

Florida SHMPoints

Providing insightful mitigation news and information from around the State of Florida.

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Remembering a Legacy

By: Gary Yates

On December 21, 2015, the Florida (and National) Emergency Management community lost a unique man of great talent, integrity, love and faith. On that day, our friend and partner, Frank J. Koutnik passed away at home in Tallahassee. This unexpected and tragic loss has shaken his family and friends, his beloved church family, his coworkers at Disasters, Strategies and Ideas, and many Emergency Management professionals nationwide.

Frank retired from the Florida Division of Emergency Management in January 2006, after serving the State for 24 Years. A few of the positions he held during his tenure included Bureau Chief, Bureau of Recovery and Mitigation for 4-1/2 years; Administrator, Office of Policy and Planning for six years, and Planning Manager for five years.

Frank lived, loved and breathed emergency management for over 34 years. His many professional contributions in his chosen field had a fundamental impact on many agencies and his personal leadership touched hundreds of professionals who worked with, around and for Frank. He truly was a man of incredible talent and among the finest professional strategic thinkers and planners in the Country. Every project he touched was embraced by Frank as the most important he had ever done—and in his mind it was never completed until it was perfect. His desire for perfection was highly contagious to those around him. Frank took exceptional pride in helping smaller agencies build their programs and he really enjoyed working with individuals at all levels to improve collaboration, coordination and the ability to serve people in their most serious time of need.

Working in all areas and disciplines of emergency management, one of his most important assignments was toward the end of his career with FDEM. He was tasked with leading the enormous statewide disaster recovery efforts in the aftermath of the historic 2004/2005 Hurricane Seasons.



This multi-year effort involved many billions of dollars in damaged local and state infrastructure and many thousands of homes and businesses statewide. His calm, steady leadership didn't garner many headlines, but Frank was the key to that recovery.

Frank's strong, yet quiet, leadership and personification of excellence in everything he did made him a natural and valuable teacher and a mentor to many. More important he made true lifelong friends with many who encountered Frank in professional dealings and the human walk of life. Frank treated everyone with respect and humility—and always had time to help out a friend, or a total stranger.

Frank's professional affiliations over the past 34 years were numerous—with his involvement in virtually every major effort to improve the National Emergency Management system since Hurricane Andrew in 1992. His leadership in the National Emergency Management Association initiatives and the Florida Governor's Hurricane Conference was of great significance. If there was an important problem to be solved, everyone wanted Frank as part of that effort!

Frank was recognized often for his dedication and hard work, including two Lifetime Achievement Awards and four Distinguished Service Awards.

When DSI CEO Joe Myers was called upon by former Governor Lawton Chiles to build a new and better emergency management system in Florida in the aftermath of Hurricane Andrew, Frank Koutnik was among the first people he met at FDEM. Remembering Frank on the morning of his passing, Joe said, "I also immediately figured out that Frank was the smartest person in the room—not the loudest, just the best. In the 23 years since that first meeting my respect, love and faith in Frank only grew greater and stronger. I have received

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no greater gift in life than the friendship and partnership of Frank Koutnik.”

But, as many know, Frank was not just about emergency management. He was an amazing “complete” person as well. Frank was an avid outdoorsman and lover of nature. He loved hiking and exploring and among his most treasured memories was a recent trip to Alaska with his children, Andy and Esther—whom he cherished with all his heart.

Most important to Frank was his understanding that he was a servant to God and his fellow man. This servant’s heart was shown during his last weekend on earth. On the Saturday before he passed, Frank worked with a group of others, helping feed the homeless and under-privileged in Tallahassee. When a co-worker asked Frank about this experience, Frank said, “I get a lot more out of this than I give.”

Been There, Done That: Acquisition Tips

By Cecilia Patella

Beginning June 26, 2012 Hernando County experienced isolated and severe flooding from Tropical Storm Debby (15-17 inches of rain over a 24 hour period). With a presidential disaster declaration and the Public Assistance process underway, we conducted outreach in the community to assess interest in the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program. Targeted outreach was also conducted to all properties with reported flood damages. While many expressed interest, just three property owners fully committed to the process. Grant applications were prepared and submitted in late February, 2013. Fully executed grant agreements were received in March and April, 2014. All three properties were acquired and structures demolished at various times in late 2014 and well into 2015. As of February 2016, all properties have been acquired, structures demolished and most reimbursement requests have been received. All the projects remain open as the closeout phase continues.

As we near the conclusion of our projects, we assembled some tips that may be useful to others managing an acquisition/demolition grant:

Read the entire agreement. Understanding the contractual obligations, deliverables and timeline will go a long way toward a successful project. **Tip:** As you review the agreement, highlight all deliverables, special conditions and create a checklist. Don’t forget to pay attention to the vendor background checks & debarment certification forms.

Get help. Even if you have previously purchased real estate, get help from someone who has experience with government acquisitions, for example, a county property manager. This should be done early and in conjunction with the development of the grant application. Failure to understand all elements of a property acquisition will likely result in grant application errors. Some frequent errors include overly inflated costs, unreasonably low cost estimates, or complete omissions (e.g. the cost of an asbestos and lead paint inspection.) **Tip:** Think about hiring a contractor to execute the project and be sure project management costs are included in your application and subsequent grant agreement.

