience that spans the area of emergency management, community service, and construction. He is skilled in the areas of surveys, plans, and blueprints. Miles has extensive knowledge in the area of FEMA operations, working in the field office in Pensacola post Ivan. He holds licenses or certifications in the area of pipeline engineering, underground utility construction, and specialty engineered construction. He has developed successful partnerships with varying levels of governments and officials.

Miles most recently served as Executive Director of Rebuild Northwest Florida, a public/private partnership existing to coordinate need-base recovery initiatives for citizens of Santa Rosa and Escambia Counties impacted by Hurricane Ivan.

Please join us as we welcome Miles Anderson back to the Division of Emergency Management's team.

SEPTEMBER WAS....

FLORIDA PREPAREDNESS MONTH

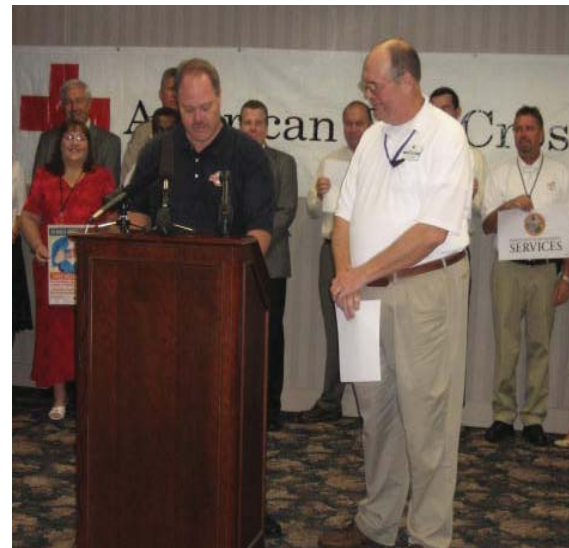
Get a Kit, Make a Plan, Be Informed and Get Involved.

Governor Charlie Crist proclaimed September 2007 as Florida Preparedness Month, to raise awareness among Floridians about the importance of being prepared for all hazards, including natural events such as hurricanes or tornadoes, as well as domestic security threats.

“It is essential that Floridians prepare their families, homes and businesses for the possibility of natural or other disasters,” said Governor Crist. “I also encourage residents to lend a helping hand to their neighbors by volunteering time and resources to prepare their local communities for an emergency.”

State and local law enforcement, emergency management and volunteer agency officials supported this effort by hosting numerous events across the state. The American Red Cross hosted the kick-off event in Tallahassee where state employees were urged to join their local faith and community-based organizations by volunteering.

“The more our communities and residents are prepared, the better they can withstand the impacts of future disasters,” said Division of Emergency Management Director Craig Fugate. “Everyone can play a key role and change outcomes by getting involved locally.”



Bureau Chief Byron Underwood presents a proclamation signed by Governor Crist to Chris Floyd with the American Red Cross

A LOOK AT COLLIER COUNTY

Sandra Arnold, Collier County APR

The Collier County Bureau of Emergency Services participated in National Preparedness Month by urging local residents to take measures to make themselves and their families better prepared for emergencies.

“Saving lives, protecting property, and protecting the environment are our main priorities,” said Director Dan Summers, Bureau of Emergency Services. “Throughout the year, we work diligently to help prepare residents and keep them informed of emergency-related issues in the event of a disaster.”

On September 11, the Collier County Board of County Commissioners joined the Bureau of Emergency Services in reminding residents of the importance of emergency preparedness and recognized two employees who have been instrumental in providing the community with essential emergency preparedness education.

Emergency Management Coordinator Rick Zyvolski, an employee of the county since 2001, is the chair of the Collier County Local Mitigation Strategy Working Group. He is responsible for developing and maintaining the Collier County Emergency Management Web site and the Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan. Zyvolski has worked to maintain the county’s designation from the National Weather Service as “StormReady,” as well as managing the Collier County Skywarn “Spotter” Program, and has provided over 100 hours training Community Emergency Response Teams on disaster preparedness.

Homeland Security Coordinator Joe Frazier, an East Naples resident, earned the Emergency Management Department’s first Achievement Award from the National Association of Counties in 2005 for his efforts in researching, coordinating and purchasing 11 Disaster Response Unit trailers. Additionally, Frazier established the county-wide Strategic Exercise Planning Group, a team whose sole purpose is to plan and design disaster exercises to test the capabilities of all county emergency response authorities and agencies to ensure they can effectively respond to, and limit the consequences of any disaster events.



