

REGION 2 BI-WEEKLY

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12 NJ COUNTIES GET IA DECLARATION; *PDA's For IA Wrap Up In Suffolk County*

Late afternoon on Good Friday, 12 New Jersey counties got a Presidential declaration for Individual Assistance, prompted by the storms and flooding that battered the state beginning March 12.

Since New Jersey already has three open PA disasters, the Fort Monmouth Joint Field Office, under the leadership of Federal Coordinating Officer Bill Vogel, was able to quickly pivot to confront their latest challenge.

Region II's IMAT team used the IA declaration as a real life training exercise, sending Logistics lead John Alonso to support the search for — and outfitting of — a new, larger JFO, with the mandate that the JFO's existing operations should not be disturbed, only enhanced.

Region II's Community Relations team, led by Linda Colon hit the ground running Tuesday, touring neighborhoods and businesses affected by the storms, and distributing information on the disaster assistance process and procedures.

By close-of-business Friday, the IMAT team had nearly completed set-up for the new JFO in Somerset, and had opened three Disaster Recovery Centers at key locations throughout the state.

Also on Friday, FCO Vogel briefed Rep. Bill Pascrell (D-NJ-8), on the JFO's outreach operations, as well as the full menu of disaster assistance programming that the presidential declaration activates.

Vogel was joined by State Coordinating Officer Bill McDonnell, who is a lieutenant in the NJ State Police. Assistant Regional Administrator Mike Moriarty was also on hand to provided the Congressman with an overview of Regional operations.

Meanwhile the CR teams were working the streets of Little Falls and Patterson, which has a substantial Arabic speaking population. CR fielded a Arabic speaking team, and early registration numbers highlight their success.

PDA's in New York

Two Preliminary Damage Assessment teams for Individual Assistance scoured Nassau County last week, tabulating damages suffered by residents in two distinct events: the Nor'easter' of March 13-15 and the record rain storm of March 29.

PDA's for Public Assistance for the Nor'easter' were completed last month, and the request for a disaster declaration by NY Gov. David Patterson is being reviewed.

With that request pending, DR-1869-NY, closed it's doors Friday, transitioning its work back to the Region. The staff is on informal standby, with nearly all personnel currently on rotation. A new declaration will send the team back to their Latham, NY/Albany JFO.

Downed trees and a severely damaged house in Montclair, NJ, left, was typical of the damage suffered in 12 New Jersey counties hit by the severe storms and floods that ravaged through the state beginning Mach 12th.



CAR (54), WHERE ARE YOU?

Region II's GSA Malibu has been relocated to the GSA Center Street Garage on Lafayette St., two blocks north of Canal St.

The car is on the third floor, spot #13.

Your GSA Smartcard is used to enter the facility. There are ID readers next to both pedestrian entrances. Place your ID under the readers to unlock the doors.

You also need your ID to open the garage door to exit the facility. The garage door automatically closes once you exit.

When you return the car, you likewise need your ID card to enter through the garage door. Please be sure you return the car to its #13 spot on the 3rd floor. If the spot is taken, select another spot on the 3rd floor and notify either Newton Tang or John Alonso that you have returned the vehicle.

CUBICLE WITH A VIEW



For those of us in Region II who didn't move to 290 Broadway, Grants Management Specialist Jerry Gelbard submitted a photo of the view from his cubicle, with a note, "eat your heart out."

FACES OF THE REGION



Joseph Asbery is Region II's new Senior Watch Officer.

He comes to us from the US Army, having enlisted in 1990 as a private. Over the course of the next 20 years, Joseph served in the Middle East, Europe, Asia and various locations in the continental United States.

In addition to serving as a peacekeeper in Bosnia, Joseph did two tours in the Middle East (Qatar, Iraq.) In December 2003, he was assigned to the Forward Headquarters Central Command in Qatar, where he worked on a Watch Operations team. On night, an unusual Sit. Rep. crossed his screen: "One HVT (high value target) captured in the vicinity of Tikrit. No Injuries. No casualties." Nobody could figure out why there was notification for a sole capture, Joseph says.

A few moments later, all the connectivity was cut. Military decision makers wanted to contain the news that "he" (Saddam Hussein) had been captured, Joseph explained. "When we learned that we got him, the Situation Report, the communications black-out, it all began to make sense."

At Fort Jackson, Joseph was put in Charge of the Emergency Operations Center, where he supervised a 24-hour Watch Operation. He eventually deployed for a second tour in Iraq, but this time as a Logistics/Civil Affairs officer in 2006 thru 2008.

Joseph retired from the Army with the rank of Major in last month. Three days later he was interviewed by FEMA, which recruited him for his proven leadership skills and Watch expertise. He was hired three days later.