



FEMA

Shopping for Knowledge at Local Home Improvement Stores

The Gulf Coast of Louisiana – Contractors and homeowners in Southern Louisiana are visiting local home improvement stores with thoughts of rebuilding, following the destruction Hurricanes Katrina and Rita brought to the Gulf Coast in August and September 2005. In response to a burgeoning public demand for mitigation information, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) is offering hazard mitigation workshops in home improvement stores, focusing on building techniques proven to make homes hurricane-resistant.

From power tools to kitchen appliances, home improvement super stores have the inventory to put a house back together. However, successful recovery and rebuilding efforts require more than simply constructing a new house. Hurricanes are a fact of life in this part of the country, and the destruction of the 2005 hurricane season has left few residents confident that they will not be affected by another severe storm. Residents want to rebuild safer and stronger so that their homes are able to withstand future hurricanes.

The slogan for these mitigation workshops is "REBUILD Stronger, Safer, and Smarter." They are being held in Stine Lumber, Doug Ashy Building Materials, 84 Lumber, Lowe's, and Home Depot stores throughout Southern Louisiana. The workshops are popularly known as "The FEMA Road Show" by the hazard mitigation teams that conduct them. They are held for three days at each location, and will eventually cover the entire Louisiana Gulf Coast region.

The workshops include a slide presentation, free publications, and the opportunity to meet one-on-one with a FEMA hazard mitigation advisor. Shoppers who attend the Road Show leave with a variety of useful information on topics such as the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP), wind-resistant roofing techniques, and effective methods of elevating a building and properly anchoring it to suitable footings and foundations. Additionally, each FEMA team possesses not only a thorough knowledge of hazard mitigation policies and procedures, but some particular experience or expertise to address the challenges faced by hurricane victims.

According to the Community Education and Outreach branch at the FEMA Joint Field Office in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, the hazard mitigation workshops are averaging over 80 visitors per day. The word is getting out and public interest is increasing.

Hazard mitigation construction techniques work. Thanks to these workshops, southern Louisiana contractors and homeowners have easy access to the program and policy information that will help them build safer, stronger homes in the hurricane-prone Gulf Coast region.



Multiple Counties,
Louisiana



Quick Facts

- Year: **2005**
- Sector: **Public/Private Partnership**
- Cost: **Amount Not Available**
- Primary Activity/Project: **Education/Outreach/Public Awareness**
- Primary Funding: **Other FEMA funds/ US Department of Homeland Security**