

## Spillway Opened



St. Charles - GOHSEP joined the Army Corps of Engineers as the Bonnet Carré Spillway was opened in late February. Increasing water levels as a result of heavy rain in the Mississippi and Ohio river valleys prompted the action to ensure safe passage of the Mississippi River through the greater New Orleans area.

Operation of the structure will relieve pressure on main line levees, maintain river stages, and regulate the flow downriver from the spillway. The decision to open Bonnet Carré was issued by Maj. Gen. Richard G. Kaiser commander of the Corps' Mississippi Valley Division in Vicksburg, Mississippi.

Opening procedures took place on Wednesday, February 27, 2019 when the river reached the operational trigger of 1.25 million cubic feet per second. The spillway has opened several times in recent years, including 2008, 2011, 2016 and 2018. This is the 13<sup>th</sup> time since 1931 that the spillway has been opened.

## MEMA Visit



Members of GOHSEP's operations and public information teams recently traveled to the Mississippi Emergency Operations Center to learn more about

virtual functions used by the Mississippi Emergency Management Agency (MEMA). MEMA uses various pages with virtual communities to support their emergency functions and Joint Information Center or JIC. Those pages are provided free of charge through the Homeland Security Information Network or HSIN.

HSIN provides incident leaders with an encrypted online web system for recording communications, chat room capability, and a real-time capability to post and review documents. The HSIN also is used by the DHS National Operations Center to coordinate homeland security operations with interagency participants. DHS Public Affairs manages access, account support and administrative issues relating to the HSIN for public affairs coordination.

GOHSEP began informally testing this resource during recent weather events. Members of the Joint Information Center are scheduled to learn more about Virtual JIC functions during the statewide exercise.



## From The Director



GOHSEP continues to be in an extremely busy stretch. In addition to big strides in recovery, we have an ongoing river flood emergency across the state and several recent rounds of severe weather. Flooding remains our state's number one threat. The threat associated with the high river levels are expected to be a factor for the next few months. Meanwhile, this is the time of year we ramp up preparedness training with our local, state and federal partners. We have numerous events planned including the ROC drill, the statewide exercise and various local meetings.

I recently traveled to Washington for the Governors Homeland Security Advisors Council meetings. I am proud to talk about our accomplishments in Louisiana and the support we provide others across the country as they face disasters and recovery. We are also making our mark at home. Hazard Mitigation Grants Management Section Chief Tenesha Wilson was recently promoted to major in the Louisiana National Guard and she was recognized for her tremendous work with CASA. Senior Problem Resolution Officer Dianna Bennett received her Louisiana Civil Service Training Certification.

As we watch news about the terrorist attacks in New Zealand, I want to touch on one final topic. It is important to maintain situation awareness in our day to day lives. Know your surroundings. Check any building or facility you enter for exits. Pay attention to what people near you are doing. We help promote situational awareness with law enforcement with our [See Something, Send Something App](#). It is a way for anyone to report suspicious activity to authorities. That type of reporting is often the key to preventing large or small criminal activity. As the state homeland security agency, include this information with those you work with because we all play a role in keeping our state safe.

Thanks for all you do for our citizens.



- James Waskom

# Governor's Homeland Security Advisors Council Winter Meeting

Washington, D.C.- GOHSEP Director Jim Waskom recently attended the Governor's Homeland Security Advisors Council 2019 Winter Meeting in Washington, D.C..

The National Governor's Homeland Security Advisors Council acts as a forum that brings together the governors principal homeland security advisors from each state, commonwealth, and territory:

- 1) Provides a unified voice for states to inform and shape national homeland security policy.
- 2) Keep governors abreast about the current threat environment and the impacts of Federal homeland security legislation, regulations, and policies on states.
- 3) Inform the work of the NGA Center for Best Practices (NGA Center) by sharing ideas and best practices, identifying emerging issues, and reviewing and analyzing the impacts of Federal homeland security activities on the states.

**NGA**  
NATIONAL GOVERNORS ASSOCIATION [www.nga.org](http://www.nga.org)



GOHSEP Director Jim Waskom discusses the Urban Areas Security Initiative grant process with US Homeland Security Secretary Kirstjen Nielsen during the recent Governors Homeland Security Advisors Council Winter Meeting in Washington, D.C..