Rick Zyvolski, Emergency Manager Coordinator



Joe Frazier, Homeland Security Coordinator

For more information on Collier County emergency management go to: www.colliergov.net

COMMUNITIES MITIGATING THE IMPACTS OF FLOODING

Charles Speights, Community Program Administrator, Florida Division of Emergency Management

In Florida, the warm climate and balmy winters attract thousands annually to live, work, and play in the Sunshine State. However, the same great weather often includes rain. Consequently, there are home and business owners who experience anxiety during rain events because their structure is built below the base flood elevation level for the local area, or they are threatened with evacuation from their homes due to repetitive flooding.

What is the base flood elevation level? It is the elevation to which the water of the 100-year flood event will rise. Flood level information may be found on Flood Insurance Rate Maps filed in local government planning, zoning and building departments, and are posted by FEMA at: <http://gis1.msc.fema.gov/Website/newstore/Viewer.htm>. For new and improved structures, it is recommended that the lowest enclosed area be built 2 feet above these 100-year flood levels.

Home and business owners whose structures have been flooded and who have insurance through the National Flood Insurance Program may qualify for grant assistance to perform flood mitigation activities that help reduce or eliminate damages from flooding through the Repetitive Flood Claims Program (RFCP) started in 2006.

During the first year of the Repetitive Flood Claims Program, 4 Florida local governments were awarded over \$3.5 Million in federal funds to acquire and demolish 10 structures. Clay County's Emergency Management Director, James Corbin, noted, "...this program enabled Clay County to remove one of the many repetitive flooding properties that we have responded to over the last several years." In 2007, over \$1.6 Million was awarded to 3 local governments to acquire and demolish 6 additional structures.

Florida's home and business owners form the nation's largest flood insurance market with over 2 million insurance policies. Although flood insurance is a financial safety net against the peril of flooding, post-disaster assessments and best management practices have demonstrated that only flood resistant materials and construction techniques, especially building the lowest enclosed areas above the 100-year base flood elevation level, will protect structures against actual flooding. In the aftermath of the 2004 and 2005 hurricane seasons when Florida was impacted by Tropical Storm Bonnie and 7 hurricanes, the Division of Emergency Management once again employed its concept of integrated mitigation management to leverage programs and assist local recovery and rebuilding efforts in cities such as Port Orange in Volusia County.

In 2004, 200 homes in the flood-prone Cambridge Basin area of Port Orange were affected by tropical storm Bonnie and hurricanes Charley, Frances, Ivan and Jeanne. City officials then prepared an application with the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program for the acquisition and demolition of 34 structures. Because of statewide demand and scarce local match funds, the Division's State Assistance Office helped the city in submitting applications for the then new Repetitive Flood Claims Program. As a result, the city has been able to receive over \$7.5 Million in funding from two different programs to acquire and demolish 28 structures.

City Manager Ken Parker said, "Port Orange is committed to acquiring and removing the most flood vulnerable properties in the Cambridge area...our long term plan is to convert these... properties into natural open-space areas to be enjoyed by all the residents of the city."



Photos by: Marvin Nauman/FEMA photo
Patricia Brach/FEMA photo

SEPTEMBER & OCTOBER—TWIN PEAKS OF THE SEASON

Brian K. Richardson, Deputy State Meteorologist, Florida Division of Emergency Management

Besides football season, September and October bring about historical peaks of tropical storm and hurricane activity in the Atlantic basin. Hurricanes Dean and Felix—two category 5 storms that carved paths of destruction through the Caribbean, Mexico, and Central America—should remind everyone of the magnitude of devastation tropical cyclones can inflict. This hurricane season has been pleasantly uneventful for Florida so far, but do not be lulled into complacency. Nearly one out of every two landfalling hurricanes in the U.S. make landfall in Florida.

Tropical cyclone activity increases dramatically from mid-August through late October. It is during these months that sea surface temperatures are warmest, and these warm waters fuel the development of numerous tropical waves and low pressure systems originating near the Cape Verde Islands, the Caribbean Sea, and Gulf of Mexico.

