



## KENNER OFFICE OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT HOSTS REGIONAL RESPONSE PARTNERS' HURRICANE PREPAREDNESS MEETING

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*May 9, 2013*

*For Immediate Release*

On May 7, 2013, **Mayor Michael S. Yenni**, **Chief Steve Caraway** and **Kenner's Office of Emergency Management** held their annual **Regional Response Partners' Hurricane Season Preparedness meeting** at Kenner Police Headquarters. These meetings have been conducted since 2009, and attendance grows each year. The purpose of the session is to bring together agencies and organizations that provide services to or that work collaboratively with the City of Kenner year round and that may be called upon to respond to Kenner in the event of a major storm. Participants review agency-specific emergency plans, identify capabilities and resources, discuss strategy, identify points of contacts, and address issues of mutual concern, such as Contraflow, mutual aid, sheltering, re-entry protocols, and relief operations. The meeting facilitates close coordination between region-wide governmental and non-government entities during and following a disaster.

**Chief Administrative Officer Michael Quigley** addressed the group, outlining the City's unified approach to incident management and describing coordination of municipal services. Kenner's Emergency Preparedness Coordinator, **Doug Dodt**, provided an outline of incident management and field activities involving City agencies during and following a storm event. **Detective Sergeant Mike Glaser**, the Kenner Police Department's planning officer, and **Fire Chief John Hellmers** each presented detailed briefings on "first responder" operations and capabilities.

Also participating were Kenner City Council members **Maria DeFrancesch**, **Kent Denapolis** and **Keith Reynaud**, each who described efforts within their individual districts designed to support effective information sharing between the City officials, residents and business owners during and following a severe weather event.

This year, the event was attended by over 70 representatives from various federal, state, parish, and local entities. Officials from the **Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)**, **Governor's Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness (GOHSEP)**, and **Jefferson Parish Emergency Management** provided information on statewide, regional and local emergency planning initiatives, evacuation decision making, re-entry protocols, alert systems, incident management, and resource management.

Officials from **East Jefferson Levee District** provided information on levee maintenance and coordination of flood control efforts with the **U.S. Army Corps of Engineers**. The **Port of South Louisiana** in Reserve provided information on maritime hurricane preparedness along the Lower

Mississippi River. The **U.S. Coast Guard** discussed the agency's role in storm preparedness and rescue operations throughout Southeast Louisiana.

Commanders from **Louisiana State Police Region I and Troop B** provided an overview of Contraflow operations and discussed state law enforcement support to local communities during and following a major storm event. The **Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development (DOTD)** discussed highway maintenance and evacuation routes throughout the region.

**Vineyard Church** provided information on its considerable volunteer and relief efforts following Hurricane Isaac. Officials from the **Louisiana Department of Health and Hospitals, Office of Public Health** discussed shelters and public health initiatives. The **Louisiana Department of Family and Child Services** addressed regional assisted evacuation operations as well as disaster relief programs.

A representative of the **Hispanic Resource Center** described Spanish language interpreter services that will be available at the City EOC.

**The New Orleans Aviation Board** discussed storm related activities affecting air operations at Louis Armstrong International Airport as well as emergency plans put into effect at the facility during severe weather conditions.

**The Jefferson Parish Public School System** provided information on emergency plans and protocols for closures and re-opening of public schools throughout the Parish.

Utility companies in attendance included **Entergy and Veolia Wastewater**, whose representatives provided information on pre-storm maintenance initiatives, pre-staging of equipment and repair crews, and plans for rapid deployment of personnel for restorative operations following a significant storm event.

Representatives from the **Pontchartrain Center** management staff were on hand to discuss that facility's usefulness for disaster relief activities. The **Esplanade Mall** management provided detailed information on retail activities at the facility in the event of a storm.

Representatives from the **Jefferson Parish Sheriff's Office** addressed 911 communications and special operations conducted by that agency during natural disasters. The **East Jefferson Levee District Police Department** detailed their plans for increased levee patrols, monitoring and emergency response and support of local law enforcement during storm events.

Also taking part in the meeting were officials from **St. Charles Parish** and **St. John the Baptist Parish Emergency Management** who provided an overview of storm plans and emergency operations in those neighboring communities.

Representatives from **Ochsner Medical Center - Kenner** and **East Jefferson General Hospital** as well as **EJGH Emergency Medical Service (EMS)** discussed medical care and emergency services during storm events.

The **United States Coast Guard Auxiliary** detailed capabilities of its emergency communications (EMCOMM) team, which embeds with the City of Kenner at its Emergency Operations Center (EOC) providing essential backup communications during major storm events.

Representatives from various City agencies, including **Legal, Finance, Public Works, K-TV, Information Technology and Telecommunications, Community Development, Human Resources, Purchasing, Inspection and Code Enforcement, Parks and Recreation, Clerk of Court, and Fleet Management** participated in the meeting.

Kenner’s Office of Emergency Management has also been working closely with officials from the **Regional Transit Authority (RTA)** and **American Red Cross** to ensure continual bus service during designated evacuation periods and establishment of post-storm emergency shelters when appropriate and necessary.

“Effective hurricane response requires a coordinated regional effort” said **Mayor Michael Yenni**. “Kenner’s city administration works year round to develop and sustain close relationships with our regional response partners. Working collaboratively with our federal, state and parish partners and keeping our department heads and local elected officials informed on a wide variety of emergency management issues ensures Kenner has the capabilities necessary to respond to any type of disaster.”

As we enter the hurricane season, Kenner residents and business owners should feel confident that City of Kenner officials and employees stand prepared to respond sufficiently to storm events. Year-round planning, training and coordination sessions ensure that all of Kenner’s agencies are capable of responding in a coordinated and unified fashion to meet the needs of our community.

## KENNER’S RESPONSE PARTNERS

**UNITED IN PURPOSE ... COMMITTED TO TEAM WORK**

