

# CEMASignal



## Mobile Emergency Operations Center Rocks at Marathon



### MEOC Supports Race

The 2013 Rock and Roll Marathon was held in Savannah on the 9th of November. More than 18,000 runners hit the streets and gave it their all to get to the finish line in hopes of completing either the 13.1 or the 26.2 mile route. Visiting Savannah for this event were runners, family members, supporters, and spectators. Having tens of thousands of visitors in Chatham County for an event can create some logistical and planning concerns from an emergency management perspective.

The MEOC, or Mobile Emergency Operations Center, was strategically placed along the route to give personnel from various agencies a place they could utilize to plan, coordinate, and dispatch for their organizations. Working in the MEOC this year were representatives from Southside Fire/EMS/Security, Chatham County Public Health

Department, Amateur Radio Emergency Services, Savannah Hospitals, Savannah Fire Department, Savannah Chatham Metropolitan Police, Georgia Bureau of Investigation, and CEMA.

WebEOC is an incident management software system and was utilized throughout the event. Through WebEOC, command and control posts around the county entered data and communicated electronically to make resource requests, identify road closures, and bring attention to areas in need of assistance. Lessons learned are also entered into the program in after-action comments to make recommendations towards improvements that can be made for future events.

Benefits of utilizing the MEOC include the ability of key planning and command personnel to have access to the tools they need to gain situational

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#### INSIDE THIS ISSUE

The CEMA Search and Rescue Team adds resources to the roster. See how four-legged volunteers are assisting on searches and how aviation support is bridging the gap between distance and time.

#### TWITTER ALERTS

New Twitter Alerts are helping users sift through emergency and non-emergency tweets. Local organizations and agencies can sign up to send the alerts; find out what agencies qualify and how to sign up.

#### DISASTER POLICIES

Chatham County employees will be required to work before, during, and after a disaster. New policies are in place that guide when employees are needed to work and how they will be compensated for their hours.

# A Message from the Director

I am pleased to say that we made it through another hurricane season untouched. While that's wonderful



news for the County, I'm afraid it may lead some of our residents to become even more

complacent. I hope that despite the quiet season for Chatham County, citizens still remember that next year we may not be so lucky. In the New Year, CEMA will continue to educate residents on preparedness and focus our planning and outreach on targeting each community in Chatham County.

One of the major outreach efforts we will address in 2014 is sharing the results from the recently updated Georgia Hurricane Evacuation Study (GAHES). The GAHES is a joint effort funded by FEMA and the US Army Corps of Engineers in partnership with NOAA, GEMA and coastal county emergency management agencies. The study revealed the

updated hurricane evacuation clearance times for Chatham County; this means planning efforts will be affected and evacuation times will increase. The study also revealed why some residents choose to evacuate during a storm and others don't. With these results we will work to ensure our focus is on the reasons why people choose not to leave, and determine what we can do to hopefully change their minds.

Keeping on the subject of preparing and warning residents, this year CEMA was able to do a massive upgrade to the County's Outdoor Emergency Warning Siren system. We use the sirens to warn residents outdoors of impending dangerous weather. Before the upgrade, if there was a tornado warning for only part of the county, we had to sound every siren in the county. That meant all 60 sirens would sound even if it was only Tybee Island that was under a tornado warning. Now with the upgrade, we have the capability of automatically sounding only the sirens in the areas that the National Weather Service place under a tornado warning.

It's hard to believe that the holidays are upon us. I want to encourage

everyone that as you shop for gifts keep in mind that preparedness items make great ones. A new flashlight, a first aid kit, a weather radio, a CPR class, or a fire proof box will benefit your family and friends for years to come. It's easy to lose sight of planning and preparedness when we are surrounded by everything that comes with the holidays. Pledge this New Year to be more prepared and to help those around you to be more prepared as well.

We look forward to an exciting 2014. With the recently approved SPLOST funds, plans for a new Emergency Operations Center will continue to move forward.

Planning for the 2014 Chatham County Hurricane Conference is already underway and the County's Search and Rescue and Damage Assessment Teams will continue to grow. The working partnerships that we have with each of you allow us to maintain a strong and successful emergency management program here in Chatham County and we look forward to that momentum in 2014!

See you next year.

**Clayton Scott**  
Director

## How May I Help You?

How important is it to receive accurate information? In terms of emergency management it is vital especially during times of disasters; not only during crisis situations, but any time emergency information is publicized.

One of the most important answering point tasks includes disseminating information to the public. Answering the telephone with "How may I help you?" may bring about a myriad response. Depending on the individual caller, the answers may vary widely: how a person regards emergency preparedness, the community they live in, their level of home preparedness, the adequacy of their supplies following a disaster, and the safety of their family members.

The information they are given involves understanding their questions, especially during critical times. There are numerous sources of information that involve the local emergency

management organization (CEMA), the State office (GEMA), the Federal office (FEMA) and other important agencies that provide emergency services. However, every citizen must receive accurate information from their emergency management office or other governmental agency in order to prepare themselves should a disaster occur.

As government employees, we must provide information to the public as rapidly and efficiently as possible. It is not only important to help disseminate information accurately; but also, to provide information that is appropriate to the situation, especially when it involves personal preparedness and protection. Information is the backbone of any emergency operation; disseminating it accurately is essential to the success of response and recovery of both individuals and our communities.

