

R2 –WEEKLY BULLETIN

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FIRE GRANTS FUND FIGHT AGAINST HIGH RISE FIRES



High-rise fires are among the most technically complex and deadly operations for firefighters. The presence of even a minimal wind can produce flash fireballs that reach across rooms and down hallways without warning.

In New York City, at least 11 people, including five firefighters, have died as a result of these fires since 1980, and dozens of others have been badly injured.

With a \$1 million Fire Prevention and Safety Grant, the FDNY has been researching new tactics to fight high rise blazes, including the use of fans for stairwell pressurization, thermal window blankets and high-rise nozzles.

They recently demonstrated these new procedures to more than 300 firefighters from Hong Kong, the Netherlands, Great Britain and numerous US cities. Word of the new tactics is spreading like wildfire.

DID YOU KNOW...?

FEMA turns 30 this year....although the federal government's commitment to help disaster victims goes back to the earliest days of the Republic.

In 1803 Congress provided federal funds to Portsmouth, NH, following a series of devastating fires. From 1803 to 1930, Congress responded to disasters on a case-by-case basis, passing 100 disaster relief bills in that time.

In 1978 the National Governors' Association asked President Carter to create an agency dedicated to disaster response and relief. His executive order activated the agency the next year. Since 1979, FEMA has responded to more than 1,800 Presidential disaster declarations.

There are 100 "original" FEMA employees still active in the agency, including seven within Region II: Michael Dabney, Arnold Davis, Marianne Jackson, Bruce Nuss, Sam Rizzo and Paul Weberg.

PREPARED? CHECK ✓



Michael Moriarty, Acting Regional Administrator

We should now all be in full preparedness mode. Hurricane season starts in about eight weeks, and although we pray that there will be no disasters this season, we know there will be storms that elevate the risk in our Area of Responsibility. Are we as well prepared as possible, both personally and organizationally? Have you had a conversation with your family to align expectations, as it is likely you will be deployed this season? Preparedness is not just a division within the Region, but it is also a state of mind that is integral to all we do across divisions, in our specific work areas and in our personal lives.

Here are some Regional developments to help you prepare that may further your preparations in these areas:

- Region II is on standby as the backup to Region V to provide an turn-key operation in support of flood response and recovery in MN and the Dakotas.

- This week the CAD conducted a COOP TTX in San Juan. Over 100 federal agencies participated. (Kudos to Marie Gonzalez, Orlando Olivera, Ed Capps, Russell Fox and all who helped.)

- COOP exercise for NYC and NJ will commence at the end of April.

- We have embarked on a series of logistics planning meetings with our State and county partners in the NYC metropolitan area to align planning expectations for post-hurricane food and water distribution. Your RII team is re-energizing previously stalled efforts and pushing the needle on this critical issue so we are more prepared for this hurricane season.

DR-1650 CLOSED-OUT; DAEs FETED BY COUNTY

Here's a story not often told. Last week, Broome County held a 'Thank You' and farewell reception for the two remaining FEMA employees working DR-1650, the 2006 flooding disaster that hit upstate New York.

In addition to light refreshments, Bruce Nuss and Doris Littlejohn received County Citations of thanks from Broome County Executive Barbara Fiala. "Though your work you became part of our community by assisting those in their greatest time of need," Fiala said.

As a result of the 2006 flood, 4,840 Broome County residents applied for FEMA assistance, with 3,332 deemed eligible for FEMA grants. The IA-only disaster ultimately paid out \$13.3 million in grants, with the bulk of that, \$9.9 million, going to Housing Assistance.

In the wake of the disaster, more than 270 families were left homeless, living in FEMA trailers. Now they are all back in their homes. As Bruce and Doris closed out operations last week, they both cited this as the proudest achievement of their recovery operations, and both noted that this was a team effort. "Without the extraordinary support from all the County agencies, local voluntary agencies and our State partners, this would not have succeed," Bruce said. "These are the folks that should be congratulated; FEMA's role is to find and match resources to the needs in these long-term recovery missions."

The formal thanks were accompanied by extensive local media coverage, including a spot on Central NY's News 10 NOW.

http://news10now.com/content/top_stories/136427/last-day-for-fema-workers/Default.aspx

COOP PLAN UPDATED; STAFF TO BE ASSIGNED

The Region II Continuity of Operations Program (COOP) plan has been revised and will soon be distributed. Continuity of Operations is much more than just going to another work site. There is a Risk Analysis requirement, a pandemic preparedness component, and family support guidance and much more. In the next few weeks, we will be staffing up our Emergency Relocation Group. Members will be drawn from each division, and begin training and exercising the plan. This is everyone's plan, and we will need everyone's support and involvement.

The COOP plan and the Emergency Relocations Group's ground work are significant steps forward in our preparedness as a Region

FACES OF THE REGION



Larry O'Reilly, Deputy Federal Preparedness Coordinator

Larry O'Reilly is Region II's new Deputy Federal Preparedness Coordinator within the National Preparedness Division. Prior to joining FEMA, Larry worked for the New Jersey Department of Law and Public Safety.

He began his state service as a budget analyst, and after completing law school at night, served as a Deputy Attorney General. In 1994, he was appointed Assistant Attorney General for Environmental Enforcement, responsible for the coordination and prosecution of priority environmental cases among state and county environmental enforcement agencies.

After the Sept. 11 attacks, New Jersey enacted legislation creating the New Jersey Domestic Preparedness Task Force, a cabinet-level, interagency body chaired by the Attorney General, and charged with the coordination of all state activities related to terrorism preparedness, prevention, mitigation and recovery. For the next five years, Larry created and supervised the organizational structure that integrated and coordinated the needs and priorities of the diverse agencies involved in strengthening the state's preparedness capabilities with its local and county partners. These efforts involved extensive collaboration and consensus building, and included the creation of a private sector partnership to identify and strengthen the preparedness of critical infrastructure throughout the state.

Larry attended Hofstra University as an undergrad, and has an MA in political science from Rutgers University. His law degree is from Seton Hall Law School.

Larry retired from coaching when his two sons went off to college, but he and his wife remain active in the community affairs of their New Jersey hometown.

