

NEFRIC

Highlights

Monthly Report of the Northeast Florida Regional Council

July 2006

Council releases Hurricane Evacuation Study to address emergency preparedness

On July 17, 2006, the Northeast Florida Regional Council released an update to the Northeast Florida Hurricane Evacuation Study. This document is comprised of data utilized by county emergency management agencies in Northeast Florida and the State government to develop critical evacuation plans used when the area is

under threat from a hurricane.

The Study is the latest in the series, originally released in 1985; the study was updated in 1988, and completely redone in 1998.

The data in the newly released study shows the growth progression for the Northeast Florida area, due to increased population particularly in hurricane-vulnerable areas, Clearance times now reach into the 48-hour range and some extend to the 60-hour range under the worst case scenarios.

The Study contains information used by county emergency management in developing the different hurricane evacuation and response plans needed to ensure public safety:

- The **Shelter analysis** establishes the estimated number of shelter spaces that will be needed to accommodate county residents.
- The **Transportation analysis** establishes clearance times, this critical piece of information is used to determine when a population is vulnerable to an approaching storm and evacuation orders must be given to ensure that everyone has time to evacuate. The transportation analysis is also used to establish traffic management plans, used to

determine which roads need to be closed, made one-way, receive additional traffic management personnel, or when the bottleneck will likely form.

■ **Hazards and Vulnerability analysis** are also included in the study, these are used to identify where the assistance may need to be focused and where the damage is most likely to occur.

For more information please contact Jeff Alexander, Director of Emergency Preparedness, (904) 279-0880, jalex@nefrc.org

Exercise held in response to study release

While regional coordination meetings and training sessions are held frequently throughout the region, no other region in the State, conducts coordination and training exercises like Northeast Florida.

In a first of its kind exercise on July 21, 2006, Emergency Management Directors from 13 North Florida areas joined representatives from state agencies, and the National Weather Service in attending a regional evacuation coordination exercise held at the Northeast Florida Regional Council.

The Exercise was held in response to the new Hurricane evacuation study released to Emergency Managers early this year, and to the general public earlier in the month. The primary focus of the exercise was to reevaluate the systems through which counties coordinate their actions and ensure the public is receiving accurate information from



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local government during an emergency or regional evacuation. The Emergency Management professionals worked from 9:00 am until 3:30 pm reviewing the current coordination system and identifying areas that required immediate change, as well as developing concepts for improved coordination.

Because of the new hurricane evacuation clearance times identified in the study, Emergency Management offices will be required to recommend the initiation of actions to protect the public, including evacuations, much sooner than they have in the past. The end results of a well-coordinated evacuation are that the local governments work with the state to organizing themselves into a system that supports the evacuating population.

This requires each county to understand which actions will be taken and when by each other county and the state during an evacuation. The exercise also gave local emergency management directors opportunities to work directly with state and National Weather Service officials who play a critical role in evacuation timing coordination.

As a results of the exercise, the Regional Council will take a more proactive role in coordination of regional training and incident management coordination issues.

For more information please contact Jeff Alexander, Director of Emergency Preparedness, (904) 279-0880, jalex@nefrc.org

NEFRC uses GIS technology to assist in transportation planning

The Council's Geographic Information Systems (GIS) group has recently completed a data collection project for the Florida Department of Transportation (DOT) District 5 which will aid the DOT in planning for future transportation infrastructure and needs within the region.

The locations of real-world features such as

cemeteries, schools, law enforcement substations, fire / rescue substations, parks, developments of regional impact, and others totaling 18 GIS datasets were created using the latest in GIS technology. These datasets will be used by planners and decision makers at the DOT in their efficient transportation decision making process model.

For more information and for a complete list of GIS layers available please contact Keith Joiner, GIS Manager, (904) 279-0880, kjoiner@nefrc.org.

NEFRC Affiliate receives infant mortality grant

Hold Out The Lifeline (HOTL), is an initiative of the AME Ministers Alliance, and functions as part of the Healthy Start Coalition, and NEFRC affiliate. This program has been received confirmation of an additional three years of grant funding. The program, which targets black infant mortality in Duval County, will continue its quest to save babies, as well as improve the lives of women in Jacksonville and other targeted communities.

The program will partner with 13 churches to educate women of pre and interconceptional care to include wellness, how to live healthy lifestyles, chronic health, family and domestic violence, maternal infections, family planning and substance abuse.



In addition, HOTL will continue to decrease the high SIDS rates in Jacksonville by constructing and distributing 300 Project Moses bassinets to at-risk homes and will distribute

information regarding infant mortality in the community through healthfairs, church meetings and a special Pastor's packet that pastors can use in their sermons.

For more information, please contact the Project Coordinator, Karen Y. Smithson (904)359-6124.