**Preparedness**

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# Planning is Key to Successful Emergency Management Program

Planning is an integral part of Chatham County's emergency management strategy. Without proper planning and the exercising of those plans, emergency management is ineffective. CEMA understands this and is constantly working on updating the plans that will be used during an emergency or disaster. We use each activation of the Emergency Operations Center and every event that occurs as an opportunity to test our plans so that we will know what works effectively and what needs to be adjusted. This year we updated 169 documents within our plans, and we still have a few left on the calendar to update before 2014. The following plans were either new documents or complete re-writes of existing documents:

- ESF Annex 02 – Appendix 2-2 Emergency Services Alerts
- ESF Annex 02 – Appendix 2-1 Interoperable Communications
- ESF Annex 03 – Appendix 3-3, Tab D Damage Assessment Strategy Team Training
- ESF Annex 07 – Appendix 7-3 CCOAD Coordination
- ESF Annex 08 – Appendix 8-1 Functional and Medical Needs Evacuation
- ESF Annex 08 – Appendix 8-2 Disaster Health and Medical Services
- ESF Annex 08 – Appendix 8-3 Family Assistance Center
- ESF Annex 11 – Appendix 11-2 Food and Water Coordination
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- Support Annex A – Appendix 10 & 11 Disaster Finance Training and Handouts
- Incident Annex J – Mass Fatality Incident Management Planning

## ESF 05a: Planning

## MEOC

*Continued from front page*

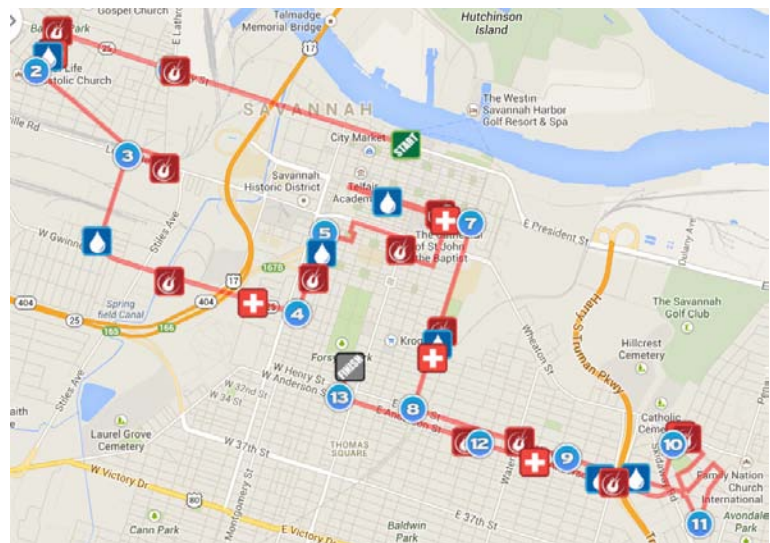
awareness, monitor situations, and place units in positions to be of assistance to the community. An unseen benefit is the interagency relationships that are built between the personnel that work together to support events such as the Rock and Roll Marathon.

"Utilizing the MEOC for this event, strategically placed on the parade route, helped interagency coordinated communications and reduced response time of emergency personnel to those in need. Every opportunity to deploy the MEOC gives us more ideas and lessons learned that will result in a more effective incident command vehicle when called upon in an unplanned emergency," said CEMA Emergency Management Specialist Anson Calmes. Calmes was stationed in the MEOC during the race.

The 2014 Savannah Rock and Roll Half Marathon/Marathon is set for November 8.

## ESF 05b: EOC Coordination

Annex C	Insurance Assistance Center Coordination (To Be D
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<b>EMERGENCY OPERATIONS PLAN</b>	
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	Tab B Rails and Te
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ESF-2 Annex	Communications and Warning
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	Tab B Siren Repair
	Tab C Joyner Contr
	Tab D Siren Parts I



**2013 Rock and Roll Race Routes**



# Region J Checks Evacuation Procedures

*How could it be a hurricane if the rains didn't fall, the tide didn't surge, and the wind didn't blow?*

Well, it was a tabletop hurricane that existed only on paper, but it was still a key part of helping coastal Georgia weather actual hurricanes in the region's future.

More than 220 participants representing healthcare facilities from throughout the region – acute care hospitals, nursing homes, Hospices, behavioral health facilities, the American Red Cross, community health centers, emergency medical service providers and so on – gathered October 30 for a “Hurricane Tabletop Exercise” designed to find health-related problems in evacuation and coping with procedures well ahead of the arrival of a real hurricane. The representatives of what is known as the Region J Coastal Healthcare Coalition spent several hours at the Savannah International Trade and Convention Center in search of potential hot-button issues that could plague future hurricane evacuations.

“We focused on an open, low-stress atmosphere that encouraged participation and various viewpoints, even disagreements,” said Jimmy Gordon, Region J Hospital Coordinator and Safety Officer for Memorial University Medical Center (MUMC).

Joining Gordon in directing the event were Matthew Crumpton, Healthcare Community Preparedness Training and Exercise Manager, and Diane Weems, M.D., District Health Director.

