



# MEMO



N O R T H C A R O L I N A D I V I S I O N O F  
E M E R G E N C Y M A N A G E M E N T

## Shelters Can Now Accommodate People with Special Needs

For the first time, evacuees with special medical needs can be housed in public shelters thanks to the North Carolina Division of Emergency Management mass care support program.

Seventeen specially equipped trailers are now positioned around the state to quickly establish shelters to support the medically fragile community. Each trailer has heavy duty wheel chairs, walkers, ramps, oversized cots, raised toilet seats, portable grip rails and shower seats.



*Seventeen Mass Care Support Trailers are positioned around the state to quickly establish shelters at designated community colleges for the medically fragile during disasters.*

**INSIDE THIS ISSUE:**

Toe River Regional Hazardous Mitigation Plan	Pg 2
Adopt-a-POD	Pg 2
NCEM Responds to Alaska EMAC	Pg 3
New EOC Construction Update	Pg 4
NCEM Fall Conference	Pg 4
NCEMA Conference	Pg 5
Floyd Anniversary	Pg 5

“During any evacuation, we know there will likely be people who evacuate that are disabled,” said state Emergency Management Director Doug Hoell. “These mass care support trailers will be a tremendous asset for those special needs shelters.”

During disasters, most evacuees are directed to shelters set up in designated public schools. However, the medically fragile citizens will be directed to various community colleges where shelters will be established to accommodate those with special needs. County emergency management agencies know in advance who and where those people are because they recently have worked with nursing homes, assisted living and other similar facilities to build a database of people that may need special accommodations during emergencies.

The trailers are positioned in the following counties; Alleghany, Brunswick, Cherokee, Cumberland, Davie, Durham, Hertford, Lee, Lenoir, Lincoln, McDowell, Pasquotank, Robeson, Stanly, Scotland, Wilson and Yadkin. A \$220,000 U.S. Department of Homeland Security grant paid for the trailers which were purchased by the state and given to the counties.

The mass care support program started from a discussion by state emergency management officials following a presidential directive to address public health and medical preparedness. NCEM worked with the N.C. Division of Aging and Adult Services and the Disable Emergency Management Task Force to develop the program.

# FEMA Funds Regional Hazard Mitigation Plan for Western NC

By Nicholas Burk, NCEM Hazard Mitigation

North Carolina Emergency Management is working with several western counties to encourage communities to look at regional planning as a way to better respond to disasters.

FEMA provided a \$52,000 grant to help develop the *Toe River Regional Hazard Mitigation Plan*. The plan, which includes Mitchell, Avery, McDowell and Yancey counties and their municipalities, will be the first of its kind in North Carolina.

“This will be the first effort to consolidate several county plans into a regional plan to develop a more comprehensive way to prepare for, respond to and prevent hazards. We are pleased to work with the Toe River communities on this important endeavor,” said NCEM Hazard Mitigation Section Chief Chris Crew. “Not only will each jurisdiction benefit from a detailed analysis of its risk and vulnerability, but this effort begins the very important process of consolidating 183 local hazard mitigation plans across the state that are currently being updated.”

The *Toe River Regional Hazard Mitigation Plan* will describe unique hazards, vulnerabilities, as well as hazard mitigation goals and actions pertaining to each county and municipality. Mitchell County will serve as the project lead.

The NCEM Hazard Mitigation Section is also collaborating with local governments to develop a regional hazard mitigation plan in eastern North Carolina that encompasses Washington, Tyrell and Martin counties and their municipalities.

“We highly encourage all counties and local jurisdictions to consider partnering on a regional basis,” concludes Crew. “This is an efficient way for us to meet FEMA’s mitigation planning requirements and allows us to deepen our understanding of the many risks to life and property that we all face as emergency managers.”

For more information, contact Chris Crew, 919-715-8000 x277.

## Adopt-a-POD Involves Community Following Disaster

The N.C. Emergency Management division is working with local groups to develop an *Adopt-a-POD* program. The idea is to recruit volunteers to staff points of distribution (POD) sites in their community to distribute life-sustaining emergency commodities to the public following a disaster or emergency. These commodities often include food, water, blankets, ice, tarps or other such supplies that are needed immediately following a disaster.

