

New York City
Office of Emergency Management
Biennial Report 2009

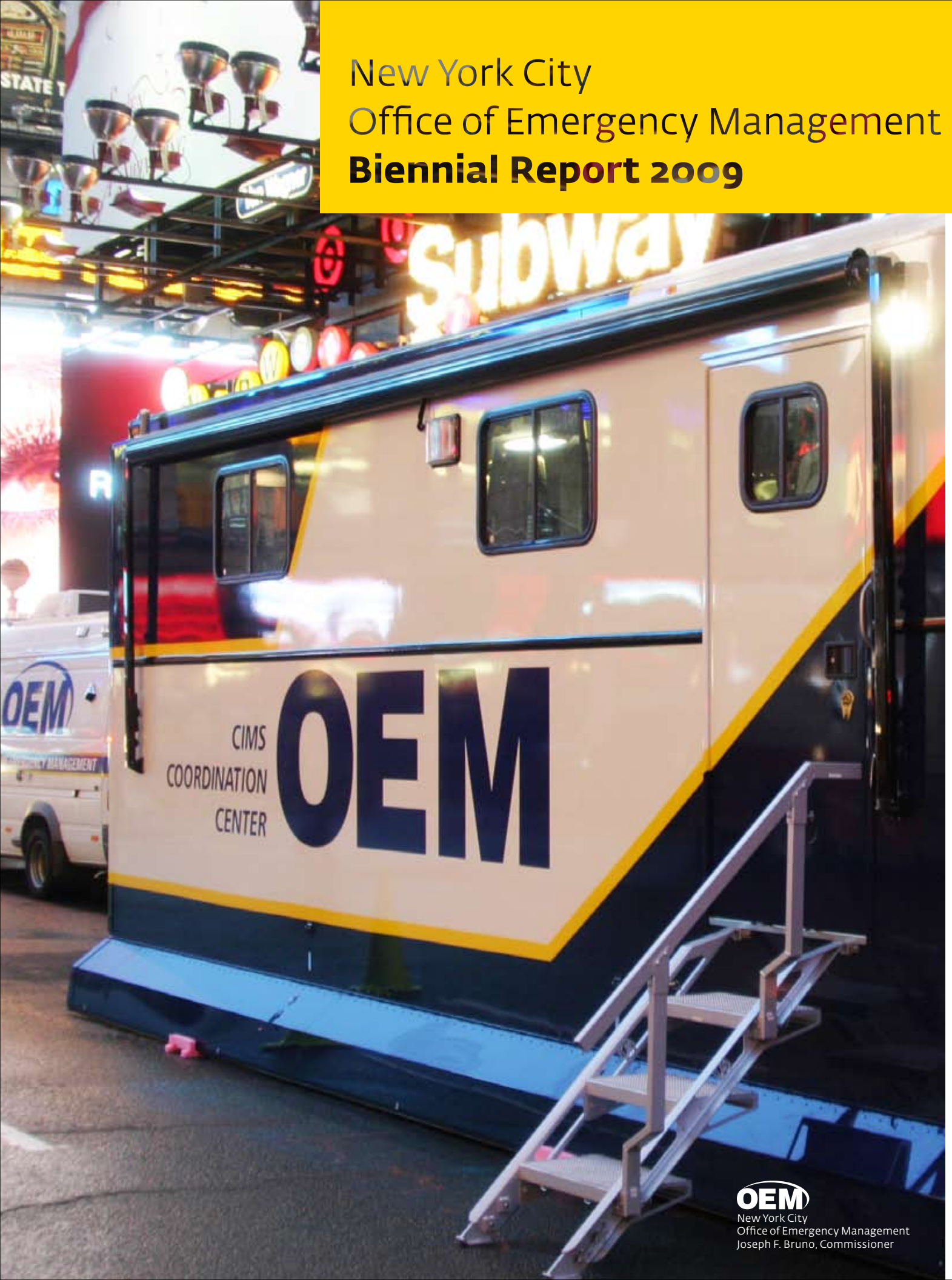


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Introduction: Commissioner's Letter

Dear Fellow New Yorkers,

New York City is a complex place. Aging infrastructure and a growing population make the potential for emergencies a matter of routine. The rapid development and bustle of the city creates confusion even in the airspace above the city. The Office of Emergency Management (OEM), with its 24-hour Watch Command, remains vigilant and prepared to respond and bring all of the needed resources of this great city to any emergencies that may affect us.

This is OEM's third report, covering July 2007 to November 2009, and we have made it digital to align our actions with Mayor Bloomberg's campaign for a greener New York City.

In spring 2009, a new strain of the H1N1 flu virus surfaced in New York City. Fortunately, OEM and the Health Department had the City's Pandemic Flu Plan prepared and had already developed a pandemic flu guide. The Health Department, Department of Education, OEM, and many other agencies worked together to develop a massive response to prepare for the likely return of the H1N1 virus in fall 2009. This program, which harnessed the planning power of a large number of City agencies and other governmental and private sector groups, included operational plans detailing vaccination for the city's 1.4 million school children, alleviating overcrowded hospital emergency departments, continuance of education, feeding and medical programs for public school children who might be displaced due to a flu outbreak, and public messaging and outreach.

With so much going on in New York City, it is important to keep New Yorkers informed about emergencies to help them stay safe. In 2008, the City introduced Notify NYC, a public emergency notification system, in four pilot areas. Since going citywide in May 2009, Notify NYC has alerted more than 27,000 residents to 184 incidents around the city.

