

Vermilion Parish — Hurricanes Katrina and Rita

A decade of progress through partnerships

Ten years of progress since hurricanes Katrina and Rita

Vermilion Parish, located on the Gulf of Mexico in South Louisiana, is part of the Lafayette metropolitan statistical area. The parish sustained major damage when Hurricane Rita made landfall near the Louisiana/Texas border Sept. 24, 2005. Many homes and buildings were leveled to the ground. Less than a month earlier, Hurricane Katrina slammed the eastern portion of the state, resulting in damage in Cameron Parish to a lesser extent. Ten years later, the parish has rebuilt even stronger than before with elevated, reinforced structures.

In the 10 years since Katrina and Rita struck the Louisiana coast, **\$121.9 million in federal funding** has been approved to help **Vermilion Parish survivors, local governments and private nonprofits recover and rebuild**. This includes assistance for the parish and its cities to repair and rebuild disaster-damaged infrastructure, assistance to individuals for housing and other needs, and projects designed to mitigate damage from future natural disasters. Projects include roads, bridges, schools, police and fire departments and healthcare facilities.



“The success of Louisiana’s recovery so far has been all about solidifying and strengthening partnerships. It’s about coming together, finding common ground and focusing on rebuilding communities that are stronger and more sustainable for the future.”

Mike Womack
Director
Louisiana Recovery Office

Individual Assistance

Nearly \$42.4 million was approved for more than 9,300 Vermilion Parish individuals and households. That includes nearly \$29.2 million for home repair and replacement costs and rental assistance. The remaining \$13.2 million helped survivors with other needs including repair or replacement of personal property, dental, medical and funeral costs, transportation and other disaster-related expenses.

Public Assistance

More than \$48.3 million in FEMA Public Assistance grants has been obligated for recovery projects in Vermilion Parish. This includes nearly \$30 million for educational facilities, more than \$3.4 million for utilities, more than \$1.3 million for public infrastructure, and more than \$999,000 for fire, police, health care and other services. Another \$12.6 million was obligated for debris removal and emergency measures taken to protect lives and property.

Hazard Mitigation

FEMA’s Hazard Mitigation Grant Program has pledged \$1.86 billion statewide to fund projects designed to help make Louisiana communities stronger and safer. To date, nearly \$1.4 billion of the total has been provided to the state-administered program. In Vermilion Parish, 12 mitigation projects have been approved for more than \$31.2 million in total funding from hurricanes Katrina and Rita. The top projects to receive grants in Vermilion Parish include home and building elevations, modifications to existing structures to strengthen them against high winds and future damage and drainage improvements to protect communities from floodwaters.



Recovery figures as of 5/1/2015
Mitigation figures as of 6/15/2015

Vermilion Parish Project Highlights



LeBlanc Elementary School — \$14.8 million

LeBlanc Elementary School is the result of an alternate project request by the Vermilion Parish School Board to build a new school using the combined funding from donor project worksheets written for Hurricane Rita-damaged facilities at the Henry Elementary School campus, replacement costs of the Erath High School stadium building and replacement of contents from five schools. The new 101,074 square-foot school is composed of six one-story buildings located on 32 acres of land. The school, which is located in Abbeville, has the capacity to accommodate 875 students in pre-K through fifth grade. FEMA obligated more than \$14.8 million in Public Assistance grant funding for this project. The school opened for students in August 2010.



Dozier Elementary School Floodwall— \$3.9 million

Hurricane Rita's storm surge from the Gulf of Mexico and Vermilion Bay caused floodwater to enter Dozier Elementary School's buildings where it remained for three days, severely damaging the buildings and contents. As a result of the facilities being declared substantially damaged by the town of Erath's floodplain manager, FEMA funded, as the most cost-effective measure, a concrete floodwall with gates and a pumping system to flood proof all buildings on the campus to meet floodplain ordinance requirements. FEMA obligated more than \$3.9 million in Public Assistance grant funding for the project.



Prairie Gregg Canal — \$1.6 million

Hurricane Rita deposited grass and soil into the canals restricting the flow and creating blockages which was determined to be an immediate threat to improved properties in the towns of Erath, Henry and Boston. FEMA provided more than \$1.6 million in Public Assistance grant funding for the emergency removal of the grass and soil, monitoring of the debris operations and proper disposal. Debris removal work in the canal was complete as of January 2010.

FEMA's mission is to support our citizens and first responders to ensure that as a nation we work together to build, sustain and improve our capability to prepare for, protect against, respond to, recover from and mitigate all hazards.

For more information, visit <https://beta.fema.gov/Katrina10>. News Desk: 225-907-7534