



STATE OF FLORIDA

DIVISION OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

RICK SCOTT
Governor

WESLEY MAUL
Interim Director

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

November 14, 2017

CONTACT: Alberto Moscoso
(850) 321-8503
alberto.moscoso@em.myflorida.com
FloridaDisaster.org

GOVERNOR SCOTT'S SECURING FLORIDA'S FUTURE BUDGET KEEPS FLORIDA PREPARED FOR NATURAL DISASTERS

TALLAHASSEE – Governor Scott's Securing Florida's Future budget invests \$1.4 billion in the Florida Division of Emergency Management (FDEM) for emergency preparedness, response and recovery. These investments include ongoing recovery efforts from Hurricane Irma, the largest storm in recent history to impact the State of Florida, and preparation for potential future natural disasters to ensure the safety of those who live, work and visit Florida.

Governor Scott said, "Hurricane Irma was the largest hurricane to make landfall in our state in recent history, and we saw firsthand the critical importance of disaster preparedness in our communities. Florida has the nation's best emergency management professionals and these investments will support their relentless work to prepare and respond to emergencies. We must continue to do all we can to ensure that Florida's families and businesses have the resources they need to be prepared and safe before any disaster."

FDEM Director Wesley Maul said, "Through continued support for our emergency management professionals, Governor Scott has shown his commitment to keep Floridians safe and Florida's communities continuing to grow and thrive. Ensuring we are prepared for disasters is of the utmost importance, and Governor Scott's proposed budget gives our team the tools to keep Florida's families safe."

The Securing Florida's Future Budget includes:

- \$1.32 Billion for Disaster Preparedness, Response, Recovery and Mitigation: Since 2011, Governor Scott has overseen the investment of more than \$2 billion to ensure Florida is a leader in disaster preparedness and recovery. The Budget invests \$1.3 billion in financial assistance to state and local governments for recovery and disaster mitigation funding to assist communities in returning not only to prior disaster conditions, but to also reduce the impacts of future disasters.
- \$3.5 Million for the Statewide Emergency Alert Notification System: DEM is continuing to expand a statewide, alert notification system, AlertFlorida, to provide alerts of eminent or actual hazards to all Florida families, businesses and visitors. It will merge with existing systems, automatically disseminate weather warnings from the National Weather Service and

target specific geographic areas for real-time, location based mobile device alerts. Currently, the system has been implemented in 56 counties and 8 cities, towns or other political municipalities. During Hurricane Irma, the AlertFlorida program's participating counties sent out 4,776 Broadcast notifications through 11,941,446 messages, which were received by 7,866,505 recipients.

- The system will also result in potential savings to Florida homeowners by reducing premiums paid by National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) policyholders. Florida National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) policy holders will save a combined \$47 million once all eligible communities are enrolled in NFIP's Community Rating System (CRS). Currently, there are 219 communities enrolled in CRS, which totals 47 percent of all Florida communities. Florida leads the nation in CRS-enrolled communities, with approximately three times the number enrolled when compared to the next closest state.
- \$1.8 million for County Emergency Operations Center Updates: Currently, Emergency Operations Centers for nine Florida counties, Bradford, Columbia, Franklin, Gadsden, Hamilton, Hardee, Suwannee, Union and Wakulla, do not meet minimum hurricane safety criteria, or have insufficient workspace. Small counties often struggle to finance capital projects, such as EOC design and construction. This funding will be used to incentivize these counties to replace or structurally alter and expand their existing EOC by providing an architectural and engineering design services grant.
- \$9.1 Million for Flood Mitigation Assistance Programs: The Flood Mitigation Assistance Programs are administered through FDEM to reduce or eliminate claims under the National Flood Insurance Program. FDEM develops and maintains a State Standard Hazard Mitigation Plan, and reviews Flood Mitigation Assistance Program applications from eligible state/local governments, recommends technically feasible and cost effective applications to FEMA and provides pass-thru funding for FEMA approved and awarded project grants to eligible sub-applicants.
- \$6.7 Million for Pre-Disaster Mitigation Program (PDM): The PDM Program provides funds for hazard mitigation planning and the implementation of mitigation projects prior to a disaster event to reduce overall risks to the population and structures, while also reducing reliance on funding from actual disaster declarations.
- \$3 Million for Hurricane Shelter Retrofit: FDEM publishes an annual shelter retrofit report which provides a list of facilities recommended to be retrofitted for use as public hurricane evacuation shelters. These measures work to bring already existing public buildings up to established safety criteria and increase the availability of public hurricane evacuation shelter spaces in the state.

Charlotte County EM Director Gerard Mallet said, "With much of Florida recovering from Hurricane Irma, Governor Scott's proposed budget supports emergency management throughout the State so we are best able to prepare for, respond to and recover from any emergencies that may occur."

Clay County EM Director John Ward said, "The proposed funding for emergency preparedness programs, such as the Statewide Notification System, takes tangible steps to keep Floridians safe during emergency situations. Continued confirmation for these programs ensures Florida remains the most prepared state in the nation for disasters."

Bay County Emergency Services Chief Mark Bowen said, “As Floridians evacuated during Hurricane Irma, local officials faced the largest hurricane evacuation shelter operation in the history of the state. Maintenance of the Hurricane Shelter Retrofit program helps communities identify and update existing spaces to increase sheltering potential and save lives.”

Washington County EM Director Lynne Abel said, “Support for the CRS program through initiatives such as the Statewide Notification System allows even more financially constrained counties to participate and pass real financial savings onto policyholders in their communities.”

For more information about the Florida Division of Emergency Management, visit www.Floridadisaster.org or follow the Division on Twitter at @FLSERT and Facebook at www.Facebook.com/FloridaSERT.

###