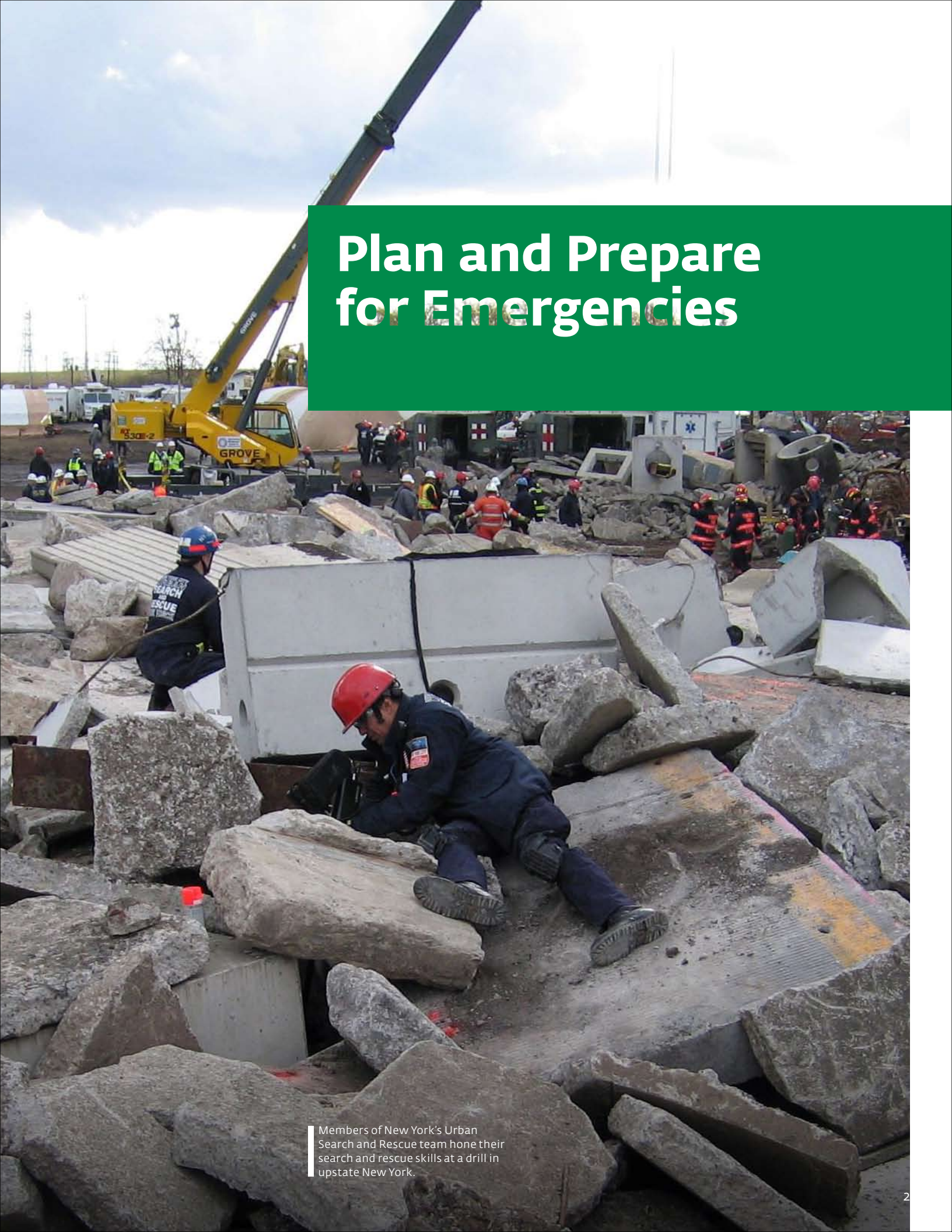
As I look back on the past two years and the developments in the City's emergency plans, responses, and education campaigns, I see great advances. I also see a bright, energetic, and innovative future for this great agency.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Joseph F. Bruno". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "J" and "B".

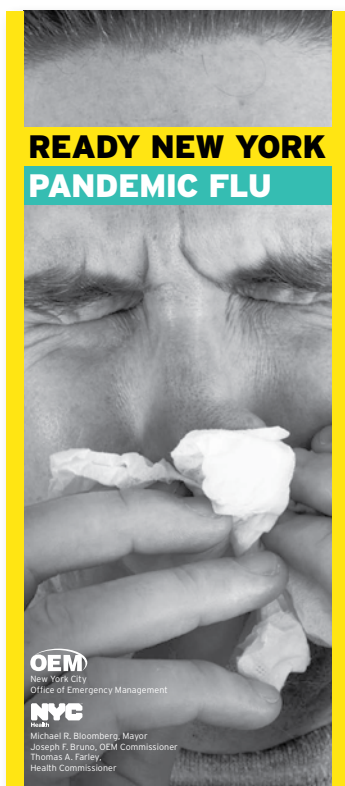
Joseph F. Bruno
Commissioner
New York City Office of Emergency Management

Plan and Prepare for Emergencies



Members of New York's Urban Search and Rescue team hone their search and rescue skills at a drill in upstate New York.

Over the past two years, OEM has continued to work with key partners throughout New York City and the region to build plans that increase the City's ability to respond to and recover from local disasters.



In April 2009, when the H1N1 virus emerged in NYC, OEM posted the Ready New York Pandemic Flu guide on the City's website. Soon after, the guide was available for download in 23 languages.

