I hope summer is off to a great start for all of you. In emergency management, summer means ramping up for hurricane season. Governor Edwards and I recently joined New Orleans city officials for a hurricane preparedness event held at the pump station near the 17th Street Canal. We both highlighted the tremendous strides we have made in the 14 years since Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. Many of you, working with our local and state partners, have helped make those improvements possible. GOHSEP continues the planning meetings with emergency managers in central and north Louisiana in order to make sure our coordination lines are strong as we face any future events.

GOHSEP and DCFS helped lead the 2019 Louisiana Emergency Repatriation Tabletop Exercise. Once again, Louisiana is near the top in preparing for this type of event which involves a scenario where thousands of U.S. citizens are forced to flee a foreign country due to political unrest or an emergency. If evacuation flights are routed to Louisiana (New Orleans), the exercise tested the response and steps to process those individuals as they re-entered the country.

On the recovery side, we continue to review many of the recent weather related emergencies. It appears we have enough data to appeal the Individual Assistance denial on behalf of the three parishes impacted by the Ruston area tornado outbreak. We may also seek more assistance related to the record-breaking, river flood fight which continues. GOHSEP employees have stepped up in many ways to help with damage assessment work and support for those efforts.

On a personal note, summer temperatures actually arrived well ahead of the official start of summer. Use caution if you’re working outdoors or taking part in any outdoor activities. The extreme heat we have experienced can quickly turn dangerous.

Thanks for all you do protecting our citizens and helping them recover from emergencies.

- James Waskom
NEW ORLEANS—Today, Gov. John Bel Edwards, along with local, state, and federal officials, addressed the state of hurricane preparedness for the greater New Orleans area for the 2019 hurricane season that began on June 1st. The event was held at the 17th Street Canal Permanent Canal Closure Pump (PCCP) station, one of three state of the art facilities with permanent gates and pumps built to lessen the chance of the same kind of storm surge flooding that New Orleans experienced during Hurricane Katrina in 2005. The governor spoke of other gates, pumps and levee improvements that now form the Hurricane Storm Damage Risk Reduction System (HSDRRS), a system that provides the best level of risk reduction the greater New Orleans area has ever had.

“We stand today inside one of the most advanced pump stations in the country,” said Edwards. “It is just one of many parts of larger $14.6 billion storm risk reduction system that also includes 350 miles of levees and floodwalls, 73 non-federal pumping stations, and several major gated structures.” Edwards said he is confident the state is prepared for the 2019 hurricane season, which began June 1st, as efforts to better manage storm water are ongoing.

Outfall canals at 17th Street, Orleans Avenue and London Avenue were originally built to allow gravity to drain storm water into Lake Pontchartrain. During Katrina the lake reversed the flow, pushing lake water into the canals, overwhelming the system and flooding the city. A similar lack of gated structures on the perimeter of the system, especially on the Industrial Harbor Navigation Canal (IHNC) and on the West Bank, allowed storm surge to overpower area defenses.

“Despite vastly improved defenses, please Get a Game Plan and be prepared to evacuate when local officials say you should do so,” said James Waskom, Director of the Governor’s Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness. “Leaving when told to is the best way to save your own life. Meanwhile, all the agencies represented here are working hard to ensure that you’ll have a safe place to come home to.”

Hurricane season ends November 30. The National Weather Service is expecting more than a dozen storms, including two to four major hurricanes, this season.

For additional information visit:
www.getagameplan.org
www.noaa.gov
www.weather.gov
Hurricane Season Preparations

Zachary - GOHSEP’s Emergency Management Training Section hosted a two day training and exercise event with our local partners from the city of New Orleans and the New Orleans Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness (NOHSEP) in preparation for hurricane season. The training and exercise took place at the Joint Emergency Series Training Center (JESTC) in Zachary. Pre-landfall discussions ascertained pre-disaster contracts, emergency evacuations, and methods of supporting safe evacuations such as contraflow: (Executed by law enforcement utilizing all lanes of traffic for one flow of direction out of the threatened region). Post landfall, training discussions examined damage assessments, security, and re-entry. Being prepared means having the training and systems in place, understanding roles and responsibilities between the State and our local partners, and answering the hard questions to protect the safety and well-being of our citizens.

St. James Coordination Meeting

GOHSEP recently participated in an emergency coordination meeting in St. James Parish. GOHSEP Assist Section Chief Mel Gaspard explained GOHSEP’s role in support of our local partners during the meeting held at the Convent Community Center on June 5th.

2019 Louisiana Emergency Repatriation Tabletop Exercise

Baton Rouge - GOHSEP, in conjunction with our state and federal partners recently participated in the 2019 Louisiana Emergency Repatriation Tabletop Exercise. In this exercise, roughly 1,200 American citizens per day are arriving in New Orleans after an emergency evacuation from a foreign country due to political unrest. This scenario tests how that process would work with each participating agency.
Preparedness Association presented WFVRRF with the 2019 LEPA Award for Leadership in Emergency Preparedness. Several of the board members traveled to Lake Charles on May 14th to receive the award. “This award shows that others are aware of their efforts and recognizes this group as an example of how volunteers working together can solve problems.” Spillman said.

WFVRRF continues to address local opportunities to help wherever they can. Training in the fields of CPR and First Aid, Sheltering, Incident Management and Volunteer Management has been completed. And they’re working with local government and faith-based groups in hopes of establishing a dedicated facility to be used as a shelter for parish residents affected by future disasters.