## Iberville Parish - Safety Town

Hundreds of kindergarten students in Iberville learn about safety each year during the Safety Town program sponsored by I-CAER and the Iberville Parish Office of Emergency Preparedness. It is



a fun way for these children to learn about emergency preparedness, chemical, fire, gun, weather, bicycle and vehicle safety. During this program, students drive their "big wheels" around the streets of the miniature Safety Town, which is complete with city buildings, railroad crossings, stop signs, and traffic lights. They are issued traffic tickets for any violations and awarded a Safety Town driver's license once they demonstrate good safety practices. During Safety Town, the students also receive lessons on what to do when the siren sounds for bad

weather or a chemical spill. Safety Town turtle mascot "Wally Wise Guy" demonstrates sheltering in place and other safety lessons, such as how to correctly report an emergency by calling "911" on the telephone, fire safety principles like "stop, drop and roll," and general personal safety, such as not playing with guns and not talking to strangers.

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I-CAER and Iberville Parish Council sponsors this program, and the member companies provide approximately 50 volunteers to assist children throughout each day-long program. The program continues for 10 days, with various groups of kindergarteners attending each day.



For more information go to: [www.ibervilleparish.com/Departments/Emergency-Preparedness](http://www.ibervilleparish.com/Departments/Emergency-Preparedness)



## 2019 Louisiana Emergency Management Conference

May 13-16, 2019

L'auberge in Lake Charles, Louisiana

Register on-line at [www.laemc.org](http://www.laemc.org)

Toll free (877) 405-5372 • Telephone (225) 408-4757 • Fax (225) 408-4422 • email [info@laemc.org](mailto:info@laemc.org)

Early Bird Registration Rate Before March 29<sup>th</sup>

Registration Rate After March 29<sup>th</sup>

# Parish Profile - East Baton Rouge

Devastating effects took a significant toll on East Baton Rouge Parish as a result of the August 2016 Floods (Flood statistic or rain totals received in EBR). However, East Baton Rouge Parish is not defined by its losses, but rather by its strength and determination to recover quickly and efficiently. These posed hardship have offered an opportunity for our Parish to strengthen emergency management efforts involving preparedness, prevention, mitigation, response and recovery to build back stronger as a community.

Upon taking office in 2017, Mayor-President Sharon Weston Broome announced her recovery initiative and vision for the Parish. East Baton Rouge Parish is developing a comprehensive All-Hazards Recovery Plan in accordance with The National Disaster Recovery Framework which provides context to restore, redevelop, and revitalize our Parish. In order to effectively develop The East Baton Rouge Parish All-Hazards Recovery Plan, subcommittees have been established among the different Recovery Support Functions (RSF) where members from various agencies have offered crucial information to construct the dynamics of the plan.

Development and the implementation of this plan require a whole community approach and include partnerships with the Center for Planning Excellence, State of Louisiana Office of Community Development, and FEMA. Along with support from



local, state, and federal partners, East Baton Rouge Parish has turned to the public for guidance through a series of public meetings. During which, residents were given the opportunity to offer suggestions and discuss their experiences with recent disasters, and the most-memorable 2016 floods.

The East Baton Rouge Parish All-Hazards Recovery Plan is being developed to specifically fulfill needs during the recovery process and define the resiliency of our community. By becoming more resilient, our community is not just prepared to survive another major event, but are poised to adapt and thrive in ever-changing conditions. The plan will be presented to the East Baton Rouge Parish Metropolitan Council in early 2019

<b>Founded:</b>	1812	
<b>Largest City:</b>	Baton Rouge	
<b>Total Area:</b>	470 square miles	
<b>Population (2015):</b>	446,753	



OHSEP Director  
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[www.brla.gov/412/Mayors-Office-of-Homeland-Sec-Emergency-](http://www.brla.gov/412/Mayors-Office-of-Homeland-Sec-Emergency-)

## The Latest GOHSEP Get A Game Plan Podcast is Available



A new episode of The GOHSEP Get A Game Plan Podcast is now available!

Find out more about the ongoing river flood threat across much of Louisiana from the National Weather Service- Lake Charles.

And we've got information on resources from DOTD you can use during an emergency evacuation.

Subscribe to the podcast now from Spotify or many other podcast stores.

Find a link at [GetAGamePlan.org](http://GetAGamePlan.org) or at your favorite podcast store.

# Tornado Safety

**National Weather Service** - It is important to have a plan of action in the event a tornado threatens your family, and to rehearse that plan frequently. Such a plan should include what you and your family should do when at home, work, school, or outdoors. The time spent planning now could determine whether or not you survive a tornado.

## Plan Ahead

First, know the county in which you live. Severe weather warnings are issued for counties, or for portions of counties. By keeping a highway roadmap nearby, you can follow storm movements, and better determine if you are threatened.