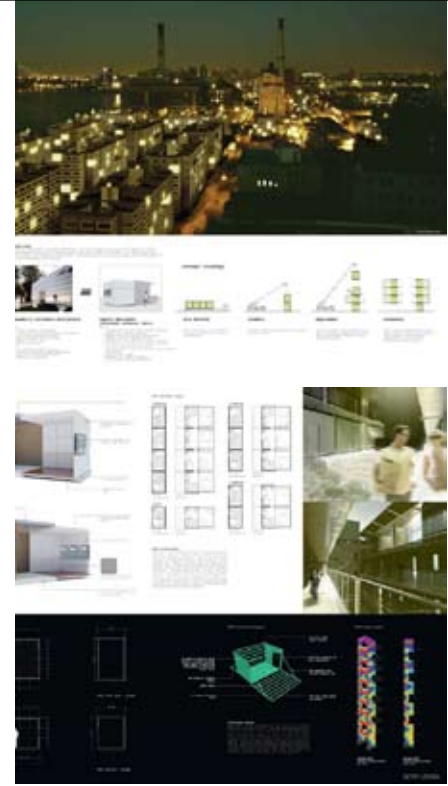
Plans

PREPARING FOR 2009 H1N1 INFLUENZA

In April 2009, the NYC Health Department first detected the H1N1 virus in New York City when a large number of students from St. Francis Preparatory School in Queens began showing symptoms of flu-like illness. OEM worked with many agencies to support the Health Department's operations. When the outbreak subsided toward summer, OEM and the Health Department developed the H1N1 Fall Planning Taskforce, with city and state agency partners and key stakeholders including public and private hospitals and clinics, and private sector and non-profit organizations. This task force revised existing flu plans and strengthened the City's protocols for healthcare surge, occupational health and safety, vaccination, keeping schools open, and resource management.

PREPARING FOR COASTAL STORMS

New York City's Coastal Storm Plan (CSP), initially developed in 2006 and upgraded each year, is made up of a series of plans that describe the citywide response to a major coastal storm, particularly a hurricane. Electrical disruptions, lack of drinking water, damaged communications systems, and debris-clogged streets could result from a variety of storm hazards. OEM has revised and expanded the CSP to prepare the city for any of these all-hazards consequences.



Winning designs from the What If New York City... post-disaster housing design contest.

Here are some more ways the CSP has grown over these past two years:

Emergency Sheltering
The City's emergency shelter program has the capacity to house 600,000 people in more than 570 secure, staffed, and supplied facilities throughout the city.

StormStaff Training Program
With the help of the City University of New York, OEM created StormStaff, a training program for City employees who would staff shelter facilities during an emergency. The training includes pre-incident training online and classroom courses, and just-in-time training at the shelters through printed materials, videos, and instructor-led training.

SAHANA Shelter Management System
Developed in partnership with the City's Department of Information Technology and Telecommunications (DoITT), SAHANA helps OEM assign City staff to the shelters and direct residents into the largest emergency sheltering system in the country. SAHANA maintains a roster of more than 140,000 City employees who would staff evacuation centers and shelters and has the ability to notify and deploy these staff within hours.

DISASTER HOUSING RECOVERY PLAN
The Disaster Housing Recovery Plan addresses three phases of post-disaster housing: emergency sheltering, interim housing, and permanent housing. The plan details housing options for displaced residents after the emergency sheltering phase. It coordinates the talent and expertise of city, state, and federal agencies to rebuild communities as quickly as possible and provide renters and homeowners access to new housing options. The plan includes a decision-making playbook and a structure for regional and national expansion.

“What If New York City...”
With support from the Rockefeller Foundation and in consultation with Architecture for Humanity–New York, OEM sponsored an open design competition to generate temporary housing solutions for the thousands of New Yorkers who might be displaced in the event of a catastrophe. Architects, industrial designers, engineers, inventors, and students from 30 countries answered OEM's call for innovative proposals. These designs outperform traditional post-disaster housing solutions, mobile homes, by addressing issues unique to urban areas, such as high population density and lack of open land.

In January 2008, 10 winners were awarded \$10,000 each to further refine their designs as the foundation for OEM's Disaster Housing Recovery Plan. The winning designs varied widely and included the use of recycled shipping containers, housing barges, experimental carbon fiber compounds, and off-the-grid sustainable strategies. After another evaluation by a technical advisory committee, two of the 10 designs were recommended for further development and prototyping. All 17 submissions, including the winners, are currently exhibited online for public viewing at www.whatifnyc.net.



Heavy rain leads to flooding on the Brooklyn-Queens Expressway.

MITIGATING DISASTERS

In 2008, OEM led the development of New York City's Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan to assess the city's natural hazard vulnerabilities and to identify mitigation opportunities. The plan represents a partnership among 39 city, state, and federal government authorities, and combines input from the private sector, academic institutions, community organizations, and citizens. It is the backbone of the City's mitigation program and provides a strategic plan to secure and apply federal mitigation funds in New York City over the long term.

MANAGING DISASTER LOGISTICS

Charged with distributing life-sustaining supplies like food, water, and ice to the public within 72 hours of a disaster, OEM developed the Disaster Logistics Plan. The plan identified eight staging areas and more than 200 points of distribution in the city, and outlines the systems, processes, and procedures required to:

- rapidly acquire supplies.
- manage staging areas to receive equipment, materials, and personnel.
- distribute supplies to emergency operations or directly to the public.

Emergency Supply Stockpile

The City's emergency supply stockpile consists of 5,700 pallets of medical supplies, personal care items, cots, blankets, food, water, and baby and pet supplies. It is designed to support the basic needs of thousands of people for up to seven days. It can be deployed in 48 hours to distribution points throughout New York City.

MANAGING DISASTER-RELATED DEBRIS

During 2009, OEM engaged its planning partners to revise the 2007 New York City Debris Management Plan. The group developed an all-hazards plan for any incident that would generate significant amounts of debris. This new FEMA-approved plan contains the guidance and procedures for large-scale debris clearance, removal, and disposal after any major disaster.

RESPONDING TO FLASH FLOODS

On the morning of August 8, 2007, a major rain storm caused flooding in the city's streets and subways, disrupting the morning commute of millions of New Yorkers. In response, the Mayor's Office of Operations convened the Flood Mitigation Task Force, which included OEM, the Department of Environmental Protection, the Department of Sanitation, the Department of Transportation, the Fire Department, and the Police Department. The task force developed procedures to identify fast-moving storms and prepare the City's roads and sewers ahead of time. By outlining steps like cleaning catch basins in recurring flood locations, monitoring known and projected flood-prone areas during intense rains, and establishing assistance centers, the plan details the steps the City will take to mitigate the effects of flash floods on residents and infrastructure. In addition, OEM developed the Ready New York Flooding guide to inform New Yorkers about how they can prepare for flash flooding. Since the task force approved the plan in 2007, it has been activated more than a dozen times.