There are three types of PODs depending on the number of people that need to be served. One distributes commodities for 20,000 people per day. The second level provides commodities for 10,000 people per day and the third can provide commodities to 5,000 people per day. The distribution system is set up according to the quantity of supplies that need to be distributed.

The point of distribution site will be used until the community infrastructure and local commerce is back in operation. A community-based, volunteer or faith-based organization or private business can be support staff for a POD site by establishing a working agreement and meeting criteria outlined by the local emergency management director. The number and location of POD sites would be determined by the local emergency management director based on population density, public need and site capabilities.

The overall goal behind the adopt-a-POD concept is to encourage local citizens to get involved in their community through disaster recovery operations.

For more information about PODs or the Adopt-a-POD program, contact Alan Roberts at 919-715-9268 or [aroberts@ncem.org](mailto:aroberts@ncem.org).

# North Carolina Aids Alaska Following Meltdown

Article contributed by David Vaughn, NCEM Public Assistance

Unseasonably warm temperatures last spring caused a meltdown of ice and snow in the mountains of Canada and the Alaskan Interior along the Yukon River. The meltdown caused ice and snow to crash down onto the Yukon River which was covered in five feet of ice already. This action triggered a reaction of ice and snow jamming and crushing into each other.

“Ice jams would build up, crush together then rise with the river and current ice until the jams would break through and crash into the river banks,” says Jake Mthenjane, NCEM Public Assistance supervisor.

The build up of ice and rising water would repeat this pattern along the river as it moved westward, crushing Native Indian villages along the way.

The Alaska Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management called on N.C. Emergency Management through the Emergency Management Assistance Compact to provide public recovery support. On July 5<sup>th</sup> Public Assistance supervisors Jack Mthenjane and Andrew Innis, along with PA Grants Manager David Vaughn, flew to Anchorage for a 21-day mission as Alaska public assistance coordinators. The North Carolina team members conducted applicant briefings, attended FEMA kick-off meetings and toured the damaged sites to begin developing project worksheets. The worksheets document and record everything that has been damaged and estimate how much it will cost to repair the facilities back to their pre-disaster condition. The documents even include details about how the sub-grantee is going to repair the facility.

Upon arrival at the FEMA joint field office at the Anchorage International Airport, the team participated in Native American sensitivity and cultural training, as most residents affected included Native American Villages along Alaska’s rivers.

After a couple of days training, each member was assigned to different parts of Alaska to conduct recovery work. Andrew was deployed to Bethel on the southwestern side of the state and traveled to various villages along the Kisaralik and Kuskokwim Rivers preparing project worksheets.

Jack was deployed to Fairbanks as a public assistance coordinator and contact for the team. While in Fairbanks, Jack conducted site inspections for Stevens Village, Circle and Tanana. Jack provided quality assurance reviews, signed off on Alaskan project worksheets and prepared three project worksheets for Circle Village which, by itself, had \$125,000 in damage.



*Before: Taken the preceding fall and facing up river, toward Canada; the quaint setting of the Village of Eagle, prior to the ice jamming and flooding (note the large ferry boat at waters edge).*



*After: Looking down-stream at Village of Eagle. Note: steel piling (black) wall on river bank; the height of the ice topping the wall exceeds the height of a two-story white home, visible on the left.*

Continued on pg 4

## Alaska Continued

David was deployed to the Fairbanks office and then flew on to the remote Eagle Village where he was stationed for two weeks. David served as a public assistance coordinator and wrote two project worksheets totaling nearly \$2 million for debris removal and emergency measures projects, such as law enforcement or other measures needed to protect life, health and overall safety.

David also was involved in the extensive review of restoring the destroyed Eagle Village Water Well and Pump House and the relocation of the Historic Eagle Museum. This is the second time David has helped with an Alaska disaster; he worked for two weeks in Wasilla in 2006.



