

FEMA MONITOR

GOVERNMENT OF THE
DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA



VOLUME ONE, NUMBER ONE

SPRING 2002



Peter G. LaPorte, Director

CITY RECEIVES FIRST IFG DECLARATION

More than 600 District of Columbia residents have received assistance under the Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) Individual and Family Grant (IFG) program as a result of damage to their homes from the severe storms and subsequent flash floods that hit the city August 11, 2001. The floods mark the first time the District has received a disaster declaration for individual assistance, which makes it eligible to participate in the IFG program. The program is administered by the city and makes a combination of District and federal funds available to city residents for serious unmet needs not covered by insurance or other disaster assistance programs.

Russell Gardner, IFG program manager for the District of Columbia government, said close to 1,300 applications for assistance were received. "Many of the people who applied were deemed ineligible for assistance under the IFG program because the amount of their loss was insufficient to meet the program's threshold or the loss was covered by insurance," he said. Mr. Gardner also noted that after reviewing reports of possible mold and mildew growth in flood-damaged homes, the IFG program has decided to provide supplemental grants to pur-

chase dehumidifiers. "Everyone who received assistance under the IFG program will receive an additional \$250 to purchase a dehumidifier," he said.

The August 2001 flood in the District dumped more than eight inches of rain on city streets in less than one hour, overwhelming storm drains and causing water and sewage to back up drains and flood basements. The Bloomingdale and LeDroit Park neighborhoods in the northwest section of the city were hardest hit by the storm, although other parts of the city also received some damage.

In addition to the individual assistance declaration, the city also received a declaration for public assistance, making it eligible for federal funds to restore damaged public infrastructure - roads, bridges, sidewalks, etc. The city will receive funds equal to 15 percent of all federal monies spent on Individual Assistance and Public Assistance to be used for eligible hazard mitigation projects.

It's difficult these days to write about emergency management anywhere in the country without making reference to the events of September 11, 2001. The attacks on the Pentagon and the World Trade Center changed forever the way in which emergency managers approach their mission. For many in the profession, particularly those in urban areas, terrorism preparedness has become a major focus as they step up their exercise and training efforts, lobby for additional funding, and revamp their emergency response plans. In the District of Columbia, much of this work was already underway. DCEMA and the Office of the Deputy Mayor for Public Safety and Justice began in early July to bring together regional and federal partners to develop a response plan to re-

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NEWS BRIEFS

DCEMA partnered with the D.C. Department of Health (DOH) to support DOH's efforts to provide required immunizations to District of Columbia public school students who were in danger of being suspended from school without them. DOH staff utilized the DCEMA Emergency Operations Center as a command center during a marathon inoculation session, January 24, at the Reeves Municipal Center where more than 3,000 students were immunized.

DCEMA staff Kerry Payne, Ricardo Stewart, Marvin Saunders and Steve Benefield provided logistical coordination. DCEMA provided over 400 meals and 40 cases of water, January 25 - 28, for workers who were at D.C. General Hospital for a four-day immunization drive. The DCEMA Mobile Command Van was deployed to the hospital and agency employees Leslie Harrison, Kelly Bracey, James Woodward and Dean Holland were on site to assist DOH with logistics and registration for the more than 5,000 children and families that took advantage of the free immunizations.

DCEMA TRAINING FOCUSES ON COMMUNITY PREPAREDNESS IN '02

Because of the events of September 11, a new awareness has been raised in District communities about emergency preparedness. Communities are now thinking about how they can protect themselves and their families during future emergencies. The District of Columbia Emergency Management Agency (DCEMA) - the agency responsible for the District's emergency management activities - has created programs to assist communities that want to be proactive in meeting their immediate needs before and during a crisis.

DCEMA coordinates the city's response to disasters, emergencies and other catastrophic events. To assist local neighborhoods in preparing for emergency situations, DCEMA has created a training program to educate residents on the types of hazards, whether manmade or natural, that threaten the District and teach them how to prepare for and handle the resulting situations.

"... a major initiative will be the implementation of community-based training courses designed to develop a cadre of well informed community leaders..."