By the end of the morning, the group had pinpointed several potential snags in the long-thought-out and often-practiced emergency preparedness process. They included:

- Regional communications, where Georgia Hospital Association 911 WebEOC is the primary communicator for all of the healthcare organizations within the region. The challenge is to train personnel and keep that training fresh.
- The availability of transportation for patient transfers and the tracking of patients/residents to other state facilities is a major concern. The Georgia Department of Public Health is developing state protocols to manage this issue.
- How does an agency hand off regional coordinating hospital (RCH) duties? MUMC serves as a RCH, but would be unable to function as such during an evacuation. The Georgia Hospital Association continues to work with all the state's RCHs in developing an emergency handoff protocol.

The Hurricane Tabletop Exercise gave participants from Region J a good dry run on the status of regional evacuation procedures. The organizations will have the opportunity to address identified potential problems in advance during a regional full-scale hurricane exercise set for March 19, 2014.

## Training and Exercise

Dr. Curt Harris (Ph.D) was the Exercise Director and Facilitator. He is from the University of Georgia, College of Public Health, Institute for Disaster Management. (Photo courtesy: Memorial University Medical Center)



# Evacuation Transportation Planning for Assisted Living Facilities

One of the premises of emergency planning is encouraging individuals to have evacuation plans for their families. However, for those living in Assisted Living Facilities quite often they must rely on caregivers, not family members, to ensure they get out of harm's way safely.

"This lack of available transportation resources becomes a serious issue if there are individuals in this vulnerable population who absolutely cannot evacuate on their own and rely on someone else to make the plans for them."

To be granted and maintain an operations license, the State of Georgia requires Assisted Living Facilities have an Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) outlining their procedures for evacuating in the event a mandatory evacuation of the area is ordered. Even with the best written EOP, when the entire coastal population is ordered to evacuate due to a pending hurricane threat, one of the key problems is there are most likely several Assisted Living Facilities relying on and competing for the same transportation resources. This lack of available transportation resources becomes a serious issue if there are individuals

in this vulnerable population who absolutely cannot evacuate on their own and rely on someone else to make the plans for them.

CEMA has worked with the State Emergency Planners for years to find a working solution to this problem. This year, the State contracted to have a plan developed allowing facilities to rely on the State to arrange transportation resources as a "plan B". This plan allows for facilities to sign a Mutual Aid Agreement with the Georgia Emergency Management Agency (GEMA) and CEMA. Under this new plan, the facilities will provide GEMA with their EOP, 24 hour contact information, participate in periodic exercises, and report numbers needed to evacuate. In return, the State will coordinate transportation for these facilities during a hurricane evacuation. CEMA will coordinate the local requirements, exercises, conference calls, and pre-emergency coordination.

When needed, the appropriate transportation resources will be requested by CEMA to GEMA and report to the facilities at the same time as the functional and medical needs evacuation. The facilities will be responsible for passenger loading and transportation and providing a transportation destination. They will also be responsible for reimbursing the State for costs incurred in requesting and supplying transportation.

Currently, 5 of Chatham County's Assisted Living Facilities have signed a mutual aid agreement and subscribed to this program.

## ESF 01: Transportation

## What's the E-Plan Status?

The 2012 filing year was the last year of E-Plan funding by the federal government. There have been questions as to how Tier II filing was going to be funded or whether E-Plan was going to be the method used. Many states are covering the funding to ensure that the filing methods are unchanged. Unfortunately, Georgia has not made that commitment.

The Georgia EPD recently issued the following statement:

*"The Georgia EPD has supported the use of E-Plan and our present position is that we will to continue to do so. The current funding issue has posed a significant challenge and if we can negotiate a resolution that will enable industries in Georgia to comply with the regulations, provide timely information to the emergency response and management community, and the requirements of participation do not exceed our regulatory authority, then Georgia EPD will support E-Plan."*

The Emergency Planning and Community Right-to-Know Act (EPCRA) of 1986 was created to help communities plan for emergencies involving hazardous substances. EPCRA requires hazardous chemical emergency planning by federal, state and local governments, Indian tribes, and industry. *It also requires industry to report on the storage, use and releases of hazardous chemicals to federal, state, and local governments.*

The current plan for Georgia is that E-Plan will be utilized by those that are required to file based upon the requirements of EPCRA. Filing will be the same as previous years with one change. There will be a \$25 fee required by those who file at <https://www.erplan.net>. Please address any questions or comments to [awcalmes@chathamcounty.org](mailto:awcalmes@chathamcounty.org).

## ESF 10: Hazardous Materials



# County Employee Disaster Policies

During emergency and disaster operations, Chatham County will face conditions requiring unique human resource services with appropriate compensation. Accordingly, every County employee will be classified into one of four categories (COOP Team, Critical Workforce - Pre-Assigned, Critical Workforce - Available for Assignment, and Special Circumstance Staff) for assignment during emergency operations. This policy sets procedures for work responsibilities during an impending or declared emergency and the subsequent recovery period.

The needs of Chatham County citizens must continue to be addressed during an impending or declared emergency or disaster response and recovery period. In order to accomplish this, County employees will complete an Emergency Work Assignment Package within 30 days of employment with Chatham County and update this package annually or anytime pertinent information changes.

The purpose of this policy is to implement uniform policies and procedures for the payment and tracking of wages during an impending or declared emergency or disaster response and recovery period. In an emergency, this policy is intended to ensure fair and equitable compensation for Chatham County employees.