Members of the City's Animal Planning Task Force staff a pet preparedness event in Union Square.

ANIMAL HEALTH AND SAFETY DURING DISASTERS

During a disaster, animals can hinder first responders' efforts, as well as a pet owner's decision to go to a shelter. Animals left behind when owners evacuate may face a lack of clean water, food, and/or shelter. To address these issues, OEM and the City's Animal Planning Task Force published the Disaster Animal Response Plan in November 2009. The plan describes a coordinated response to animal health and safety issues during a disaster, such as search and rescue, sheltering, veterinary care, adoption, and mortality management.

MANAGING DONATIONS AND VOLUNTEERS DURING DISASTERS

The Donations and Volunteer Management Plan, released in October 2009, establishes a coordinated response to the predictable outpouring of supplies and volunteers that follow large-scale disasters. The plan uses an existing web-based portal (www.aidmatrix.org/nyc) and the City's 311 call center to provide a clear and user-friendly process for matching donated resources and spontaneous volunteers to the needs in the field.

REGIONAL CATASTROPHIC PLANNING

A joint project of the New York City and the Northern New Jersey Urban Area Working Groups, the Regional Catastrophic Planning Grant Program improves catastrophic preparedness by linking regional operational capabilities, resources, and plans. The geographical area represented by the Regional Catastrophic Planning Team includes New York City, the cities of Newark and Jersey City, the State of New Jersey, as well as Bridgeport, Connecticut, and Pike County, Pennsylvania.

The population of this 12,000-square-mile area is approximately 22 million people, representing one in 14 Americans. A Regional Integration Center with full-time disaster planners is building regional capabilities for evacuation and sheltering, radiological dispersal device attack response, disaster housing recovery, critical infrastructure protection, mass fatality, debris management, continuity of operations, and disaster logistics planning.

In support of this regional catastrophic planning, the New York State Office of Homeland Security (OHS) entered into an agreement with OEM, whereby OHS agreed to permit OEM to receive and administer regional catastrophic planning grant funds (more than \$17 million) on behalf of all of the regional jurisdictions.

Regional Disaster Communications

The Regional Executive Liaison Team coordinates timing, decision-making, and operations among local governments during disasters. It provides a forum for local executives to quickly resolve regional issues. For example, since the beginning of the H1N1 outbreak, representatives from local jurisdictions have been holding biweekly calls to share information and discuss best practices for communicating with the public, dispensing vaccines, and planning for surges in health care demand.

SPECIAL NEEDS AWS PLAN

The Special Needs Advance Warning System (AWS) provides timely and actionable information to people with special needs during incidents requiring evacuation. OEM has recruited a coalition of hundreds of public agencies, non-governmental organizations, and private sector entities who provide care, services, and information to people with special needs quickly and effectively. The AWS Plan uses these partners, along with directed messaging, to provide targeted information to vulnerable populations in New York City before and during disasters. AWS information is communicated in real-time through conference calls, e-mail, and the AWS website.

OEM's Disaster Simulator allows staff to practice managing large-scale emergencies, like an incident at a major airport, without incurring costs or imposing disruptions.



Tools

CITYWIDE INCIDENT MANAGEMENT SYSTEM CURRICULUM

The Citywide Incident Management System (CIMS) has been in effect for more than five years and has been successful in ensuring that emergencies in New York City are managed under an organized system. CIMS promotes communication between the City's first response and subject matter expert agencies. In 2009, OEM introduced a New York City-specific suite of classroom and interactive web-based courses grounded in the fundamentals of the Incident Command System to train City agencies in CIMS. The curriculum is compliant with the National Incident Management System.

DISASTER SIMULATOR

The Advanced Disaster Management Simulator is a virtual reality system that simulates emergencies and their surrounding environments. It has five stations for the incident commander and four section chiefs, as set forth by CIMS structure. Training sessions allow players to talk to each other using CIMS while they respond to mock disasters.

LEARNING MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

The Learning Management System (LMS) is a web-based application that enables OEM to centralize all aspects of its training. From course registration to certification for all CIMS agencies, LMS tracks individual training portfolios, stores records, communicates with users, and creates various training reports. Additionally, one of the most valuable benefits of LMS is its ability to deliver online training, which enables OEM to expand its outreach and training beyond the traditional classroom format.

In June 2009, OEM hosted a COOP conference for states, cities and other public entities to share best practices and enhance public sector preparedness.



COOP

OEM manages the Continuity of Operations Planning (COOP) program, which ensures the City's major agencies can continue providing essential public services in the event of an emergency that severely disrupts government operations.

OEM has been guiding City agencies through the planning process and is in the final stages of facilitating the development of one of the largest and most comprehensive municipal continuity plans in the nation. OEM developed a standardized planning methodology and procured customized software to build uniform plans.

More than 200 essential City services have been identified across 43 agencies. The team has also created an extensive toolkit, including a web portal for agency COOP administrators to gather resources, ask questions, and download their plans. The program also includes weekly client meetings, a monthly working group, and a 24-hour help line.

Hundreds of City employees have been trained in COOP practices and software.

COOP in action

In March 2009, a fire forced the New York City Employees Retirement System (NYCERS) to evacuate its building. OEM COOP staff helped NYCERS reorganize its administration and workflow to maintain essential functions while the building was repaired.

Exercises

OPERATION VIGILANT GUARD

On November 2, 2009, NY-TF1, the City's Urban Search and Rescue (US&R) team took part in Operation Vigilant Guard, a joint training exercise with military, state, and local first responders. The three-day exercise simulated the response to an earthquake resulting in collapsed buildings and damage to critical infrastructure including power grids and water and waste systems.