"District communities should be proactive about their own safety, because in a disaster situation District emergency responders like firefighters and medics may not be readily accessible," said DCEMA Director Peter LaPorte. "The DCEMA training program is designed to educate communities on how they can help themselves and their neighborhood in times of need," he added.

In early spring 2002, DCEMA will begin three key training initiatives - Emergency Preparedness Training Courses, the Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) Program and the Speakers Forum.

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS TRAINING COURSES

This program has two classes designed for the public. "Basic Emergency Management" gives participants an introduction to the emergency management system in the District and throughout the United States. Specifically, the course explains the District Response Plan (DRP), which outlines how various District agencies will respond to, support efforts to recover from and work to mitigate the impact of a disaster.

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DCEMA Director Peter LaPorte (second from left) presents a weather alert radio to Deborah Holmes (fourth from left), principal of Jefferson Junior High School. Assisting with the presentation is Linda Mathes (third from left), chief executive officer of the National Capital Chapter of the American Red Cross. Charlie Smith, science teacher at Jefferson, is at far left.



In early fall 2000, DCEMA began planning for the inauguration of the 43rd president of the United States, set for Saturday, January 20, 2001. Although the outcome of the 2000 presidential election remained undecided until 37 days before the inauguration, by the time the winner was announced the District's preparations were well underway.

Led by the D.C. Presidential Inaugural Committee (DCPIC), city workers were responsible for all of the logistical tasks that supported the many inaugural events that took place on city property, including:

- ❑ Removing the traffic lights in the center of Pennsylvania Avenue, the route of the inaugural parade, and replacing them at the parade's conclusion in time for revelers to get to the many inaugural balls slated for that evening;
- ❑ Designing and building the reviewing stand in front of the White House from which the newly inaugurated President watched the inaugural parade as well as designing and building the reviewing stand in front of the John A. Wilson Building from which D.C. Mayor Anthony Williams viewed the parade and the three tiered-press box directly across from the presidential reviewing stand;
- ❑ Coordinating the many street closings, parking restrictions and changes in traffic patterns;
- ❑ Providing health and medical services at inaugural venues including each inaugural ball and at several sites along the parade route.



Emergency workers on M Street in Georgetown during a four-day power outage in June.

Immediately following the presidential inauguration, the city hosted the 2001 NBA All-Star Week, February 7 through 11. DCEMA provided overall coordination for the many street closings, parking restrictions and other logistical issues associated with this week of parties and celebrations.

Mayor Williams proclaimed April 29 through May 5 as "Severe Storm Awareness Week in the District of Columbia." In observance, DCEMA donated a weather alert radio to each District of Columbia public school. The agency also donated copies of the "Masters of Disaster" curriculum guide to each third through eighth grade DC Public School classroom.

On Wednesday, June 13, a large segment of the Georgetown neighborhood lost power due to fires in several manholes along M Street and surrounding streets. Throughout the power outage, which lasted until mid-day on Saturday, June 16, the DCEMA mobile command center and senior agency staff were on site to monitor the situation and coordinate resources including food, water and lighting for workers. A shelter for neighborhood residents was opened at a local school and the agency arranged for staff from the Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs to canvass neighborhood businesses to ascertain the extent of losses.

On June 19 an odor of gasoline was detected in the neighborhood adjacent to the Amoco gasoline station at 4101 Alabama Avenue, S.E. A preliminary investigation revealed a leak in an underground hose leading from underground storage tanks to the pump dispensers above ground. After the appropriate officials and authorities were notified, the station was shut down and residents of the 1400 block of 41st Street, S.E. were relocated to a local hotel. BP/Amoco began work immediately to recover the spilled gasoline. Throughout the investigation and recovery period, DCEMA worked with the D.C. Department of Health and the D.C. Fire and EMS Department to monitor the situation. The agency also convened weekly meetings between BP/Amoco, the D.C. Corporation Counsel, the Health Department and the Fire and EMS Department to discuss the on-going clean-up effort.

During June and July 2001, the city hosted numerous special events ranging from bike races, to parades and street festivals, to the National Independence Day Parade and 4th of July fireworks display. Each of these events was monitored on-site by DCEMA staff. The agency also provided logistical coordination for the June 10 - 13 site evaluation visit of the United States Olympic Committee.