During a declared emergency, conditions may be such that it is hazardous for some employees to report to work. In situations such as this, the County Manager / County Commission Chairman may grant up to a maximum of 40 hours paid administrative leave to prevent financial hardship to employees who are directed not to report to work.

The County Manager may authorize activation of this policy during a declared state of local emergency in Chatham County, or during a period of Mutual Aid (county-to-county aid within the state); or similar assignment outside Chatham County, where work is being performed in an area where a declared state of emergency exists.

## Disaster Finance

Employees are required to have a Family Emergency Plan. Chatham County recognizes the importance of advanced planning for the care, safety and human services needs for families and pets. Each employee is required to have a plan for their family and pets should an emergency or disaster impact Chatham County. CEMA is available to assist any employee with developing a family disaster plan.

## Employee Categories



### Category 1 - Department Continuity of Operations (COOP) Team:

Staff members in this category manage the Department's COOP. Responsibilities:

- Coordinates the evacuation of the department to an identified alternate facility
- Ensures the mission essential services identified remain operational and brought online ASAP
- Ensures reconstitution of the department

### Category 2 - Critical Workforce (CWF) Pre-Assigned:

Employees in this category are pre-assigned post disaster functions and most are required to shelter with CEMA. Examples of pre-assignments include:

- CWF Shelter Managers
- Damage Assessment Team Members
- Debris Management Team Members
- Render Safe Team Members
- Emergency Operations Center Staff, etc.

### Category 3 - Critical Workforce (CWF) Available for Assignment:

Employees are available for assignment by the County to meet pre- and post-disaster staffing needs. Examples of assignments include:

- Assisting with tracking labor and equipment hours
- Assisting with finding and tracking resources
- Assisting with document management, situational awareness and incident reporting
- Serving as a Point of Distribution (POD) Manager for commodity distribution to the general public
- Assisting with the Evacuation Assembly Area, etc.

### Category 4 - Special Circumstance Staff:

Some staff may have a special circumstance that is identified in advance of an evacuation or emergency event which require them to be excused from emergency or disaster response and recovery duties. These staff members are not required to report during disaster conditions until the area is rendered safe.





# Damage Assessment Teams Hit the Streets of Savannah for Training

As the sun was coming up on September 18, 2013 CEMA was gearing up for a county wide damage assessment exercise. The morning was cool, the coffee was hot and more than 50 participants laced up their boots ready to hit the streets of Savannah. "As part of my desire to help before, during and after an event, I was compelled to be part of the Chatham County Damage Assessment (DA) Team. Damage assessment is one of the first steps in disaster recovery and it is uplifting to see that I am able to help people who may have lost everything they own," said Colin Elgood. Elgood is a Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) volunteer who is also part of a local DA Team.

Damage assessment is one of the most important elements of the county's response to an emergency or disaster. It allows crews to determine what happened, what areas were hardest hit, where priority must be given and what type of assistance is needed. "This coordinated process of activation, assignment, deployment, and operation of DA teams within Chatham County will assist municipalities to quickly recover from an event or major disaster," said CEMA Emergency Management Specialist Dave Grottyhann.

The exercise included team members from the Cities of Savannah, Thunderbolt, Tybee Island and Chatham County, as well as CERT volunteers. CEMA used a scenario that was post hurricane in which exercise participants had to conduct assessments around the area to document the magnitude of the damage. The exercise was conducted in the Savannah Gardens area and CEMA placed poster board sized photos in front of various houses, which described the type of damage each house sustained. Mack McPherson is the Emergency Operations Center Manager for Fort Stewart and served as one of the Safety Officers for the exercise. "Something new is learned in every exercise, be it a safety concern, response or tactics. A key learning objective for this exercise was that DA teams need recurring training on operating hand-held radios and ensuring a communications check is made between all teams and the incident command post before they depart for their

missions," said McPherson. Some of the objectives of the exercise were to conduct DA using county and municipal teams to relay information back to the Chatham Emergency Operations Center; integrate DA teams from multiple municipalities and organizations and for groups from a variety of disciplines to work together effectively.

DA team members have completed three training classes and this is the second full scale exercise members have participated in. The first exercise was held on Tybee Island last December. There are approximately 60 DA team members in Chatham County who are part of the overall countywide damage assessment strategy. "The objective of this strategy is to enable the countywide municipalities and local damage assessment teams to understand, conduct and report damage assessments according to County, State and Federal guidelines," said Grottyhann. Support comes from the entire county as well as our surrounding counties. Along with McPherson from Fort Stewart, Liberty County Emergency Management Agency's Deputy Director, Larry Logan, was on hand to support the exercise. "Fort Stewart and Hunter Army Airfield support CEMA training events and exercises, and CEMA has done the same for our emergency management exercises; each providing command/staff officers, evaluators and observers respectively. We support each other when training opportunities are scheduled and always invite each other to send personnel to attend training which benefits us all. The mutual relationship between Liberty County and our local community emergency management partners is very well vested," added McPherson.

The exercise ran smoothly. While lessons were learned throughout the day, all team members worked together effectively and conducted the damage assessments in a timely and well organized manner. The DA teams will continue to train and practice their skills so when it's time to conduct real damage assessments, exercises like this will pay off.

## ESF 03: Damage Assessment



Left: Damage Assessment Team members gather for a briefing before the start of the exercise. Right: Team members read a sign in the front of a house. Signs were used to simulate damage. Team members evaluated the damage and completed the appropriate forms.