Local Volunteer Group Recognized for Community Service

In the wake of the August 2016 flooding there was a tremendous need for coordination of relief and recovery efforts carried out by volunteer groups in West Feliciana Parish. In this time of great need local volunteers came together as a team of dedicated and talented leaders to manage volunteers, donated goods and resources, and outside assistance. Their professional management was vital to assist flood victims in everything from mucking out homes to being fed and immunized.

As a result of their efforts in response to the flood, this group of local citizens saw a need to continue with recovery assistance to their affected neighbors. This included setting up and managing disaster assistance to help with the complicated issues that arose when victims began dealing with FEMA and the state. The group went on to assist with case management of victim’s claims and providing financial assistance to help those affected get back into their homes.

Realizing the process would take time, the group began meeting regularly and eventually formed the West Feliciana Volunteers for Response and Recovery Foundation (WFVRRF). The status as a foundation would allow them to receive and expend funds on behalf of those in need.

Captain Brian Spillman, Director of Homeland Security for West Feliciana Parish is very appreciative of their efforts. “The WFVRRF has demonstrated their ability to see a problem, identify needs and rapidly activate in a respectful and professional manner to assist wherever they can.” “They’re a great asset to our parish and we’re blessed to have this group of dedicated volunteers.” Their members are local professionals, retirees, clergy, homemakers, and other civic-minded leaders who have come together to do what they do best - assist their neighbors in need. Their neighbors can be across the street or across the globe.

In September 2017, while still assisting local flood victims, WFVRRF led a local humanitarian aid effort to help the citizens of Puerto Rico after Hurricane Maria. They collected, inventoried and prepared for shipment 28 boxes containing almost 900 items including baby formula, anti-bacterial wipes and other hygiene supplies.

The WFVRRF recently partnered with the West Feliciana Fire Protection District and the American Red Cross to provide and install over 50 smoke detectors in local homes.

All of this hasn’t gone unnoticed. The Louisiana Emergency Preparedness Association presented WFVRRF with the 2019 LEPA Award for Leadership in Emergency Preparedness. Several of the board members traveled to Lake Charles on May 14th to receive the award. “This award shows that others are aware of their efforts and recognizes this group as an example of how volunteers working together can solve problems.” Spillman said.

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New Parish OEP Director

Myrtle Green is the newest West Carroll OEP Director as of June 1st. Myrtle may be contacted at (318) 428-8020, or by email at myrtle09262018@gmail.com.

JUNE BIRTHDAYS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Date</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jim Ballow (Preparedness)</td>
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<tr>
<td>John Colvin (Public Assistance Closeout)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Winfield Leblanc (Public Assistance Grants)</td>
<td>06/08</td>
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<tr>
<td>Brian Fletcher (Public Assistance SALs)</td>
<td>06/09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lisa Tucker (Sub-recipient Monitoring)</td>
<td>06/09</td>
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<tr>
<td>Darren Guidry (Regional Support)</td>
<td>06/10</td>
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Andreas Hansen (Facility Management) | 06/15  
Mildred Leopold (Recovery Grants Administration) | 06/17  
Gabrielle Brown (Public Assistance Closeout) | 06/19  
Rebecca Arnold (Public Assistance Closeout) | 06/19  
Erica Thigpen (State Management Cost) | 06/20  

UPCOMING EVENTS

July 15 – 19, 2019
Communications Training: Communications Unit Technician (COMT) - Gonzales, Louisiana

July 30- Aug 1, 2019
ICS 300 Intermediate ICS & ICS 400 Advanced Incident Command System - Zachary, Louisiana

Aug 6-8, 2019
Wide Area Search - Amite, Louisiana

Aug 19, 2019
PER 294 Testing an Emergency Operations Plan in a Rural Emergency Operations Center - Eunice, Louisiana

Aug 21-22, 2019
ICS 300 Intermediate ICS & ICS 400 Advanced Incident Command System - Madisonville, Louisiana

Aug 23, 2019
PER 374 Active Threats on Campuses: Protective Measures and Response - Baton Rouge, Louisiana

Aug 28, 2019
ICS 400 Advanced Incident Command System - Madisonville, Louisiana

Oct 14-18, 2019
Communications Unit Technician (COMT) - Gonzales, Louisiana

Oct 23-24, 2019
MGT 345 Disaster Management for Electric Power Systems - New Orleans, Louisiana

Nov 4-5, 2019
Law Enforcement Prevention & Deterrence of Terrorist Acts - Scott, Louisiana

Nov 5-7, 2019
PER 229 Intro to Computer-Aided Management of Emergency Operations (CAMEO) - Lake Charles, Louisiana

Nov 13-14, 2019
MGT 317 Disaster Management for Public Services - New Orleans, Louisiana

Dec 3-4, 2019
MGT-319 Medical Countermeasures: Point of Dispensing, Plan & Response - Monroe, Louisiana

Dec 4-5, 2019
MGT 341 Disaster Preparedness for Hospitals & Healthcare Organizations - New Orleans, Louisiana

Jan 28-29, 2020
MGT 343 - Disaster Management for Water & Wastewater Utilities - Chalmette, Louisiana

NEW AGENCY HIRES

Jezreel Joseph
Attorney (Legal)

Fayth Golden
Administrative Assistant (Facility Management)

LATERAL TRANSFERS

Teidra Clark: Team Lead (Hazard Mitigation Grants)

UPCOMING STATE HOLIDAYS

Independence Day - July 4, 2019
Declared Holiday - July 5, 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

Steven Burr (225) 925-7423 steve.burr@la.gov

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