The 28 advanced search and rescue teams are strategically located throughout the United States and are experts in the use of the specialized tools, equipment, and techniques required for the most dangerous conditions. NY-TF 1 is managed by the Office of Emergency Management and is composed of members of the New York City Fire and Police Departments.

OPERATION SAFE PATH 2009

On May 17, 2009, OEM and the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey hosted Operation Safe PATH 2009 to practice the emergency response to simulated explosions on a New Jersey-bound PATH train. More than 800 emergency responders participated from an array of response and subject-matter expert agencies, including police, firefighters, and environmental and health officials. The two-hour exercise took place at the World Trade Center PATH station.

CERT In Action

CERT (Community Emergency Response Team) volunteers participated in Operation Safe PATH as accident victims. The first responders welcomed the chance to train with real people and the CERT volunteers had the opportunity to learn victim triage techniques first hand.

HURREX 08

HurrEx 08, planned as part of the HurrEx Exercise Series, was a two-day, full-scale exercise held in Brooklyn that tested the supply, staffing, training, and setup of hurricane evacuation centers and shelters prior to the arrival of evacuees. This exercise allowed players to practice plans and procedures for opening evacuation centers and shelters in the event of a coastal storm. It also gave OEM an opportunity to test the ability of its CERTs to work alongside City employees.

PENN STATION FULL-SCALE EXERCISE

Planned after the transit attacks in Madrid and London, the Penn Station Full-Scale Exercise provided a learning environment for first responders to exercise emergency response plans, policies, and procedures as they pertain to a terrorist-initiated explosive incident on the track level of Penn Station. Almost 400 first responders participated in the exercise in August 2007.

Firefighters respond to a mock explosion at Penn Station.



Volunteers hand out preparedness guides to passersby at a National Preparedness Month kick-off fair.

Educate the Public About Preparedness



Among OEM's biggest tasks is educating New Yorkers about preparing for emergencies.

READY NEW YORK

In the past two years, OEM distributed more than three million Ready New York guides, including its two newest guides, Ready New York: Flooding and Ready New York: Pandemic Flu. Guides are available in up to 23 languages, including new languages such as Tagalog, Czech, and Romanian. Many are also available in Braille and audio format.

Ready New York, in cooperation with the City's Department of Education, introduced Ready Schools to teach children to prepare for emergencies. The program encompasses two guides designed specifically for students in grades K-5 and 6-12. Interactive presentations, guides, and web games teach school children how they can plan and prepare for emergencies. A pilot presentation was introduced in select schools in the spring of 2009 and went citywide for the 2009 - 2010 school year.

Ready New York Video

On January 28, 2009, OEM hosted the premiere of the Ready New York video. The 11-minute preparedness video uses real-life examples from emergencies in New York City to encourage people to prepare. The video was filmed in high definition by NYC-TV and stars Karen Duffy, a former MTV host and member of NYC CERT.

The Ready New York video is available in four languages and is available on OEM's website and various video hosting websites, like YouTube, Vimeo, Blip.TV, and Facebook.



OEM added guides about preparing for floods and pandemics to its suite of emergency preparedness guides.



Ready NYC Campaign

In 2009, OEM and the American Red Cross in Greater New York contracted with the Ad Council to develop *Ready New York City*, a multimedia advertising campaign designed to encourage New Yorkers to prepare for emergencies. The campaign presents a simple preparedness answer to overcoming events that could “turn your world upside down” – get a kit, make a plan, and be informed. It features TV spots and ads on billboards, telephone kiosks, newspapers, bus shelters, and other media in both English and Spanish.

Incident-Based Distribution

The Incident-Based Distribution Program was created in 2008 to increase awareness about disasters in affected communities. Following incidents such as power outages, fires, water main breaks, and building evacuations, OEM sends emergency preparedness guides and information to area residents and businesses to remind them how they can be better prepared for future emergencies.

OEM sends Ready New York guides to local elected officials so they can encourage preparedness among their constituents. Since the program’s inception, 47 incidents have been flagged for inclusion in this program and more than 12,100 Ready New York guides have been distributed to affected-area residents and businesses.

A Ready New York outreach coordinator teaches students to prepare for emergencies at P.S. 41 in Staten Island.

GROWTH OF CERT

In the past two years, OEM's CERT program trained 541 new volunteers through a total of 24 classes, and hosted four graduation ceremonies at OEM headquarters, Fire headquarters, One Police Plaza, and Randall's Island FDNY Training Academy. There are now 56 active CERTs across the city, including two corporate teams. The program has more than 1,000 active, credentialed volunteers.

The CERT program also expanded its post-training, continuing education curriculum in 2009. CERT partnered with the Health Department, Con Edison, and the Center for Independence of the Disabled, NY, among other organizations, to offer specific post-training programs on topics like utility infrastructure, cultural competency, and the particulars of aiding persons with special needs. More than 600 members participated in the post-training program.

Throughout the past two years, CERT members have been working to develop close relationships with faith-based groups, schools, and local businesses to build community disaster networks in advance of emergencies. CERT volunteers also give Ready New York and Ready New York for Kids presentations and assist with tabling events in their communities.

DISASTER VOLUNTEER CONFERENCE

OEM, as the coordinating body for the New York City Citizen Corps Council (CCC), organized annual disaster volunteer conferences. The 2008 conference taught organizations how to prepare to recover during a two-day workshop.

In May 2009, the CCC hosted the 2009 Disaster Volunteer Conference. More than 200 representatives and volunteers attended the event to learn how to be more effective leaders during times of emergency.



Ready New York's Frank Lowe receives an award from Mayor Bloomberg for his efforts to prepare NYC's seniors for emergencies.

EXPANSION OF PRIVATE SECTOR PARTNERSHIPS

During the past two years, the Public/Private Initiatives Unit developed partnerships with the New York State Restaurant Association, the hotel industry, the Mayor's Sports Commission, a network of cultural institutions, and professional sports organizations like the NY Yankees, NY Mets, and Madison Square Garden to plan ways the City can give and receive assistance while preparing for and responding to emergencies.