# Public Information Officers Conference To Be Held in Savannah

During the George Zimmerman trial, how did public information officers handle the overwhelming number of media outlets who planted temporary roots in small town Sanford, Florida? How did they work together to ensure that the public remained safe during the many tense moments of the trial?

Those questions will be answered plus more during the first ever 2013 CCPIOA Winter Conference hosted by the Chatham County Public Information Officers Association (CCPIOA). The half day event held in Savannah, Georgia is designed for public information officers/public affairs officers/communication managers and others who may be required to work with the media and public. You will learn how experienced information officers have handled high profile media events from the George Zimmerman trial to the Heidt Murder case in Effingham County, Georgia that led PIOs to expand beyond local borders. WTOC News Director Jan Smith will discuss ways PIOs can

effectively work with local media and how to build better relationships. The Georgia Forestry Commission will also discuss its emergency response capabilities, supporting a Joint Information Center and how public information officers play a crucial role in saving lives during wildfires.

The CCPIOA Winter Conference will provide valuable lessons learned and ways to strengthen your own PIO skills. Sometimes we learn more by hearing how others did it; what worked and what didn't. Not only will the day include exceptional presentations, it will also provide an opportunity to network with local and regional PIOs. Knowing who to call for support during an emergency situation, can help alleviate some of the stress of effectively and efficiently communicating with the media and public.

**ESF 15: External Affairs**

## DAY AT A GLANCE

### THE HEIDT CASE: GOING BEYOND LOCAL BORDERS

Det. David Ehsanipoor, Public Information Officer, Effingham County Sheriff's Office

### GEORGIA WILDLAND FIRE OPERATIONS AND PUBLIC INFORMATION OUTREACH

Eric Mosley, Wildfire Mitigation Program Manager, Georgia Forestry Commission

### MEDIA RELATIONS DURING THE STATE VS. GEORGE ZIMMERMAN TRIAL

Heather Smith, Director, Public Affairs Division, Seminole County Sheriff's Office

### WORKING WITH LOCAL MEDIA: HOW TO EFFECTIVELY BUILD RELATIONSHIPS

Jan Smith, News Director, WTOC News

### CONFERENCE COST

CCPIOA members current on dues - free

All others - \$10

Lunch is provided

[www.CCPIOA.org](http://www.CCPIOA.org) - 912-201-4500

DECEMBER 13, 2013

8 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.