Have a **NOAA Weather Radio** handy at all times. Make sure your model has an tone-alarm feature, which will activate the radio when warnings or watches are issued for your area. If you are planning to be outdoors for an extended period of time, keep up with the latest weather information from your local National Weather Service office.

If you see a tornado, or hear that the National Weather Service has issued a Tornado Warning for your location...

## Know Where to Go

In a home or a building, move to a pre-designated shelter, preferably the basement or the lowest floor of your home. Don't worry about opening your windows first - that would be a mistake, just get to the basement, and get under a sturdy piece of furniture or workbench. Grab blankets to cover yourself with, which will protect you from flying debris.

If an underground shelter (basement) is not available, move to an interior room or hallway on the lowest floor, and crouch down close to the floor. Again, grab extra blankets to protect yourself from flying debris. Stay away from windows - as they can shatter due to flying debris and the force of the wind.

If you are in a mobile home: Immediately move to a substantial shelter.

If you are caught outdoors and cannot get to a safe building. As a last resort, you should:

- Immediately get into a vehicle, buckle your seat belt and try to drive to the closest sturdy shelter.
- If your vehicle is hit by flying debris while you are driving, pull over and park.
- Stay in the car with the seat belt on. Put your head down below the windows; cover your head with your hands and a blanket, coat or other cushion if possible.
- If you can safely get noticeably lower than the level of the roadway, leave your car and lie in that area, covering your head with your hands. Your choice of whether to stay in your car should be driven by your specific circumstances. Your best choice remains getting to a secure building with a basement or saferoom.
- If you find yourself outside or in a car with a tornado approaching and you are unable to get to a safe shelter, you remain at risk whether you stay in your car or seek shelter in a depression or ditch, both of which are last resort options that provide little protection. The safest place to be is in an underground shelter, basement or safe room.



[www.getagameplan.org](http://www.getagameplan.org)



**NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE**

NATIONAL OCEANIC AND ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION  
Tornado Frequently Asked Questions: [www.spc.noaa.gov/faq/](http://www.spc.noaa.gov/faq/)

## Tenesha Wilson Named CASA Volunteer Of The Month

Baton Rouge - Congrats to Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) **Tenesha Wilson** on being named **Volunteer of The Month** for March!

GOHSEP's Tenesha Wilson works as the Section Chief of Hazard Mitigation Grants Management.

Thank you, Tenesha for your hard work and dedication to provide a voice for children in foster care who need one.

The CASA advocates are community volunteers who advocate for the best interests of abused and neglected children living in foster care.

**Learn how you can help a child by becoming a CASA volunteer:**

Attending a 45-minute orientation session is the first step to becoming a CASA volunteer. Sessions are held weekly..

To become a CASA volunteer, you must:

- Be at least 21 years of age.
- Attend a 45-minute orientation session.
- Complete a 32-hour training course.
- Make a one-year commitment to a child.

CASA volunteers are ordinary people, many with full-time jobs of their own. They work with one or two children at a time averaging 10-15 hours per month. No special experience is required. CASA provides thorough training and CASA volunteers work under the direct supervision of CASA staff. Once assigned to a case, CASA volunteers act as a watchdog for the child and become a stable presence in the child's life. The personal attention ensures that the case keeps moving toward a safe, permanent home for the child.

Go to [www.casabr.org/volunteer](http://www.casabr.org/volunteer) for more information about volunteering.

To contact Tenesha: [tenesha.wilson@la.gov](mailto:tenesha.wilson@la.gov)



**March's Volunteer of the Month**

TENESHA WILSON



## Captain Tenesha Wilson Promoted To Major

Baton Rouge - GOHSEP's Tenesha Wilson was promoted to the rank of Major effective January 9, 2019. Tenesha has proudly served 20 years in the Louisiana Army National Guard. Her current assignment is Logistics Officer and Property Book Officer for the 61<sup>st</sup> Troop Command. Her promotion ceremony was held at the Armed Forces Reserve Center on Saturday, March 9, 2019 in Baton Rouge and was witnessed by family members, friends, her leadership team, peers, and many members of her GOHSEP family. Tenesha was pinned by her Commander, COL Dirk Erickson, and son, Kameran Senegal.



Tenesha Wilson (center) and ceremony attendees.

In her civilian capacity, Tenesha works for GOHSEP as the Section Chief of Hazard Mitigation Grants Management.

