



STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

TRENTON, NJ 08625

Lt. Governor Kim Guadagno Announces New Emergency Volunteer Hotline

Volunteers Can Call 1-800-JERSEY-7 To Assist Fellow New Jerseyans

For Immediate Release Contact: Ernest Landante, Jr.
June 4, 2012 609-777-2535

TRENTON, N.J. - Enhancing the state's emergency responsiveness by harnessing New Jerseyans' strong spirit of service, Lt. Governor Kim Guadagno today announced a new telephone hotline dedicated to supporting New Jersey's emergency volunteer effort.

During an emergency, citizens who wish to volunteer to help fellow New Jerseyans can call 1-800-JERSEY-7 (1-800-537-7397). This hotline will be staffed and managed by the New Jersey Business Action Center and the Governor's Office of Volunteerism, and will be activated in anticipation of an impending emergency. Both divisions are within the New Jersey Department of State.

"During Hurricane Irene, I saw firsthand how individual New Jerseyans worked selflessly to help others during a crisis," said Lt. Governor Guadagno. "I also saw an opportunity to enhance our responsiveness to our citizens during emergencies by using our business call center's resources to better organize volunteers. In the event of an emergency, and especially heading into the 2012 hurricane season, this hotline will better direct New Jersey's volunteers to assist those in areas where help is needed."

The Office of Volunteerism and its partners, including New Jersey VOAD (Voluntary Organizations Active in Disasters), coordinated more than a thousand volunteers after Hurricane Irene to help New Jersey residents with the clean up and relocation effort.

The New Jersey Business Action Center's call center also counseled hundreds of businesses following Hurricane Irene, providing advocacy services and critical information about state and federal programs available to businesses affected by the storm.

"The new 800-JERSEY-7 number will greatly improve our efforts to recruit and organize spontaneous volunteers," said Cathy McCann, chair of NJ VOAD. "With a simple phone call, people can now let us know they're available and willing to help their fellow New Jerseyans during a crisis."

During an emergency, calls placed by volunteers to the hotline will be received by BAC, which will work with the Office of Volunteerism and NJ AmeriCorps to direct volunteers. Phone operators will collect basic information, like place of residence, availability and skills, and match volunteers with

community emergency needs. New Jersey's 2-1-1 call center will continue to assist people seeking help.

The Office of Volunteerism offers New Jersey's 1.5 million volunteers technical assistance, the latest information about trends and best practices in volunteerism, and provides recognition to individuals and groups that enhance New Jersey's communities through service.

The New Jersey Business Action Center (BAC) is dedicated to revitalizing and expanding New Jersey's business community. Its mission is to foster economic vitality, grow jobs and position New Jersey as the nation's leader in retaining, growing and attracting businesses. For more information on the BAC and its unique services, entrepreneurs, small business owners and companies of all sizes are encouraged to call the BAC directly at 866-534-7789 or via the web at www.newjerseybusiness.gov.

###