Establishing property value. Property owners generally have a good sense of the value of their property and know precisely how much they are willing to accept. Unfortunately, a property owner’s opinion of value is unacceptable and so is value derived from a market analysis. *Unified Hazard Mitigation Assistance guidance states that the appraisal methodology shall be used to determine property value.* If a property owner happens to have a recent independent appraisal available, that value is acceptable for the grant application. Another approach is to consider the value assessed by the County Property Appraiser (PA). Although County PA values generally lag behind the market, it is possible that the value is current and representative of the market. If so, and the property owner agrees, this value can be used without the need for an independent appraisal.

What options are there if no recent appraisal exists and the PA value is below market?

The property owner may obtain an appraisal at their expense. **Tip:** The appraisal fee is reimbursable if included as a pre-grant expense in the grant application. Be sure to document how you communicated the reimbursement process to the property owner. In particular, that the appraisal expense is reimbursed only if the grant is awarded and the closing actually occurs.

Alternatively, the County obtains the appraisal. **Tip:** If the grant is not awarded, or if the property owner backs out of the project before the closing occurs, the County will not be reimbursed for the expense. To avoid this potential pitfall, you can opt to require property owners to pre-pay for some or all expenses incurred prior to closing, including the appraisal, property survey, and an asbestos/lead paint inspection. All items can and should be credited back at the closing.

Once the property value is established, dependent closing costs can be more easily estimated. For instance: title insurance, doc stamp fees.

Duplication of Benefits (DOB) – Deduct the DOB from the initial award and before the local share of expenses is calculated. While this step is documented in guidance documents, it is easy to spend a lot of time trying to find it. **Tip:** Deducting DOB at any other time in the project will have a negative effect on the net to the property owner. **Tip:** Be sure to ask homeowners about any expenses they have incurred for mitigation of damages. As long as receipts are available, the expenditures are reimbursable.

Organize your documentation. Submit requests that are well organized and concise; doing so will minimize reviewer questions and consequently result in a faster reimbursement. Keep in mind that individuals reviewing your requests are not privy to every single aspect of your project. Try to anticipate their questions and provide the answers in your submittal. **Tip:** Maintain accurate and complete records related to project management by using the HMGP Personnel Activity Report from Day 1. **Tip:** Organize reimbursement requests according to the deliverables in the scope of work. Create logical sections (with tabs or section dividers) so that work flows smoothly. Our last request for reimbursement contained 236 pages. Imagine sorting through that without a table of contents. **Tip:** Continuously track your costs. Creating a simple spreadsheet that includes your budgeted and actual

figures will insure that you are comparing expenses to the budget as you go.

Property owner relations. Some, but not all, property owners will be difficult to deal with. Among the causes of negative behavior are event stress, uncertainty and the frustratingly long acquisition process. From the beginning, set and communicate realistic timeframes. Be sure they understand that it is not unusual for a project of this type to take **years** to complete, even if you are working aggressively. **Tip:** Provide regular communications to keep property owners up to date and document each instance. **Tip:** As you are working through the project, never forget that the property owner has suffered significant losses. Even if there is no loss of life, similar grief can be experienced when an individual has lost a home, sentimental keepsake and irreplaceable mementos. **Tip:** Understanding the stages of loss & grief will help you adjust your approach to the owners at any given time during the course of the project.

Who you know. Sometimes, you need just a little help from the right person to move things along by making inquiries on your behalf. In our case, the support of our Congressman was critical in moving things along. **Tip:** Develop those relationships now.

Before



After



Hazard Profile: Waterspouts

By: David Block

A waterspout is a rotating column of water and spray formed by a whirlwind occurring over a body of water. There are two different kinds of waterspouts, tornadic and non-tornadic, each formed by different atmospheric dynamics.

Non-tornadic waterspouts (picture on left) are the typical and most common waterspouts. These waterspouts generally last less than 20 minutes, move very slowly if at all, and rarely cause damages as they stay over water and usually exhibit winds of less than 30 mph. They are not associated with the rotating updraft of a thunderstorm, which is how tornadoes are formed. Their formation is similar to that of landspouts, which is a tornado not associated with the mesocyclonic action of a thunderstorm.

Tornadic waterspouts (picture on right) are essentially tornadoes that form over water, in a similar mesocyclonic action as tornadoes do; these are the waterspouts that can come ashore (where they are reclassified as tornadoes) and can cause damages. Several counties in Florida have experienced damages when tornadic waterspouts come ashore.



Fast Facts (NOAA):

- Waterspouts are spotted in the Florida Keys more than any other place on earth.
- Listen for special marine warnings about waterspout sightings that are broadcast on NOAA Weather Radio.
- Watch the sky for certain types of clouds. In the summer, with light winds, look for a possible waterspout underneath a line of cumulus clouds with dark, flat bases. At anytime of the year, a thunderstorm or line of thunderstorms, can produce very intense waterspouts.
- If a waterspout is sighted, immediately head at a 90 degree angle from the apparent motion of the waterspout.
- Never try to navigate through a waterspout. Although waterspouts are usually weaker than tornadoes, they can still produce significant damage to you and your boat.