To contact Tenesha: [tenesha.wilson@la.gov](mailto:tenesha.wilson@la.gov)

## MARCH BIRTHDAYS

For questions or comments about the birthdays, contact: Tiffany Johnson - [tiffany.l.johnson@la.gov](mailto:tiffany.l.johnson@la.gov)

**Paul Boyle** (Recovery Grants Administration) 03/02  
**Paul Davis** (Sub-recipient Monitoring) 03/04  
**Amy Maglone** (Legal Services) 03/05

**Ellen Ibert** (Public Assistance Tech Services) 03/11  
**Cody Landry** (Homeland Security Grants) 03/13  
**Dinah Riggs** (PART) 03/24

## UPCOMING EVENTS

To sign up or for more information about the training, visit: [gohsep.la.gov/resources/training-events-schedule](http://gohsep.la.gov/resources/training-events-schedule)

### TRAINING

March 18-19, 2019 Homeland Security Exercise & Evaluation Program Training (HSEEP) - Baton Rouge, Louisiana  
 March 19, 2019 MGT-324 C Campus Emergencies Prevention, Response & Recovery - Grambling, Louisiana  
 March 19, 2019 G-0775 Emergency Operations Center Management & Operations - Lafayette, Louisiana  
 March 20-21, 2019 ICS-300 Intermediate ICS for Expanding Incidents for Operational First Responders - Lake Charles, Louisiana  
 March 20-21, 2019 L0105- Public Information & Warning - Baton Rouge, Louisiana  
 March 28-29, 2019 PER-211 Medical Management of CBRNE Events - Shreveport, Louisiana  
 April 10, 2019 HAZTRAN19 Hazardous Materials Tabletop Exercise/Training - Bossier City, Louisiana  
 April 23, 2019 AWR-362 Flooding Hazards: Science & Preparedness - Lake Charles, Louisiana  
 April 23, 2019 HAZTRAN19 Hazardous Materials Tabletop Exercise/Training - West Monroe, Louisiana  
 April 24, 2019 Region 3: Annual Hurricane & Tropical Weather Coordination Meeting - Thibodaux, Louisiana  
 April 30, 2019 Community Exercise-River & Bayou Parishes Mutual Aid & Assistance Task Force - Morgan City, Louisiana  
 May 2, 2019 HAZTRAN19 Hazardous Materials Tabletop Exercise/Training - Zachary, Louisiana  
 May 6-7, 2019 MGT-439 Pediatric Disaster Response & Emergency Preparedness - New Orleans, Louisiana  
 May 9, 2019 HAZTRAN19 Hazardous Materials Tabletop Exercise/Training - New Orleans, Louisiana  
 May 9, 2019 ICS-400 Advanced Incident Command System - Lake Charles, Louisiana  
 May 9-10, 2019 MGT-439 Pediatric Disaster Response & Emergency Preparedness - Baton Rouge, Louisiana  
 May 13, 2019 DHS Active Shooter Preparedness Workshop - Lake Charles, Louisiana  
 May 13, 2019 AWR-313 Homemade Explosives: Awareness, Recognition & Response - Lake Charles, Louisiana  
 May 22, 2019 AWR-326 Tornado Awareness Course- Lake Charles, Louisiana - Lake Charles, Louisiana

### OTHER

March 18, 2019 2019 Spring Flood Outlook - State EOC, Baton Rouge, Louisiana  
 March 19, 2019 Region 1 Severe Tropical Weather Coordination Meeting - New Orleans, Louisiana  
 March 20, 2019 2019 Rehearsal of Concept (ROC) Drill - Baton Rouge, Louisiana  
 April 3-5, 2019 Statewide Full Scale Exercise (SWE19) - Statewide  
 April 10, 2019 Region 3 Annual Hurricane & Tropical Weather Preparedness Coordination meeting - Thibodaux, Louisiana  
 April 22-25, 2019 The National Hurricane Conference - New Orleans, Louisiana  
 April 30, 2019 Community Exercise: River & Bayou Parishes Mutual Aid & Assistance Task Force - Morgan City, Louisiana  
 May 13-16, 2019 Louisiana Emergency Management Conference (LEMC) - Lake Charles, Louisiana

## TRANSFERS

**Ashley Givens**  
 Homeland Security Grants Specialist (Regions 5 and 6)  
 Grants and Administration

## NEW AGENCY HIRES

**Paul Boyle**  
 Recovery Grants Analyst, Recovery Grants Administration  
**Kaitlin Cox**  
 Recovery Grants Analyst, Recovery Grants Administration

## UPCOMING STATE HOLIDAYS

**Good Friday** - April 19, 2019

### Request For Articles

If you would like to include an article in future issues of *The GOHSEP Focus*, please contact:  
 Your designated Agency Representative or Mike Steele  
 (225) 925-3966  
[mike.steele@la.gov](mailto:mike.steele@la.gov)



### Follow GOHSEP's Social Media....

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