William and Iffath Hoskins Center for Biomedical

Research on the Memorial University

Medical Center Campus

66th Street and Ranger Street

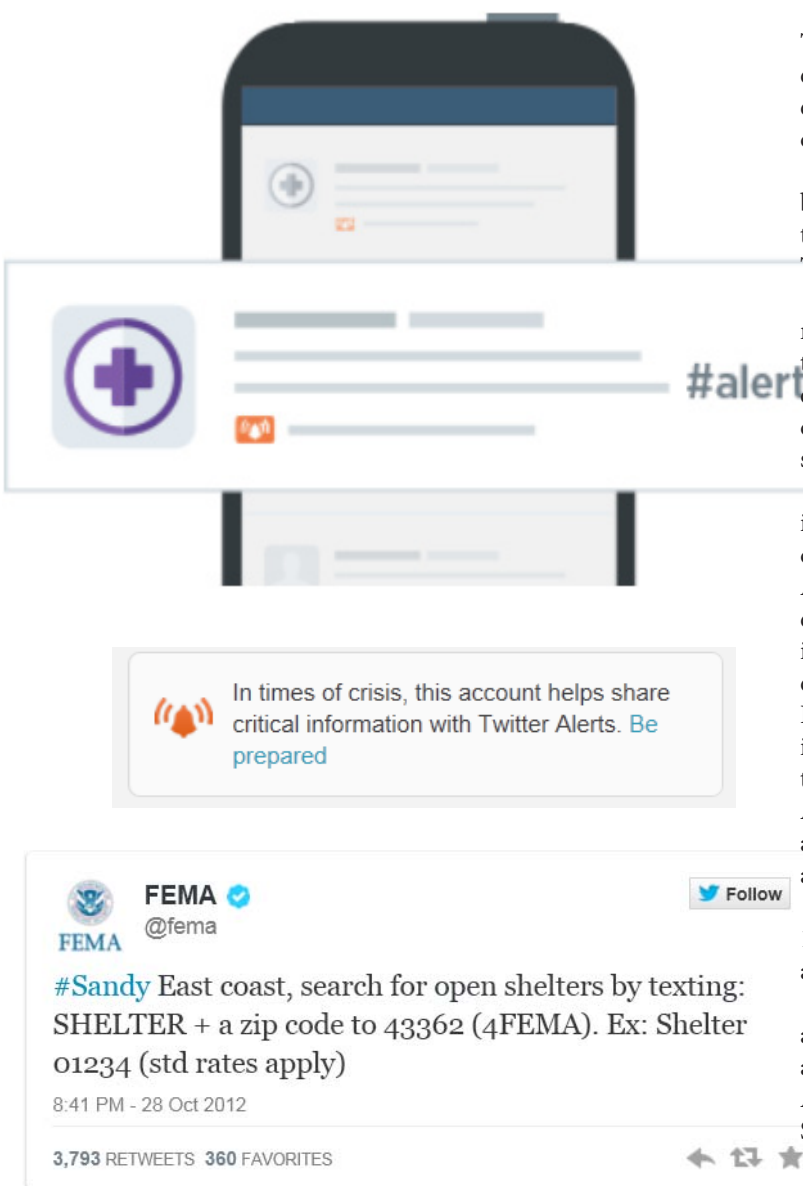
Savannah, Georgia





# New Twitter Alerts Draw Attention

*With so many beeps and dings, it's hard to figure out what your smart phone is trying to tell you these days. If you get emergency information delivered to your cellphone, you want to make sure it doesn't get lost. Twitter is stepping up to the plate and has created Twitter Alerts. **These alerts allow users to get emergency information directly from vetted, credible organizations.** The Twitter Alert will be a tweet marked as an alert (approved by organizations), and will post on the timeline feed and will be delivered to a user's cellphone via SMS. In addition, users who have the Twitter app for iPhone and Android will receive a push notification with the alert information.*



## *What will you get if you subscribe to receive an agency's Twitter Alerts?*

The list includes: warnings for imminent dangers, preventive instructions, evacuation directions, urgent safety alerts, information on access to essential resources, information on critical transit and utility outages, and crowd and misinformation management.

**How will you know it's a Twitter Alert?** Twitter Alerts will be indicated by an orange bell, and approved accounts show the bell alongside the text: "In times of crisis, this account helps share critical information with Twitter Alerts. Be prepared."

**Who is participating?** The Twitter Alerts program is available to local, national and international institutions that provide critical information to the general public. Priority access to this feature is granted to: law enforcement and public safety agencies; emergency management agencies; city and municipal governments; county and regional agencies; and select state, federal, and national agencies and NGOs.

CEMA currently utilizes Twitter as a means to distribute emergency information, but messages aren't sent as a Twitter Alert. We have currently completed an enrollment form and are waiting to hear back on the Twitter Alert status. "With so many ways the public can receive information, emergency and non-emergency, to have the ability to distinguish an important message, is huge for our agency. When we send out an emergency message, we want people to stop what they are doing and react. I hope that Twitter Alerts will help our residents sift through the daily information load when emergencies threaten and pick out key messages that could ultimately save their lives," said Clayton Scott, CEMA Director. According to the Twitter website, the Twitter Alerts are designed to draw attention, stand out from other Tweets on your followers' Timelines and across twitter.com and the Twitter mobile apps.

Participating U.S. organizations include the American Red Cross, all 10 FEMA regions and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and the Georgia Emergency Management Agency.

The Boston Police Department was approved for the alerts program and made headlines with how it used Twitter to keep the public updated about its investigation and search for the marathon bombing suspects in April. Twitter was also used successfully in 2012 following Superstorm Sandy.

**ESF 15: External Affairs**

**TO ENROLL YOUR AGENCY:**

**[HTTPS://ABOUT.TWITTER.COM/PRODUCTS/ALERTS/ENROLL](https://about.twitter.com/products/alerts/enroll)**

# Atlanta Gas Light's Plan to Power Up

Preserve the safety of the general public and the safety of AGL employees involved in damage assessment and service restoration efforts.

Minimize the disruption of essential community services.

To employ the maximum resources available in order to fully restore the gas distribution system in the shortest possible time.

Effectively inform the general public concerning the extent of system damage and service interruption, the nature and scope of restoration efforts, and the estimated duration of service interruptions.

Notify the Georgia Public Service Commission upon implementation of Emergency Weather Response Plan.

In the event of widespread system damage and service interruption due to a major hurricane, Atlanta Gas Light (AGL) seeks order through implementation of a detailed plan.

The plan is divided into three distinct phases: **Phase I-Preparation, Phase II-Damage Assessment, and Phase III-System Restoration.**

During Phase I-Preparation, the main focus is on preparing the Distribution system, Savannah Service Center, and Critical Work Force team for an approaching hurricane. The Incident Command System (ICS) will be activated during the Preparation phase.

Following the passage of the storm through the Savannah Service Center territory, Phase II-Damage Assessment will be initiated as soon

as possible. During Phase II, the primary focus is to conduct an initial assessment of the distribution system by Damage Assessment teams. This assessment is needed by the ICS Staff in order to begin planning for Phase III-System Restoration.

During Phase III-System Restoration, the Incident Commander and his staff will coordinate the restoration effort initially with local AGL and Contractor assets. As re-entry operations allow for additional AGL personnel, the Incident Commander will integrate these assets into the Restoration plan. The transition from Damage Assessment to System Restoration is fluid in nature and may not be discernible.

**ESF 12: Utilities**

**Frank Gray, Operations Supervisor, AGL**

## How Team Rubicon is Answering the Call of Duty



Last month CEMA hosted a meet and greet with representatives from Team Rubicon. Team Rubicon unites the skills and experiences of military veterans with first

responders to rapidly deploy emergency response teams. Team Rubicon is a non-profit organization dedicated to veteran reintegration by enabling them to continue to be of service in their communities and responding to natural disasters wherever they occur.

