

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

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**New Orleans Emergency Training and Exercise at JESTC**

**BATON ROUGE (May 30, 2019)** – The Governor’s Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness (GOHSEP) is hosting 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. The training and exercise is taking place May 30- May 31 at the Joint Emergency Services Training Center (JESTC) in Zachary.

“We are always looking for ways to strengthen our relationships with the local agencies we serve,” said GOHSEP Director Jim Waskom. “This is an excellent way for state agencies and New Orleans leadership to review emergency functions such as information sharing, evacuation plans, pre-disaster contracts and post-storm activity before the start of hurricane season. A full evacuation of New Orleans involves several agencies and several moving parts. It is important to test those types of activities before you face an actual emergency. Our local partners are our clients and we want to make sure we are ready to support their efforts protecting our citizens.”

Day 1 will mainly focus on pre-landfall activity as a storm threatens the region. Areas examined include issuing parish declarations, pre-disaster contracts for issues like debris removal and the evacuation process. Evacuation training will include discussions on how evacuation orders are issued, collection points in the city and the parish pick up point at the Smoothie King Center, aviation resources for evacuations and general population evacuation for those who have their own transportation.

Day 2 will focus on post-storm activity. That includes damage assessment work for critical infrastructure, security needs, re-entry into impacted areas and establishing assistance programs and shelters.

“Being prepared for an emergency means having the training and the systems in place for seamless collaboration between our state and local partners, and exercises like this training session are the best way to make that happen,” said New Orleans Mayor LaToya Cantrell. “Advance preparation is crucial to the success of any response

operation. I'm grateful to GOHSEP for hosting the event, and proud of our first-responders for the hard work that went into making it a success."

"Working and living together at the JESTC facility will help build coordination and trust that will serve us well should a real-world event come our way," said NOHSEP Director Collin Arnold. "We cannot do this alone and are grateful for our partners at the State of Louisiana who are facilitating this unique opportunity test our hurricane plans."

## **Media Availability**

**There will be a news conference at JESTC at 11:30am Friday as the training wraps up.**

**JESTC  
1400 West Irene Road  
Zachary, LA  
70791**

*Find more tips on weather and preparedness on GOHSEP's Facebook and Twitter accounts. You can receive emergency alerts on most smartphones and tablets by downloading the new Alert FM App. It is free for basic service. The Get A Game Plan App is another resource available to help you and your family prepare for any type of emergency. You can download the Louisiana Emergency Preparedness Guide and find other information at [www.getagameplan.org](http://www.getagameplan.org).*

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