

The Region III Report

The FEMA Region III Information Source, Philadelphia, PA

September 18, 2002

Floyd: Reminder of Late-Season Threat



Fay went away. Gustav flirted with the Atlantic Coast. Hanna, if she arrives, may – or may not – be hard-hearted. The names for 2002 Atlantic storms have yet to join the disaster lexicon.

Just because we haven't had a hurricane this late in the year doesn't mean we won't. Three years ago this week, Hurricane Floyd created damaging flooding in 13 states, four in Region III.

While most disasters cannot be avoided, people can lessen the loss of life and property. Flood insurance and catastrophic planning can help. Further information is available from the FEMA website: www.fema.gov.

To date, FEMA Region III has obligated \$40 million for Floyd infrastructure repair in Delaware, Maryland, Pennsylvania and Virginia. Of that, more than \$20 million went to Virginia, where the City of Franklin was nearly demolished. Individual Assistance for Floyd in Region III totaled more than \$33 million, with southeastern Pennsylvanians needing the most.

Hazard Mitigation projects have moved hundreds of families out of harm's way. With \$4.6 million in Hazard Mitigation Grant Program funds plus more than \$19 million in supplemental funding authorized by Congress, Pennsylvania worked with homeowners and local officials to buy 244 houses and elevate 56 others damaged by Hurricane Floyd.

PDA Teams Plan for Enhanced Roles

FEMA and state officials are working to make Preliminary Damage Assessment (PDA) teams a more valuable disaster-recovery tool. Regional staff and representatives from Region III states gathered in Ocean City, MD, last week seeking ways to streamline PDA team requirements and expand team members' capabilities.

"Our objective is to improve the PDA process," Regional Director Charlotte Herbert Mears said. "We plan to develop a cadre of specialists who can perform all PDA functions."

Under this plan, any PDA team member can gather information on Public Assistance, Individual Assistance, Hazard Mitigation or environmental programs. Separate teams now perform different assessments. This system also will minimize the time

emergency managers must spend with PDA teams and allow them to focus more on immediate disaster needs.

The region is studying technological advances to improve information gathering. For example, palm pads could be used to store and report data, increasing efficiency in the field.

These devices also will improve PDA inspectors' ability to transfer information to the Regional Operations Center for analysis and processing. The new system will be implemented during the next event and is expected to evolve with use.

Technology will enhance the quality of reports the team generates. The PDA teams will use laptop computers and Global Positioning equipment to allow integration with Geographic Information Systems mapping.

RIII Director to Bid Farewell to FEMA

FEMA Region III Director Charlotte Herbert Mears announced she plans to resign, effective Nov. 22, in anticipation of the birth of her son.



Charlotte made the surprise announcement during a Region III all-hands meeting on Sept. 9. Charlotte and Bruce Mears were wed on June 1 of this year in Delaware. The expected child is her first.

Charlotte thanked the assembled Region III employees for their support and their friendship, which she said she hoped would continue. She also declared her intention to remain active during the remainder of her term, saying she had no intention of being a "lame duck." President Bush appointed Charlotte director of Region III in October 2001.

Before joining FEMA, Charlotte was vice president and executive director of The Partnership, an organization of the Delaware State Chamber of Commerce. She was responsible for all aspects of the operations, including strategic planning, program growth, budgeting and fundraising. Previously, she had been a vice president of the Associated Builders and Contractors, in Washington, DC. There she developed and implemented policy and programs for four association divisions, including congressional, regulatory, legal and political. She established and led business coalitions and developed communications strategies to build support for the construction industry.

Earlier in her career, Charlotte had worked as a legislative assistant for Rep. Bud Shuster.

► **Sept. 11 Tribute Book:** FEMA has published *A Nation Remembers, A Nation Recovers*, an anniversary tribute to those who experienced the horrific event or served on the front lines of response and recovery following the terrorist attacks on the United States. The booklet contains 14 articles about men and women involved at the World Trade Center in New York City, the Pentagon in Washington, DC, and the Shanksville, PA, crash site. Copies were sent to the governors, state emergency management directors and homeland security advisers in the Region III states and Washington, DC. Additional copies are available. *For more information, contact Phil Clark at 215-931-5716.*

► **Region III Fire Grants Top \$10 million:** The fifth round of awards in FEMA's 2002 Assistance to Firefighters Grant Program will deliver an additional \$2.9 million to 35 fire departments in Maryland, Pennsylvania, Virginia and West Virginia. That total comes to just over \$10 million for 132 grants announced for Region III states. The national total to date is about \$107 million for 1,613 grants. No grants have been announced for Delaware or the District of Columbia.

Among the region's largest grants for Fire Operations and Firefighter Safety are \$437,388 to Roanoke Fire-EMS in Roanoke, VA; \$361,847 to the Chesterfield (VA) Department of Fire and EMS; \$262,350 to Concordville (PA) Fire and Protective Association; \$157,388 to the Peterstown (WV) Volunteer Fire Department & Rescue Squad; and \$108,144 to the Volunteer Fire Company of Halfway in Hagerstown, MD. *For more information, contact Phil Clark at 215-931-5716.*

► **Pre-Disaster Mitigation Grants:** States that have been waiting to see if residual funds will be available after Pre-Disaster Mitigation (PDM) grant applications have been reviewed will be interested to know that FEMA Region III has approved all the grant applications. As a result, there will be no other funds available for additional work. The summary of Region III PDM grants is as follows: Delaware, \$268,988; District of Columbia, \$269,533; Maryland, \$375,294; Pennsylvania, \$540,520; Virginia, \$417,000; and West Virginia, \$292,788. *For more information, contact Nancy Carpenter at 215-931-5508.*

► **VA Communities Update Flood Ordinances:** Nine Virginia communities, through initiatives by the state's National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) coordinator, are the latest to update flood maps and ordinances. After receiving Flood Insurance Rate Maps updated effective Sept. 4, 2002, the communities reviewed their Floodplain Management Ordinances and provided Region III with compliant regulations. Region III officials encourage states that have not already done so to take steps to update their floodplain management program. Updated maps more accurately identify flood risks and can affect flood insurance costs. *For more information, contact Joe Zagone at 215-931-5542.*

► **Map Modernization Conference:** Region III officials are urging cooperating technical partners – and potential CTPs – to check a website describing the results of a Map Modernization Summit held in Shepherdstown, WV, early this month. The website is: <http://www.floodmaps.fema.gov/region3/> Participating were more than 60 representatives of CTP communities, state agencies, flood-insurance-study contractors and FEMA Region III. The goal was to exchange information and ideas related to FEMA map creation, delivery and use and to provide an opportunity for feedback about FEMA's flood-hazard mapping program. CTPs are those with mapping resources and expertise who assist FEMA in floodplain mapping. *For more information, contact Jon Janowicz at 215-931-5524.*

► **Hazard Mitigation Focus Group Meeting:** Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) regulations are going to change. State mitigation officers should look for the results of an HMGP Focus Group that met last week at Mount Weather. The purpose of the meeting was to provide regional and state views before FEMA headquarters begins revising HMGP policy. Their regional counterparts will be in touch with the state mitigation officers with the outcome of the focus group. *For more information, contact Nancy Carpenter at 215-931-5508.*

More circulation: *The Region III Report* is a vehicle for FEMA to share information with our federal, state and local partners and our full-time staff and reservists. Thank you for your comments and suggestions in our previous issues. Please send any additional email addresses or changes to susan.greatorex@fema.gov.