The meeting at the Emergency Operations Center was an opportunity for county emergency management specialists along with Community Emergency Response Team and Search and Rescue Team volunteers to come together. Volunteers were able to share information with Team Rubicon Region IV members regarding emergency planning and risk management in Chatham County. A discussion of volunteer capacity between the organizations helped frame Team Rubicon's goal to "Bridge The Gap"; providing disaster relief between the moment a natural disaster occurs and the time conventional aid organizations

arrive. "We believe that gatherings like this help establish a relationship with communities before a disaster occurs," stated Dee Clancy, Team Rubicon Communications Manager for Region IV. This is thought to be of particular importance in areas that are considered to be at high risk.

Team Rubicon has already made its mark in Georgia while working closely with GEMA in tornado ravaged Adairsville last year. The team currently has more than 200 volunteers in Georgia alone. National membership now exceeds 12,000. In 2013, Team Rubicon has deployed hundreds of volunteers on 16 missions. Domestic missions include disaster management, debris removal and emergent home repair as well as disaster assessment. The organization is divided into 10 regions across the U.S. to mirror those used by FEMA and operations are conducted within the NIMS/ICS protocols.

If you would like to learn more about Team Rubicon or would like to support the group's effort either by joining or donating, you can visit the website, [www.TeamRubiconUSA.org](http://www.TeamRubiconUSA.org).

**ESF 07: Resource Management**

**Deborah DeMarchis, Dep. Comms. Manager, Region IV, Team Rubicon**

# Chatham County Search and Rescue Team Adds K9s to the Roster



The CEMA Search and Rescue Team (SAR) is expanding its footprint. This year the SAR team has been able to identify and train with additional K9 resources to support search missions involving lost or missing people. According to Dogs South, a volunteer K9 Search and Rescue group in Georgia, trained SAR dogs can search day and night, in poor weather conditions, and where human sight is limited. They can search in high grass, in the woods, on the water, and the debris in the aftermath of a flood,

tornado or hurricane. They are also effective in rural and suburban areas, in parks, groves of trees, overgrown vacant lots and houses. This means more eyes, ears, and noses on the ground. Being able to afford handlers the opportunity to train their dogs with the team is imperative to successful searches.

CEMA has identified SAR K9 Teams within driving distance that can be utilized during a search. These K9 Teams are specifically trained to find lost or missing people. One of the resources utilized is a Dogs South K9 Team in Jesup, Georgia. (Sometimes more than one K9 Team may work simultaneously to provide fast, thorough and initial coverage of high probability areas.) Due to distance, CEMA has coordinated aviation support in order to provide transportation for the K9 Teams directly into a search area. "Being able to airlift a K9 team right into the target area, saves time, and ultimately will aid in the safe recovery of

the missing person," said Don Sullens, CEMA Emergency Management Specialist and the SAR Team coordinator. This is where the aviation support bridges the gap between time and distance. "Seeing the resources we have in front of us, and the support this team has received



over the past year, is very rewarding. When a loved one goes missing, having every resource possible looking for that person is crucial. Time is of the essence and the mission of the SAR team is to find the person safe and bring them home. When we can get boots on the ground as quickly as possible, the chance of finding a person alive increases tremendously" added Sullens.

The CEMA SAR team trains monthly with K9 teams and with other SAR partners. "When our local team is activated and additional SAR resources are requested, we are confident that our volunteers (four legged ones included) will respond and get the job done," said Sullens.

**ESF 09: Search and Rescue**

## Riot Control Exercise Held in Savannah

Law enforcement officers and military personnel from at least six agencies converged in Savannah on November 12, 2013 for a wide-ranging training exercise to address civil unrest.

The exercise depicted a scenario that residents are returning to the area 24 hours after an evacuation order has been rescinded to find a multitude of unexpected issues. The lack of electrical power, food and water was amplified by protest groups, outside agitators, bomb threats and a riot at the county jail.

The training exercises were centered in Grayson Stadium and Daffin Park and two undisclosed areas. While most of the activity was centered on those sites, the training also involved emergency vehicles caravanning between them.

Savannah-Chatham Metropolitan Police Department's Mobile Field Force hosted the exercise and measures were taken to limit the inconvenience to the public.

Lt. Harry Trawick, commander of the Mobile Field Force, said the exercise was complicated by many moving parts to simulate real-life situations. "The Mobile Field Force (also known as the 'riot squad') is the last unit you want to see deployed, but when it is, it will be dealing with a multitude of issues at the same time. It is important that everyone be prepared for the situations they can face in such an event. Just like any sports team, the key to precision is intensive practice," said Lt. Trawick.

**ESF 13: Law Enforcement**  
**Julian Miller, Public Affairs Administrator, SCMPD**

*CEMA provided staff and the Mobile Emergency Operations Center to support the exercise.*



# Digital Communications Comes To the Coastal Empire

The Coastal Empire moved into the digital age with the installation of the new D-STAR repeater system KK4SGC. It consists of a 2 meter voice and slow speed data module, a 70 centimeter voice and slow speed data module, a 23 centimeter voice module and a 23 centimeter high speed data module and a gateway computer, which ties the entire system together. With this system, the coast can be linked by computer to the rest of the state or the region as needed on a moment's notice. It will also allow for the real time tracking of assets that possess the GPS capability in their radios. The D-STAR system also allows for communications across the 2 meter and the 70 centimeter bands to allow for even better coverage of voice communications.

The Amateur Radio Emergency Service in the State of Georgia is pushing the D-STAR radio system as a new tool in their response plan for emergencies. There are currently 26 different D-STAR repeaters in Georgia. Not all of them are full stacks like the one in Savannah.