Climatologically, the peak of Atlantic tropical cyclone activity is around the second week of September, but a secondary spike in activity occurs during mid-October. This October “mini-surge” is attributed primarily to low pressure systems developing along stationary fronts over the Gulf of Mexico. Storms that form in this manner can intensify and move quickly, leaving little time for preparation because of their close proximity to land. Hurricane Humberto is a prime example, strengthening from a weak tropical depression along the Texas coast to a category 1 hurricane in only 18 hours! Humberto struck the upper Texas coast on September 13th and made history as the fastest-developing tropical cyclone on record.

Although we are in an above average period of tropical cyclone activity, we only need to look back 15 years to see that Florida is susceptible to hurricanes during normal, above normal, and below normal seasons. In 1992, a “below normal” season, Hurricane Andrew struck South Florida as a category 5 storm, causing billions of dollars worth of damage. Andrew was one of the most destructive storms to impact the state and the second costliest hurricane in U.S. history, second only to Hurricane Katrina.

By taking the time now to prepare your home, business, and family before the next storm threatens, you can remain safe and eliminate a significant amount of stress. The Florida Division of Emergency Management has information on how to create your own personal or business disaster plan as well as a guide on how to protect your home from wind and water damage associated with hurricanes. Visit www.floridadisaster.org for more information.

Remember, September and October mean not only football but also an increased threat of hurricanes to the “Sunshine State.” Get your snacks; get your drinks, and GET A PLAN!!!

TRAINING WITH A TWIST

Pamela Keil, External Affairs, Florida Division of Emergency Management

It’s a situation most everyone has been through at some point. The one where you’ve signed up for a training class you know you need, however, you dread sitting in class for long periods of time. You try to stay awake and focused on all this new information! If you got that accomplished, you wonder if you have really learned enough to get the job done.

This was not the case, during an August Advanced Business and Housing Preliminary Damage Assessment (PDA) training. Disaster Housing Chief Roy Dunn and Deputy Tom Smith created a new twist in training for selected state staff of the Long Term Recovery Office in Orlando.

After a thorough mission essential training covering all the elements of the PDA efforts, teams deployed into a real world simulation. Each team faced being sent into a “damaged” community created using large blown-up disaster photos.

Task one, was to conduct the initial stakeholders meeting with representatives from the three levels of government (local, state, federal). Teams then launched into the actual assessment all while providing quick and accurate “swags” of damage, calling in numbers as required.

The day ended as the teams raced to reach an accurate consensus on the final numbers. The Long Term Recovery Office staff is serious and ready to deploy the next time needed

For more training information visit: <http://www.floridadisaster.org/trainingcalendar/index.asp>



LEO LACHAT AWARDED FLORIDA DISTINGUISHED SERVICE MEDAL

Florida Division of Emergency Management (DEM) Chief of Operations, Leo Lachat was recognized for his service to the state during emergency operations by the Department of Military Affairs and Florida National Guard.

Leo Lachat was awarded the Florida Distinguished Service Medal by Maj. Gen. Douglas Burnett, Adjutant General of Florida, for his guidance and support to the Florida National Guard during major activations of the National Guard, including the historic hurricane seasons of 2004 and 2005.

“Leo Lachat has given faithful support to the citizens of Florida for many years, and these events, along with many other significant operations, would not have been possible without his leadership,” said Burnett.

Mr. Lachat joined the division in 1995 and has been involved in operations that resulted in more than 30 federal disaster declarations including hurricanes, tropical storms, major flooding events, and wildfires. Prior to his current assignment he has served as the administrator for the DEM Finance and Logistics Management Section and as the administrator for the DEM Preparedness, Training, and Exercise Section. During his tenure he was awarded a total of four Davis Productivity Awards for exemplary performance and cost savings enhancements and was directly responsible for the training and coordination of the initial series of tabletop and field exercises for all Regional Domestic Security Task Forces throughout Florida following the September 11, 2001 terrorist attack.

“I am humbled and honored to receive this award,” said Leo Lachat, Chief of Operations with the Florida Division of Emergency Management. “There are 12 thousand reasons, and their families, from the Guard and thousands more throughout the State Emergency Response Team as to why I am appreciative of this great honor.”