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Photo Gallery



DCEMA Director Peter LaPorte (right) and Ward 5 City Council member Vincent Orange (second from left) congratulate Steve Powell, coach of the District's Spingarn High School football team, at DCEMA's Community Appreciation Night, January 8, 2002. Mrs. Powell is at left. Coach Powell and his team received a Certificate of Appreciation at the event for working as volunteers as part of the city's effort to clean up basements in the Bloomingdale neighborhood that were damaged by flood waters and sewage backups resulting from the severe storm and subsequent flash floods that hit the District on August 11, 2001.



(Left to right) Ward 5 community leader Robert Brannum is joined at the podium by ANC Commissioners Cleopatra Jones and James Berry at the DCEMA Community Appreciation Night, January 8, 2002. Mr. Brannum, Ms. Jones and Mr. Berry were recognized for their leadership in assisting residents in the Bloomingdale neighborhood to recover from the floods that hit the neighborhood on August 11.

DCEMA Director Peter G. LaPorte takes time out from cleaning basements damaged by the August 11 flood to take a telephone call. Mr. LaPorte was among the city officials who responded to Mayor Williams' call for volunteers to join him in cleaning homes damaged by the flood.



A local photographer records the image of a car resting against a bridge abutment after it was swept down the street during the August '01 flash flood.



D.C. Mayor Anthony Williams talks about the city's response and recovery plans for the August 2001 flood at a meeting on August 14 at Mt. Bethel Baptist Church. More than 300 residents of the Bloomingdale and LeDroit Park communities turned out to hear the mayor and other city officials and to voice their concerns about damages to their homes and businesses as a result of the flood.

DC-10, DCEMA's mobile command center, was on site throughout the duration of the three-day power outage that occurred in June 2001 in Georgetown. DCEMA senior staff, along with police officers, fire and EMS personnel, and other emergency response workers as well as staff from PEPCO used DC-10 as a command center from which to direct the repair operation. DC-10 also was loaned to the FBI for use as a command center during the response and recovery operation at the Pentagon following the plane crash on September 11. DC-10 was acquired by DCEMA in December 1999. It is a 37-foot, specially equipped Beaver coach with a magnum chassis. Special features include a turbo-charged, computerized electronic diesel engine; two generators, one to provide power to the unit and one as a back up; an uninterrupted power supply system (UPS) for the radios; both cellular and satellite phone systems; a night infra-red video system; and a multi-frequency radio system.



Heavy equipment filled 41st Street, S.E. in June 2001, as contractors hired by BP/Amoco, owners of a gasoline station at 41st Street and Alabama Avenue, S.E., worked to clean up a gasoline leak from an underground hose at the station that forced the evacuation of residents in the 1400 block of 41st Street, S.E. Work to repair the leak, recover the gasoline and monitor and extract any related vapors continued for several months. In early February 2002, BP/Amoco began work to remove and replace the storage tanks and piping at the station. According to BP/Amoco, the new tanks will be state-of-the-art, double-walled, fiberglass tanks; the new piping will also be state-of-the-art, double-walled piping. An impermeable liner between the tanks and the soil will also be installed.

A Look at 2001

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In early August the District was hit by several days of record heat, followed on August 11 by a massive thunderstorm that dumped as much as eight inches of rain on city streets in less than an hour. The resulting flash floods and storm sewer back-ups taxed the city's infrastructure to its limits and resulted in major disaster declarations for the city. On August 16, President Bush granted a disaster declaration to the District for individual assistance. This marked the first time that the District had received an individual assistance declaration, which provides federal assistance to individuals whose homes or property were damaged as a result of disaster. Four days later on August 20, President Bush granted the city's request for federal assistance in restoring damaged public infrastructure.

One month after the August floods, on September 11, the United States was the victim of terrorist attacks that destroyed the World Trade Center in New York City and severely damaged the Pentagon. DCEMA's Emergency Operations Center (EOC) was activated immediately following the attacks and Mayor Williams declared a state of emergency in the city. The DCEMA mobile command van was requested by the FBI and remained on-site at the Pentagon to provide logistical support during the recovery activities. Although the state of emergency was lifted on September 14, the city remains on heightened alert.