These damages can range from patio furniture being tossed around to structural damage to widespread power outages.

Both forms of waterspouts can also cause nautical hazards. Depending on how fast the winds from a waterspout are, anything that is within about one yard of the surface of the water (including fish, frogs, and sea turtles) can be lifted into the air. There have been documented instances of fish raining from the sky. Waterspouts can also overturn and damage boats, and care should be taken at sea when a waterspout is spotted in order to prevent loss of life.

The National Weather Service will often issue special marine warnings when waterspouts are likely or have been sighted over coastal waters, or tornado warnings when tornadic waterspouts are expected to move onshore. There is a scale used to predict conditions favorable for waterspout development. The Szilagyi Waterspout Index (SWI) ranges from -10 to +10, where values greater than or equal to zero represent conditions favorable for waterspout development. For more information on waterspouts, visit the International Center for Waterspout Research at <http://www.icwr.ca/>.



Five Stages of Waterspout Formation:

1. Dark spot. The surface of the water takes on a dark appearance where the vortex, or column of rotating wind, reaches it.
2. Spiral pattern. Light and dark bands spiral out from the dark spot.
3. Spray ring. A swirling ring of sea spray called a cascade forms around the dark spot. It appears to have an eye at the center, similar to that seen in a hurricane.
4. Mature vortex. The waterspout is now at its most intense stage, visible from the surface of the water to the clouds overhead. It appears to have a hollow funnel and may be surrounded by vapor.
5. Decay. When the flow of warm air into the vortex weakens, the waterspout collapses.

Mitigation and Volunteer Services: A Match Made in Legislation

By: Jared Jaworski

This year's FEPA Annual Meeting offered many exciting panels that touched on a broad range of topics in the emergency management field. One in particular, of which I was able to be a part, was "Supporting Non-Governmental Partners: Donations and Mitigation," with Ken Skalitzky from Volunteer Florida and Lindsay Jones from Good360. Of the various topics and questions addresses during the panel, one takeaway that I want those reading this article to have is the concept of coupling volunteer hours/donations with the local non-federal cost share.

This coupling can be done with any of the federal grants the State manages, but for the sake of brevity, I will use the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) as an example. In any given county's Local Mitigation Strategy (LMS) project list there should be, ideally, a mix of large, medium, and small projects to capture any size post-disaster allocation. Depending on the type of project, volunteer services (VS) can be used to offset the local share by providing a wide variety of work to complete the project. The rates to use for volunteers varies depending on the type of work, and more on that can be found in 2 C.F.R. §200.306 (e).

If using VS' interests you for future projects, the preparations listed below will pay off greatly in the long run: During blue skies, make contact with various VS providers in your area and know where they can be used and for which projects on your priority list. If none exist, consider adding some, if possible.

Have an organized system for capturing VS hours ahead of time so that no time is unaccounted. Some VS's have their own system, but you as the sub-grantee should develop your own just as a back-up.

Invite VS' to your county's LMS Working Group public meetings when discussing projects. Often they can be unaware that a notice has been put out or that this is an area that they can be of assistance.

There are more preparations that can be taken, but these are some impactful ones with which to start. In the years that I've worked under the HMGP unit, I've seen that those counties that do even a little project preparation during blue skies, have less trouble throughout their project's lifespan than those that do not. If you have more questions about using VS' in your future projects, please feel free to contact me.

Congratulations!

Columbia, Martin, and Osceola Counties completed the LMS update process.

Their new plans expire in 2020.

Baker, Franklin, Hendry, Lake, Nassau, Sarasota, and Sumter Counties completed the LMS update process.

Their new plans expire in 2021.

Alachua, Bradford, Holmes, Jackson and Marion Counties achieved Approved Pending Adoption Status.

Need More Information?

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The Bureau of Mitigation

Mitigation is an integral part of the Florida Division of Emergency Management (FDEM). Mitigation actions reduce or eliminate the loss of life and property by lessening the impact of disasters. Due to Florida's weather, geography, and miles of coastline the state is highly vulnerable to disasters. Disasters can be very costly to both the citizens and government.

Under the direction of Division Director Bryan W. Koon and State Hazard Mitigation Officer, Miles E. Anderson, the Bureau of Mitigation administers several federal mitigation grant programs including the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program, the Pre-Disaster Mitigation Program, and the Flood Mitigation Assistance Program. The Bureau also administers a state funded mitigation program called the Residential Construction Mitigation Program.

If you would like to know more about mitigation in Florida please visit: www.floridadisaster.org/mitigation.



Current Update Cycle

Approved	43
Approved Pending Adoption	8
Expired	4
Complete	32

2016 PDM/FMA Cycle

All applications must be submitted to FDEM via the eGrants application system on or before **May 3, 2016 by 5:00 PM EST.**

For fact sheets, please see:
<http://www.floridadisaster.org/Mitigation/index.htm>

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