*Pictured (from left): Andrew Innis, Jack Mthenjane and David Vaughan receive certificate of appreciation from the state of Alaska and FEMA for their work as public assistance coordinators last spring.*

## Construction Update on the NEW EOC

Construction of the new offices for N.C. Emergency Management and other state agencies is well underway. In September, construction crews began excavating the ground and brought in equipment and supplies to start building the foundation

Officials broke ground in May for the facility which will serve as the new headquarters for the N.C. National Guard and house the State Highway Patrol's communication center, the N.C. Turnpike Authority and the N.C. Department of Transportation's traffic congestion management center.

The new state-of-the-art facility will provide key state agencies a place to work together and coordinate joint response activities when disaster strikes. The 237,000 square foot facility should be completed in mid 2011. The \$56 million dollar project could create up to 4,200 jobs. The building will be located behind the current N.C. National Guard office across the highway from the RBC center in Raleigh.



*National Guard Joint Force Headquarters and state Emergency Operations Center construction site as viewed from south side looking north.*

## North Carolina Emergency Management Association Holds Fall Conference

The North Carolina Emergency Management Association (NCEMA) will hold its Fall Conference Oct. 18-21 in Hickory. The bi-annual conference provides a way for emergency management personnel to meet together to learn about and discuss the latest emergency management topics.

More than 30 sessions are planned covering a variety of topics including: federal emergency management initiatives; FEMA's policy direction; RENCI technology update; evacuation planning; lessons learned from recent disasters; and the impact of social media on public safety.

The conference also will include meetings to handle routine association duties. For more information or the register, visit the NCEMA website at [https://ncema.renci.org/\\_layouts/Renci/NCEMAConference/Default.aspx](https://ncema.renci.org/_layouts/Renci/NCEMAConference/Default.aspx)

## NEMA 2009 Fall Conference

The National Emergency Management Association Conference will be held in Columbus, Ohio Oct. 9 – 13. The conference provides a forum for staff from all 50 states, eight territories and the District of Columbia to discuss national and regional emergency management strategies. The conference also provides an opportunity to form strategic partnerships to create innovative programs and collaborate on policy positions.

This year's conference agenda includes information on disaster declarations, lessons learned from recent disasters, social networks, climate change, pandemic influenza, model practices for states housing task forces and others, as well as various break out sessions to handle routine association duties. For more information, visit the NEMA website at [www.nemaweb.org](http://www.nemaweb.org).

## North Carolina Marks the Tenth Anniversary of Hurricane Floyd

Two communities in eastern North Carolina marked the tenth anniversary of Hurricane Floyd with special events.

The City Rocky of Mount hosted a one-day symposium *Hurricane Floyd Then & Now* at the Imperial Centre for the Arts and Sciences. Originally a tobacco processing facility built in 1903, the building was destroyed by flood waters during Floyd.

The Rocky Mount event featured speakers from the National Weather Service, Rocky Mount Fire Department, Federal Emergency Management Agency and U.S. Geological Survey. State Emergency Management Director Doug Hoell spoke about the state's planning and response capabilities and what has changed in the ten years since Floyd. John Dorman, NCEM Geospatial and Technology Management director, talked about North Carolina's floodplain mapping resources and future plans. Outside, many emergency response agencies such as local urban search and rescue teams, state medical response teams, N.C. National Guard, and others had equipment on display so people could get a hands-on feel of North Carolina's capabilities.

East Carolina University's Center for Natural Hazards Research hosted a two-day symposium in Greenville to review progress made over the last decade in emergency preparedness and emerging technology and current research projects. Speakers included former Governor Jim Hunt, former Crime Control and Public Safety Secretary Richard Moore and NOAA Assistant Administrator Laura Furgione.



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***"In the Business of Saving Lives and Protecting Property"***

*The North Carolina Division of Emergency Management was formed in 1977 to coordinate the preparedness, response, recovery and mitigation activities of all agencies for emergency management within North Carolina. It performs this mission by planning, organizing, staffing, equipping, training, testing and activating emergency management programs during times of need.*