In the week following September 11, DCEMA stepped up its efforts to increase and enhance preparedness in the District. A revised emergency response plan was drafted and renamed "District Response Plan" to mirror the Federal Response Plan. The revised plan is organized by Emergency Support Functions (ESF). A draft copy was

"Although the state of emergency was lifted... the city remains on heightened alert... DCEMA remains vigilant."

posted on the agency's website - <http://dcema.dc.gov> - for review and comment by interested individuals and groups.

Concurrent with the work to revise the DRP, DCEMA published a Family Preparedness Guide that was distributed to every household in the District of Columbia. Eighty-one thousand copies of the guide also were made available to the District of Columbia Public Schools for distribution to each student and staff member. Thousands of additional copies were distributed at community meetings, to business groups and to other interested individuals. It is also posted on the city's website.

In mid-October, following the opening of an anthrax-laced letter by staff in the office of Senator Tom Daschle, DCEMA worked with District and federal officials to coordinate and support efforts to educate, evaluate and treat individuals that might have been exposed to anthrax. The agency also worked closely with the U.S. Capitol Police and the D.C. Department of Health during the decontamination of the Hart Senate Office Building where Senator Daschle's office is located.

As part of its efforts to increase preparedness among city workers and residents, the agency revamped its training component to increase the

number and types of available training opportunities. More than 500 city workers and community members have received emergency preparedness training since the beginning of the 2002 fiscal year in October 2001.

A Look Ahead

A major focus for the agency during FY 2002 will be the implementation of a community emergency management program designed to educate residents about preparedness and teach them how to develop individual community preparedness plans for disaster response and recovery. The program will offer city residents the opportunity to take part in the Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) training program, a national training program developed in 1993 by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).

CERT provides a framework in which community members partner with emergency management and response agencies. Neighborhood, workplace and school teams train and prepare to assist others with immediate needs following a disaster. The teams respond when normal response resources are overwhelmed or delayed because of the nature of the event (e.g. earthquakes, floods, terrorist attacks, hurricanes).

As a first step, DCEMA has attended numerous community forums and town hall meetings to share preparedness information with residents and inform them about training opportunities.

Calendar of Events

- April 6** National Cherry Blossom Festival Parade; 9:30 a.m.; beginning at Constitution Avenue and 7th Street, N. W., ending at Constitution Avenue and 17th Street, N. W.
- Sakura Matsuri: Japanese Cherry Blossom Festival; 11 a.m. – 5 p.m.; on 12th Street at the Federal Triangle Metro between Constitution and Pennsylvania Avenues, N. W.
- April 16** Emancipation Day Parade; 10 a.m.; Pennsylvania Avenue, beginning at 4th Street, N.W.; ending at 14th Street, N.W.
- Emancipation Day Festival; 2 p.m.; Freedom Plaza and Pennsylvania Avenue, between 13th and 14th Streets, N.W.
- May 18** Family and Child Services 5K Walk; 9 a.m.; beginning and ending at Freedom Plaza, 1300 block of Pennsylvania Avenue, N. W.
- 23rd Annual D.C. Chili Championship; 11 a.m. – 8 p.m.; Pennsylvania Avenue, N. W., between 10th and 14th Streets
- May 25 – May 26** 2002 Washington D.C. Dragon Boat Festival; 11:30 a.m.; Thompson Boathouse of Rock Creek National Park, 2900 Virginia Avenue, N.W.

People in the News...

Kerry Payne, DCEMA's deputy operations chief, and **Jim McBride**, DCEMA domestic preparedness coordinator, attended the inaugural session of "Emergency Planning for a Terrorism Incident," a five-day course in January conducted by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) at their Emergency Management Institute (EMI) in Emmitsburg, Maryland. The course focused on the development and content of terrorism annexes and allowed participants to share ideas about how to strengthen weak areas. Also attending the course were Sherry Adams, director of emergency health and medical services at the D.C. Department of Health and

Mike Sellitto, battalion chief, special operations, D.C. Department of Fire and Emergency Medical Services... **James Woodward**, DCEMA exercise coordinator, was the instructor for the "Exercise Development Course", offered February 10-15 at EMI. The course is designed to help participants acquire indepth knowledge and skills related to exercise development, including exercise administration, control, simulation and evaluation. **Walter King**, DCEMA operations specialist, was among the students enrolled in the course... **Terrell Jones**, Emergency Planning Specialist is retiring from DCEMA after eleven years. We wish him the best...

