



New Jersey Office of Homeland Security & Preparedness

NEWS

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NJ Emergency Management Officials Tout Hurricane Preparedness Planning -Preparedness Messaging Comes in Advance of Atlantic Hurricane Season-

TRENTON – New Jersey Office of Homeland Security and Preparedness (OHSP) Director Edward Dickson and New Jersey State Police Superintendent Colonel Rick Fuentes announced today that state officials will be increasing individual preparedness messaging in advance of the 2012 Atlantic Hurricane Season, which begins on June 1, 2012 and runs through November 30, 2012. They also said the increased awareness messages will coincide with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) National Hurricane Preparedness Week, which began May 27.

“Hurricane preparedness is a critical element of the state’s overarching homeland security and emergency preparedness efforts,” Dickson said. “Last summer, New Jersey experienced first-hand the damage and destruction caused by Hurricane Irene, and we remain committed to reminding residents, businesses and visitors to be prepared for any type of emergency as we begin the summer travel and vacation season.”

Dickson and Fuentes emphasized that ensuring that state residents, businesses and local communities are ready to respond to and recover from emergencies is a top priority for Governor Christie. Throughout the summer, the State Office of Emergency Management (OEM) will be communicating important preparedness information on a regular basis throughout the state.

Colonel Fuentes added, “Though hurricane season may start on June 1st and end on November 30th, preparedness is a way of life. Preparedness means moving from ‘lessons learned’ to ‘lessons applied,’ in order to increase our state of readiness each and every year. The mission of the NJOEM is to build resilient communities, engage citizens in the emergency management process and make the process inclusive to all community members. Our goal is disaster survivors, not disaster victims.”

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Health and Senior Services Commissioner Mary E. O’Dowd also emphasized the importance of being prepared. “As always, the best time to prepare for an emergency is before it happens,” said New Jersey Health Commissioner Mary O’Dowd. “By taking time to review emergency plans and develop emergency kits, families can avoid serious illness or death if a hurricane or major storm should strike New Jersey.”

Dickson and Fuentes said there are basic steps that residents, businesses, and visitors can take to increase their individual level of preparedness for a hurricane or any type of emergency event.

These measures include:

Make an Emergency Go-Bag, which includes items such as, bottled water, battery-powered radio, flashlights and extra batteries, non-perishable foods, and necessary prescription drugs. Remember to include extra cash in the event ATMs are not working. Remember to maintain at least a half tank of gas in your vehicle at all times.

Make a Family Emergency Plan, which will ensure your family members know where to go, whom to contact, and how to remain in contact should family members become separated during an emergency event.

Stay Informed, knowing information such as local evacuation routes, the location of nearby shelters, what to do before and during a flood, and other basic safety tips can help keep individuals withstand the first few hours of a hurricane or any other emergency.

More specific safety tips and additional information can be found at www.ready.nj.gov, the official website of the NJ Office of Emergency Management. Hurricane related information from the NJ OEM is also available on Facebook (www.facebook.com/READYNEWJERSEY) and Twitter (@NJOEM2010).

Dickson said OHSP will continue to work with public and private sector partners throughout New Jersey to ensure that the state’s critical infrastructure sites and key resources, the majority of which are owned and/or operated by the private sector, are ready to return to service as quickly as possible after any type of emergency. “The private sector is a valuable partner in our planning, and will continue to have a seat at our table when it comes to enhancing the state’s readiness and resiliency,” Director Dickson stated.

More information about OHSP can be found at www.njhomelandsecurity.gov.

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