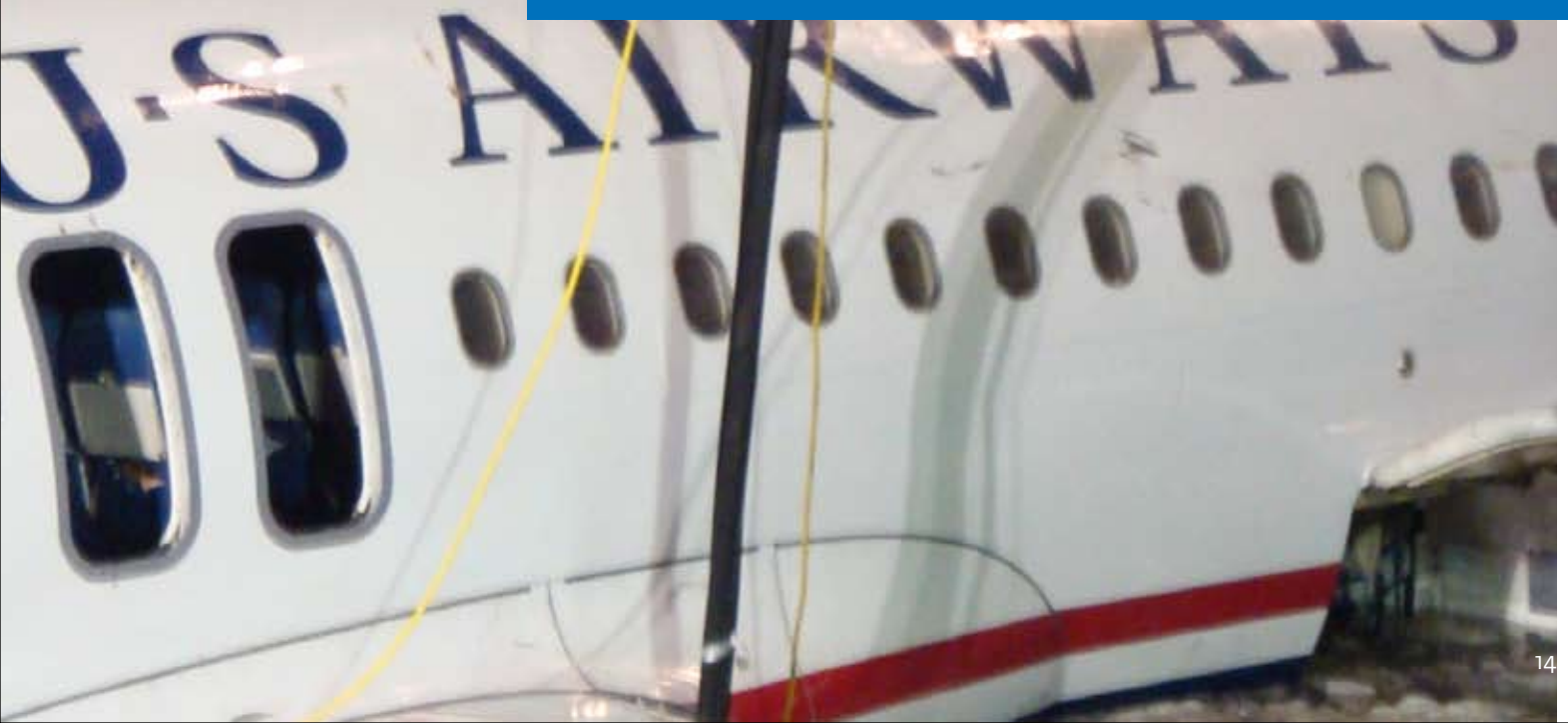
In 2009, the Public/Private Initiatives Unit expanded its outreach efforts and educated more than 400 small business owners at 18 emergency preparedness events across the city. The unit also introduced NYContinuity, a monthly newsletter that informs hundreds of business partners about the latest business continuity news and upcoming educational events.

NYC SERVICE

In April 2009, the Mayor's Office introduced NYC Service to increase volunteerism among city residents. One of NYC Service's six focus areas is emergency preparedness, spearheaded by OEM. OEM is working with NYC Service to find volunteers to join CERT, give Ready New York for Kids presentations in City schools, and staff special events such as the annual National Preparedness Month kick-off. OEM also created Ready New Yorker and Notify NYC tool kits to allow citizens to become Ready New Yorkers on a self-guided basis. NYC Service has also become an active part of the NYC Citizen Corps Council.

U.S. Airways 1549 is pulled from the Hudson River after an emergency landing.

Coordinate Response and Recovery





OEM's new CIMS mobile coordination center has room for multiple agencies to work together at the scene of an emergency.

Emergencies in a city as large and complex as New York require a coordinated response. OEM ensures first responders have the information and resources they need.

CIMS MOBILE COORDINATION CENTER

OEM's CIMS Mobile Coordination Center, the newest and most versatile of our mobile assets, provides City agencies with an on-scene work space to facilitate interagency coordination at an emergency. It can accommodate a meeting of 40 people, or provide 20 work stations equipped with phones, computers, and internet service. It is OEM's third largest conference room, with almost 500 square feet of space. Through collaboration with DoITT, OEM staff is able to incorporate the New York City Wireless Network capabilities within the Coordination Center.

ENHANCING FIELD RESPONSE

OEM led the effort to implement Recommendation # 10 of the Mayor's World Trade Center Health Panel, which enhanced the Health Department and Department of Environmental Protection's field response to occupational and public health emergencies. The new efforts bring subject matter experts into the field and help keep the public informed about hazardous conditions in their neighborhoods.

