



New York City Office of Emergency Management
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**NYC OFFICE OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT (OEM) CONDUCTS
HURRICANE DRILL**

Regional Hurricane Preparedness Exercise Features Deployment of Emergency Supply Stockpile and Shelter Setup

The New York City Office of Emergency Management (OEM) Commissioner today announced the successful completion of HURREX 2008, a multi-agency field exercise to test the deployment of the City's emergency supply stockpile and the setup of shelters.

During the two-day exercise, held on May 31st and June 1st, 24 pallets from the City's emergency stockpile were delivered to IS 187 in Brooklyn, where more than 100 staff members from City agencies, the American Red Cross (ARC) and OEM's Community Emergency Response Teams (CERT) set up a shelter capable of providing housing and essential supplies for up to 500 people for four days. The supplies included cots, blankets, hygiene and medical kits, baby food and diapers, pet supplies and bottled water. In addition to setting up the shelter, staff members received training in five areas of shelter management: Evacuation Center Operations, Solar System Operations, Hurricane Shelter Administration, Hurricane Shelter Operations and Evacuation Center Administration/Hurricane Shelter Logistics.

"New York City has one of the most robust coastal storm plans in the country and this weekend we put yet another component of our plan to the test," said OEM Commissioner Joseph Bruno. "Drills like HURREX help ensure the City is ready if we ever have to face the real thing."

In a major coastal storm, such as a category 3 or 4 hurricane, as many as 2.3 million people would need to evacuate coastal areas and up to 600,000 people would require temporary shelter. To meet those needs OEM has developed a comprehensive Coastal Storm Plan that includes detailed procedures for evacuating and sheltering residents. The City's shelter system consists of 65 evacuation centers and up to 509 hurricane shelters, including eight special medical needs shelters. To supply and staff the shelter system, OEM maintains an emergency stockpile of essential supplies and a database of nearly 25,000 City employees who would be called upon to manage evacuation centers and emergency shelters.

City officials will evaluate the exercise and study the response and decisions made by the participants for future training in New York City and in other jurisdictions. HURREX was funded by SEMO and a contribution from American International Group, Inc. (AIG).

"As an insurance company with a clear understanding of the importance of emergency preparedness and risk mitigation, AIG is proud to support the New York City Office of Emergency Management's HURREX coastal storm exercise," said Ned Cloonan, AIG Vice President for International & Corporate Affairs. "We value our relationship with OEM and look forward to continuing to work with them as they test and refine New York City's preparedness plans and emergency response protocols."

Hurricane Season in the United States begins June 1 and ends November 30. HURREX took place on the final day of National Hurricane Preparedness Week 2008, which ran from May 25 through May 31.



City employees and volunteers from ARC and CERT unload shelter supplies Saturday at I.S. 187

HURREX 2008 is part of the City's continuing efforts to test and refine its Coastal Storm Plan. The exercise was designed specifically to test the deployment of supplies from the City's emergency stockpile and staff from the city's volunteer database, and to set up a simulated emergency shelter.

In 2006, OEM held three drills that focused on other aspects of the Coastal Storm Plan. In October 2006, more than 800 evacuees were evaluated and transported from an evacuation center to two shelter locations. In June 2006, OEM held a tabletop exercise involving more than 60 City, state and federal agencies, non-profit organizations and private sector partners that traced the movement of a hurricane from its initial development to the decision to evacuate portions of the city. And, in a second tabletop exercise held in July 2006, players focused on the evacuation of special needs populations from healthcare facilities.

Agencies that participated in HURREX include:

- American Red Cross in Greater NY
- NYC Administration for Children's Services
- NYC Community Emergency Response Teams
- NYC Department for the Aging
- NYC Department for Citywide Administrative Services
- NYC Department of Education
- NYC Department of Environmental Protection
- NYC Department of Finance
- NYC Department of Homeless Services
- NYC Department of Information Technology and Telecommunications
- NYC Department of Parks and Recreation
- NYC Department of Housing Preservation and Development
- NYC Fire Department
- NYC Housing Authority
- NYC Human Resource Administration

- NYC Law Department
- NYC Mayor's Office
- NYC Office of Emergency Management
- NYC Police Department

In addition to the HURREX shelter exercise, the City of New York is participating in a first-of-its-kind regional exercise hosted by the New York State Emergency Management Office (SEMO). SEMO's Empire Express Hurricane Exercise will activate state and local coastal storm plans in preparation for a direct hit by a simulated hurricane and will focus on three critical components of New York's hurricane response: Emergency Operations Center (EOC) coordination, local operations and healthcare facility evacuations.

The regional exercise kicked off Friday, May 31, 2008 with a call between OEM, SEMO, the National Weather Service and Nassau Suffolk and Westchester counties. Over the weekend, OEM participated in calls with the Regional Evacuation Liaison Team (RELT), a group of city and county executives that would ensure a coordinated regional evacuation during a major hurricane. Today, the exercise continued with a simulated activation of OEM's Emergency Operations Center (EOC). The activation simulated the decision making and information gathering activities that would be taking place if a Category 2 hurricane was approaching New York City. With the simulated hurricane scheduled to make landfall Tuesday at 8 pm, players worked to establish a timeline for the evacuation of healthcare and nursing home facilities and a timeline for evacuating the general population from areas that would be impacted by storm surge. Throughout the exercise, OEM will simulate the activities that would occur in an actual event. On Wednesday, the exercise will focus on regional recovery efforts. The SEMO exercise concludes in Albany on Thursday with a meeting where participants will examine the decisions made during the exercise and assess the effectiveness of the regions coastal storm plans.

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