



E. "BEN" ZAHN III
MAYOR

CITY OF KENNER

News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 20, 2018

KENNER PARTICIPATES IN ANNUAL HURRICANE PREPAREDNESS MEETING

Kenner, LA. – Kenner’s Office of Emergency Management staff and ranking officers from the Kenner Police Department, as well as a liaison from East Jefferson Emergency Medical Service, attended the annual hurricane preparedness meeting led by the Governor’s Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Management (GOHSEP).

Seventy-five emergency managers and homeland security staff from local, parish, and regional government agencies throughout the greater New Orleans area attended Tuesday’s meeting in Gretna to discuss updates and receive new information ahead of storm season.

Ken Graham from the Slidell office of the National Weather Service (NWS) began the meeting, discussing updates on hurricane forecasting and terminology that will be integrated into disaster information this year. Officials from GOHSEP and the state Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority (CPRA) discussed hurricane and storm damage risk-reduction systems, as well as Lake Pontchartrain and vicinity gates for flood control systems. The CPRA is assuming a more proactive role in working together with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the Southeast Louisiana Flood Protection Authority and local Levee Districts to reduce flooding throughout the region.

An important point shared by the NWS is that there is an increasing reliance on social media for information, though the public may not always rely on the informed sources for accurate information. NWS forecasters continue to improve their social media products, providing timely surge and coastal flooding advisories and imaging.

Mayor Ben Zahn understands the importance of accurate communications. “We have increased real-time information-sharing through our city Nextdoor site, Kenner’s official Facebook page and the city’s Twitter account. Our staff is committed to improving accurate, timely sharing of information that will help keep our community safer.”

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It is important to consider that the biggest threat to local residents resulting from a major storm, despite public perception, is water – not wind. This year, residents can probably expect at least an average number of storms. The National Weather Service will provide its formal estimates in mid-May.

The American Red Cross provided an update on sheltering in the region as well, stressing that its teams “do not participate in pre-landfall sheltering in efforts that are within the Category Four Storm Surge.” Therefore, shelters will not be opened in advance of an approaching storm in Jefferson Parish, including Kenner. A Red Cross specialist said the agency’s teams will only come into the southeast Louisiana region for post-landfall sheltering.

“When the City of Kenner provides information for the public’s safety,” Mayor Zahn said, “it’s because we have reliable information from trusted partners that we work with every day on a variety of activities, like sheltering, and want the best for our residents and businesses. Please make sure to connect to the city on official social media so you have real-time factual updates in order to make the best decision for your families and loved ones not only in hurricane season, but throughout the year.”

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