Leo Lachat receiving Distinguished Service Medal

CURRENT ISSUES IN EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

Nicole Holton, Statewide Training Manager, Florida Division of Emergency Management

The Current Issues in Emergency Management seminars are designed to provide the emergency management community with an overview of the State Emergency Response Team operations, the Florida Division of Emergency Management's programs, as well as an opportunity to meet individually with division staff. Session One, held at the Emergency Operations Center, took place October 9-11 and Session Two will begin October 23-25, 2007.

There will be presentations made on topics covering all aspects of emergency management as well as status updates on existing programs and legislation. This seminar provides the local emergency management community with an opportunity to receive valuable information that is beneficial to their daily business practices as well as their emergency operations. It also enables division staff to build and maintain a productive working relationship with their local counterparts.

The Current Issues in Emergency Management seminar is a time for the division and our local partners to learn how we can best support each other as together we strive to meet the needs of the 18 million residents who call the great state of Florida home.

“The relationships we're able to build through information sharing venues such as this goes a long way in ensuring that we're successful in providing optimal services to our citizens in times of disaster,” added Deputy Director Ruben D. Almaguer.



OWNERS OF SEVERE REPETITIVE LOSS STRUCTURES

Charles Speights, Community Program Administrator, Florida Division of Emergency

\$80 Million in Mitigation funds available in 07/08.

Staff from the Division's State Assistance Office is busy contacting 81 local governments that participate in the National Flood Insurance Program. Also included are 480 home owners because of a new federal program which focuses on mitigating properties with a history of high flood claims. The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) announced that \$80 million will be made available in fiscal year 2007 for the Severe Repetitive Loss Pilot Program.

In 2004, Congress reauthorized the National Flood Insurance Program and created the new program to mitigate severe repetitive loss properties. Additionally, the new program authorizes a rate increase of 150% in the annual flood insurance premium for those severe repetitive loss properties who refuse a reasonable offer of a mitigation grant.

"Based upon our past experience, we anticipate that Floridians will respond positively to this new flood reduction initiative," said Craig Fugate DEM Director. "Florida communities are the nation's most proactive in flood loss reduction programs as measured by the number of flood insurance policies and participation in the Community Rating System Program."

The Division of Emergency Management will post information and Program Guidance on www.FloridaDisaster.org when released by FEMA.

Severe repetitive loss properties are single family structures consisting of 1 to 4 residences that have flood insurance. They have also experienced flood related damages on 4 or more separate occasions. Each loss resulting in a claim paid exceeding \$5,000 and the cumulative amount of the total claims paid exceeding \$20,000, or when at least 2 separate claim payments have been paid with the cumulative amount of the claims exceeding the value of the property.

These severe repetitive loss properties have priority for mitigation funding by the Division. This priority status will be recognized in all programs: Flood Mitigation Assistance, Hazard Mitigation Grant Program, Pre-Disaster Mitigation-Competitive, and Repetitive Flood Claims.

In addition to partnering with FEMA, the Division will partner with the Community Rating System communities that conduct outreach annually. Education and awareness provided through outreach is key to owners accepting mitigation grant offers and achieving this loss reduction strategy. The Severe Repetitive Loss Outreach Strategy will be incorporated into the State Enhanced Hazard Mitigation Plan submitted to the Federal Emergency Management Agency by December 31, 2007.

For additional information, please contact staff of the State Assistance Office: Linda Bell, Linda.Bell@em.myflorida.com; Helen M. Johnson, Helen.Johnson@em.myflorida.com; Alvin Shipmon, Alvin.Shipmon@em.myflorida.com; Kirkland Spraggins, Kirkland.Spraggins@em.myflorida.com.



Photos by: Jocelyn Augustino/FEMA

We Want to Hear From You!

We welcome your comments and suggestions. Please let us know how we are doing.

Please submit all articles to:

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DEM welcomes submissions from readers. Articles selected for publication must provide accurate information to Floridians and complement the DEM mission. The editor reserves the right to edit submitted material.

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OUR MISSION

*WORKING TOGETHER TO ENSURE THAT
FLORIDA IS PREPARED TO
RESPOND TO EMERGENCIES,
RECOVER FROM THEM, AND MITIGATE
AGAINST THEIR IMPACTS*

"FAILURE IS NOT AN OPTION"