STEAM PIPE EXPLOSION

On July 18, 2007, a geyser of steam and mud erupted almost 70 feet in the air near Grand Central Station after a 24-inch steam pipe exploded beneath Lexington Avenue at 41st Street. The force of the explosion ripped a 40-foot hole in the street, flipped a nearby tow truck, and rained debris on the area. The City established a frozen zone around the incident, while more than a dozen agencies and numerous businesses worked to clean the area, restore utilities, repair the damage, and keep traffic moving. This incident also marked the first time the Corporate Emergency Access System (CEAS) was activated.

👉 CRANE COLLAPSES

On March 15, 2008, a construction crane on East 51st Street between 1st and 2nd Avenues detached from its moorings, crashed into multiple buildings, and broke into pieces. One building collapsed and many others were severely damaged. The largest section of the crane lay propped against a building. Dozens of residents and many businesses were displaced. OEM worked with other City agencies and private contractors, as well as the Red Cross and CERT volunteers, to disassemble the crane, clean up debris, shelter residents, re-route traffic, recover stranded pets, and return the neighborhood to a fully functional state.

Two months later, on May 30, a second construction crane collapsed on the corner of 1st Avenue and 91st Street. The City vacated eight buildings containing 212 residential units and 10 businesses, closed the surrounding streets, and cleaned up the debris.

Department of Buildings in Watch Command

Based on OEM's experience at the two major crane collapses, engineering staff from the Department of Buildings is now assigned to OEM. This provides subject matter expertise for responses to building-related matters, including unsafe buildings, collapses and danger of collapses, construction accidents, and illegal and improper construction.

Helping Residents After Building Vacate Orders

City agencies can order buildings to be vacated for structural or fire safety hazards or other defects that pose a danger to occupants. The Emergency Vacate Operations Protocol supports residents in New York City who have been ordered to vacate their homes due to unsafe conditions. The protocol coordinates the relocation process for affected residents between City agencies and non-profit partners and manages incident information.

👉 BROOKLYN TORNADO

On August 8, 2007, a thunderstorm battered New York City. The storm produced torrential rains, hail, and a tornado in Brooklyn. The rain severely affected subway service and flooded basements across the city. The tornado damaged houses in the Bay Ridge, Kensington, and Williamsburg neighborhoods of Brooklyn. The storm also caused significant damage in the Forest Hills, Jamaica, and Flushing neighborhoods of Queens due to flash flooding.

OEM coordinated emergency sheltering for the Bay Ridge residents, damage assessment, debris removal, and clean-up. Watch Command collected information about citywide flood damage, which led to a federal disaster declaration and funding for Queens and Brooklyn residents. OEM worked with FEMA, the State Emergency Management Office, other New York City agencies, non-governmental organizations, local elected officials, and community groups to open a Disaster Assistance Service Center and help residents recover from the storm damage.

Providing Services to Disaster Victims

The Disaster Assistance Service Center Plan is a partnership between OEM and the NYC Human Resources Administration to provide a one-stop location for all services available from governmental and non-governmental agencies to people affected by significant disasters. These services include emergency cash assistance, food stamps, housing assistance, crisis counseling, small business counseling, and disaster mitigation.

On March 15, 2008, a construction crane collapsed and crashed through multiple buildings on the east side.

On August 8, 2007, a tornado tore through neighborhoods in Brooklyn and Queens.



MUTUAL ASSISTANCE

Though OEM is a New York City agency, its staff often assists with emergencies beyond the five boroughs. During the past two years, OEM has sent staff to assist with the response to California's wildfires, Hurricane Gustav in Louisiana, Hurricane Dean in Houston, Texas, and Hurricane Ike in Harris County, Texas.

In addition, the City, through OEM, entered into an intergovernmental agreement with the New York State Emergency Management Office for local deployment of employees and/or equipment out of state. The Agreement set out the terms and conditions that the City and its agencies must satisfy when providing local resources to assist other states in recovery efforts pursuant to an Emergency Management Assistance Compact request.

On January 15, 2009, US Airways 1549 made an emergency landing on the Hudson River.



Also, New York-Task Force 1 (NY-TF 1) from the Urban Search and Rescue System, deployed with FEMA's Incident Support Team for Hurricane Dean in August 2007, Tropical Storm Dolly in July 2008, the Republican National Convention in August 2008, and Hurricane Omar in October 2008. Additionally, NY-TF1 deployed a 35-member task force to the Gulf Coast in response to Hurricanes Ike and Gustav in 2008.

MAPLE SYRUP ODOR

In 2008 and 2009, 311 received a number of calls from residents in the Bronx and Manhattan complaining of a "maple syrup-like" odor. The Department of Environmental Protection, using plume modeling and air sampling technology, determined the odor was non-toxic. OEM's Watch Command and GIS units used computer-aided mapping systems to locate the origin of the maple syrup smell by mapping resident odor complaints and reports from CERT members while adding wind conditions for the days when the odor was reported. Watch Command shared the data with New Jersey and Westchester County to identify the source, a perfume manufacturer located in North Bergen, New Jersey. The mystery was solved by some good human and computer detective work.

FLIGHT 1549: MIRACLE ON THE HUDSON

On January 15, 2009, US Airways Flight 1549 was struck by a flock of geese that disabled both engines minutes after departing from LaGuardia Airport. The flight crew was forced to land the plane on the Hudson River. Miraculously, all passengers and crew survived the crash with only minor injuries.

The plane floated downstream for two miles while passengers and crew members were rescued from its wings by commuter ferries and NYPD and FDNY boats. Once rescued, the passengers and crew dispersed to hospitals in both New Jersey and New York City.

Watch Command immediately established communications with New Jersey to coordinate efforts and share information. OEM responders worked with marine response agencies to establish a command post, a passenger and crew receiving center, and a location to secure the aircraft for a National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) crash investigation.

Thankfully, the crash of US Airways Flight 1549 caused no casualties. The crash showcased the great potential for coordinated regional response. Since then, OEM has implemented improved communication capabilities and procedures with both the regional and national FAA control centers.