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spond to a terrorist attack in the Metropolitan Washington area. Within days of the September 11 attacks it became clear that the city needed to refine its emergency operations plan. On September 19, District of Columbia Mayor Anthony Williams created a domestic preparedness task force composed of top city officials and tasked the group with revising the city's emergency response plan to more closely mirror the federal plan. The group was divided into 15 sub-committees, one for each emergency support function (ESF) identified as critical to emergency response. Once an initial draft had been developed, tabletop drills were held at the weekly task force meetings to help further refine the plan.

Concurrent with its planning efforts the city sought federal funding to support the additional resources needed to implement the heightened levels of preparedness and response called for in the revised plan. Mayor Williams led a delegation of city officials that testified at Congressional hearings where they outlined the changes in the city's response plan and responded to questions about the city's overall preparedness in the wake of the attacks at the Pentagon and the World Trade Center. These efforts yielded an initial \$16,058,000 federal payment to the city "for emergency planning and security costs and to reimburse the District for certain security expenses related to the presence of the Federal Government in the District of Columbia: Provided, that the

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\$12,652,000 be made available immediately to the District of Columbia Emergency Management Agency for planning, training and personnel costs required for development and implementation of the emergency operations plan for the District of Columbia..."

In addition, as part of the city's overall preparedness effort, DCEMA coordinated the publication and city-wide distribution of a family preparedness guide designed to help families prepare for, respond to and recover from a range of emergencies and disasters.

As we move forward in 2002, much remains to be done. A major initiative will be the implementation of community-based emergency management training courses designed to develop a cadre of well-informed, well-trained community leaders. We will also work with our partners in Maryland and Virginia and at federal agencies such as the FBI, the Department of Justice and FEMA to ensure the safety of the region. As part of that effort, the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (COG) has designated DCEMA to serve as Regional Incident Command Coordinator.

Before closing, I want to take this opportunity to publicly express my appreciation to the many District workers and in particular the employees of the District of Columbia Emergency Management Agency whose dedication to and unwavering support of the city's domestic preparedness efforts have helped our city and our nation respond to the challenges imposed on us all by the events of September 11.

TRAINING FOCUS IN 2002 ON COMMUNITY PREPAREDNESS

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The second course, "Personal Safety and Protection," provides an overview of how people can protect themselves in and out of the workplace. Some of the topics discussed in the course include how to create a family disaster plan and what types of equipment or food to store.

COMMUNITY EMERGENCY RESPONSE TEAM PROGRAM

This program teaches citizens how to prepare for and survive a disaster for at least 72 hours. It also instructs students on such topics as fire safety, first aid and CPR and disaster psychology. The course encourages the formation of a community team, whose members' job in a disaster is to help their neighbors.

The Community Emergency Response Team Program is based on the Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) CERT program, which began after the Whittier Narrows earthquake in 1987 in California. The event reinforced the benefit of training civilians to meet their immediate needs.

SPEAKERS FORUM

Community groups are encouraged to contact DCEMA to request emergency management experts to speak at community meetings and in other forums. Speakers are available to discuss a broad range of emergency management topics, including bioterrorism, preparedness efforts and disaster assistance information, in both formal presentations as well as less structured

discussions. In addition, DCEMA will customize any existing training course to meet the needs of groups of ten or more.

For additional information about DCEMA training programs, contact the DCEMA Training Division at (202) 673-2101 or on the web at dcema.dc.gov. All courses described in this article are free and open to the public.

EMA MONITOR

The EMA Monitor is published quarterly by the District of Columbia Emergency Management Agency, 2000 14th Street, N.W. 8th Floor, Washington, D.C. 20009 (202)727-6161

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