Providing Services to Families

The Family Assistance Center (FAC) Plan is a partnership between OEM, the American Red Cross in Greater New York, and the NYC Office of Chief Medical Examiner. A New York City FAC provides information, emotional support, translation, and emergency social services to families and friends of victims after a mass fatality incident in New York City. The FAC will coordinate victim identification services and mental health assistance. The FAC plan ensures coordination with key agencies such as the National Transportation Safety Board and the FBI.

ACCIDENT OVER THE HUDSON

On August 8, 2009, a small private plane collided with a tour company helicopter above the Hudson River. OEM helped coordinate the recovery of the two aircrafts and victims and opened a FAC to address the needs of foreign national and US victims' relatives.

Watch Commanders monitor incidents throughout the city 24 hours a day.



Collect and Disseminate Critical Information

Get Notified.

What you need to know,
when you need to know it.
Notify NYC delivers important
information about emergency
events and City services.

Registration is free.
Sign up now for Notify NYC
at nyc.gov/notifynyc
or call 311.

Notify **NYC**

Email. Phone. Text.

Notify NYC's multimedia advertising campaign features web banners, radio spots, TV ads on taxi monitors, and even Department of Sanitation truck posters.

NOTIFY NYC

Notify NYC, the City's emergency notification system, sends notifications and alerts to subscribers regarding emergencies occurring in New York City. These messages can be issued via phone, e-mail, and text message. In addition to providing emergency notices and updates, the service will provide school closure information, public health advisories, and unscheduled parking rule updates.

Since the program began, the City has sent out 243 messages related to 184 incidents across all five boroughs. By the end of 2009, more than 27,000 people had enrolled to receive notifications.

Alerts sent through Notify NYC are also posted at www.nyc.gov and on Twitter and distributed to call takers at 311 and 911 to ensure that information the City provides is accurate, timely and consistent.



In 2009, OEM launched a presence on a number of social media sites to help keep New Yorkers informed about emergencies.

WEB 2.0

On June 16, 2009, OEM expanded its internet outreach and introduced new ways New Yorkers can stay informed about emergency information and community events through Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube.

Facebook

With more than two million users in New York City, Facebook alone has the potential to help OEM keep millions of New Yorkers informed and prepared for emergencies.

Twitter

OEM's Twitter page provides updates about emergencies occurring in New York City, as well as increases public awareness of press releases and official statements during emergencies. Notify NYC messages are sent out via Twitter to expand the program's reach.

PUBLIC SAFETY DATA CENTER

In spring 2007, OEM created the Public Safety Geographic Information System (GIS) Data Development Center to collect, organize, and supply the City with geospatial data for public safety purposes.

While many agencies develop data sets for individual needs, the GIS Data Development Center collects, combines, and refines the data to transform it into something that can be used for various purposes.

For example, to help the Health Department create a citywide strategy for H1N1 prevention and containment, the GIS Data Development Center helped the Department of Education visualize and identify which types of schools, like elementary or special needs, occupied which buildings, and subsequently, which groups of children would be at risk.

CRITICAL INFRASTRUCTURE GIS DATA SETS PROJECT

GIS converted architectural drawings for all 468 subway stations in New York City into GIS data sets in July 2009. The process began to help incident commanders in the police and fire departments identify barriers that might hinder the deployment of personnel and equipment into the subway system. The revised data sets display the location and size of exits, including emergency exits for evacuations, and information on hidden spaces like storage and equipment rooms, corridors, and other sealed-off areas.

The GIS format also allows new fields of data to be easily added to the existing maps. For example, information about the buildings directly above the subway station can be viewed on the same maps as those of the stations themselves. A viewing and querying application has been developed for incident commanders to use at any emergency scene that includes a subway station.

NY STATE ARCHIVES

OEM was a 2008-2009 award recipient for the New York State Archives' Local Government Records Management Improvement Fund (LGRMIF) grant for archiving documents of historical significance.

With the LGRMIF grant funds, OEM established the OEM Historical Records Assessment Project for the purpose of cataloging and storing records related to the September 11 attacks and their aftermath.



OEM's GIS unit makes detailed maps to help first responders understand the challenges of a particular location.

Mayor Bloomberg visits OEM's Watch Command during the holidays.



Seek Funding to Support the Overall Preparedness of NYC

Summary of Grants Received 2007-2009

GRANT

AREAS OF FOCUS

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| Homeland Security/DHS | Projects in geographic information systems, continuity of operations, Ready New York, CERT, regional evacuation, emergency stockpile, human services, Citywide Incident Management System, Citywide Asset and Logistics Management System, Coastal Storm Stockpile, and Notify NYC |
| Citizen Corps/DHS, New York State Emergency Management Office | Incorporating non-profit and volunteer organizations in disaster preparedness |
| Metropolitan Medical Response System/DHS | Medical planning and coordination efforts for mass casualty events |
| Ready NY/Private grants - supported by AIG and McGraw Hill | Development, translation, and printing of Ready New York guides, and advertising for the Ready New York program |
| Corporate CERT/UBS | Training of second corporate CERT and funding for an accompanying neighborhood-based CERT |
| Local Emergency Management Performance/DHS, New York State Emergency Management Office | Administrative operations of NYC OEM |
| Regional Catastrophic Planning Grant Program/DHS | Development of regional planning projects and plans for the region including Northern New Jersey, New York, Connecticut, and parts of Pennsylvania |
| What If NYC.../Rockefeller Foundation | Post-disaster provisional housing design competition |
| Interoperable Emergency Communications Grant Program /DHS | Revision of the Tactical Interoperable Communications Plan and exercise costs to test those plans |
| Urban Search and Rescue/FEMA | Staff and equipment to administer the Urban Search and Rescue program |



CERT volunteers practice response skills during a drill at the Fire Academy on Randall's Island.