Nine of the hospitals in Region J have mobile D-STAR radios; CEMA has 2 D-STAR HT's and an ID-1, which is a high speed data radio; and the City of Savannah has a mobile D-STAR radio, which will be installed at their EOC in the Civic Center in the near future. Many of the local amateurs are now buying D-STAR radios since they can use them now. This will greatly increase our ability to communicate around the state during times of emergency. The Reflector 030B has been designated by the State ARES as the emergency frequency for Georgia. That means that any amateur with D-STAR capability can access the frequency in times of emergency and communicate across the state. The STATE SOC also has D-STAR capabilities and will monitor this frequency during times of emergency. What that means for us is we have another tool with which to pass traffic during emergencies and it isn't affected by atmospheric conditions like HF radio signals are.

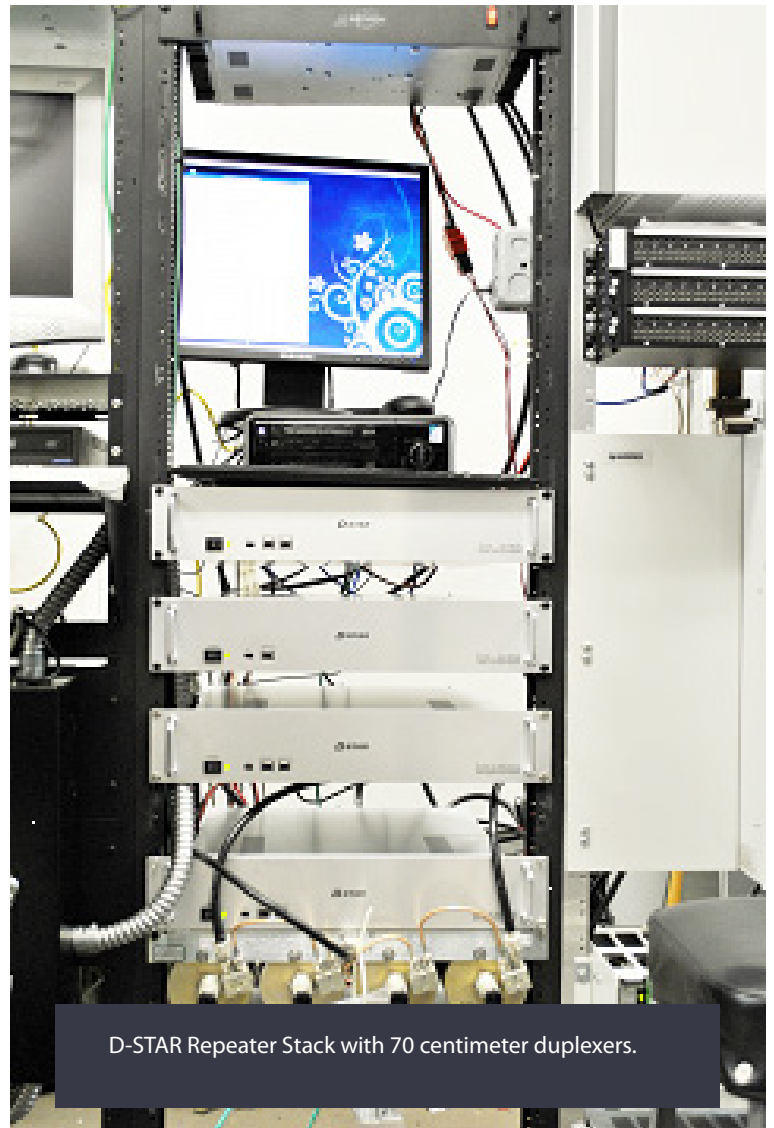
The project to bring a D-STAR repeater system to Savannah was kicked off last May with a training session at the Annex EOC facility. During that time, the instructor John Davis (WB4QDX), mentioned that the State was trying to have another system nearer to the coast to enhance the coverage for the coast. The Pembroke D-STAR repeater system is at 800' and has a large coverage area but there are parts along the coast that are not able to reach it, especially by hand held radio units (HT's) which only have 5 watts of transmitting power.

In late June word came out that Icom America, the America subsidiary, was selling a complete D-STAR stack for over 50% off or about \$4400.00. With that as a starting figure, a group of local amateurs got together to determine the cost for the rest of the equipment, a location for the equipment, and where funding could be obtained to assist with the venture. It was determined that the total outlay for the equipment and installation would be about \$10,000.00 after the City of Savannah offered us the tower space, feed-line from the antenna to the equipment, which would be housed in the Kerry Street site and internet access for the system. Work was immediately initiated to find the funds. The Chatham County emergency community responded almost immediately. The first donation of \$2500.00 was from a private donor who was interested in increasing our emergency capabilities. The Coastal Amateur Radio Society (CARS) then voted to contribute \$2500.00 toward the project. Then the Region J Coastal Healthcare

Coalition voted to donate an additional \$2,500.00. The final \$2,500.00 donation came from CEMA.

Early in September all of the equipment was in town and on September 16 John Davis (WB4QDX) and Robin Cutshaw (AA4RC) arrived in town to install the system. With the help of David Delamater (K4DJJD) the system was installed in about four hours. The system is now operational. We are still working on some network issues which keep us from installing the few remaining programs on the gateway computer, which will enhance the capabilities of the system even more.

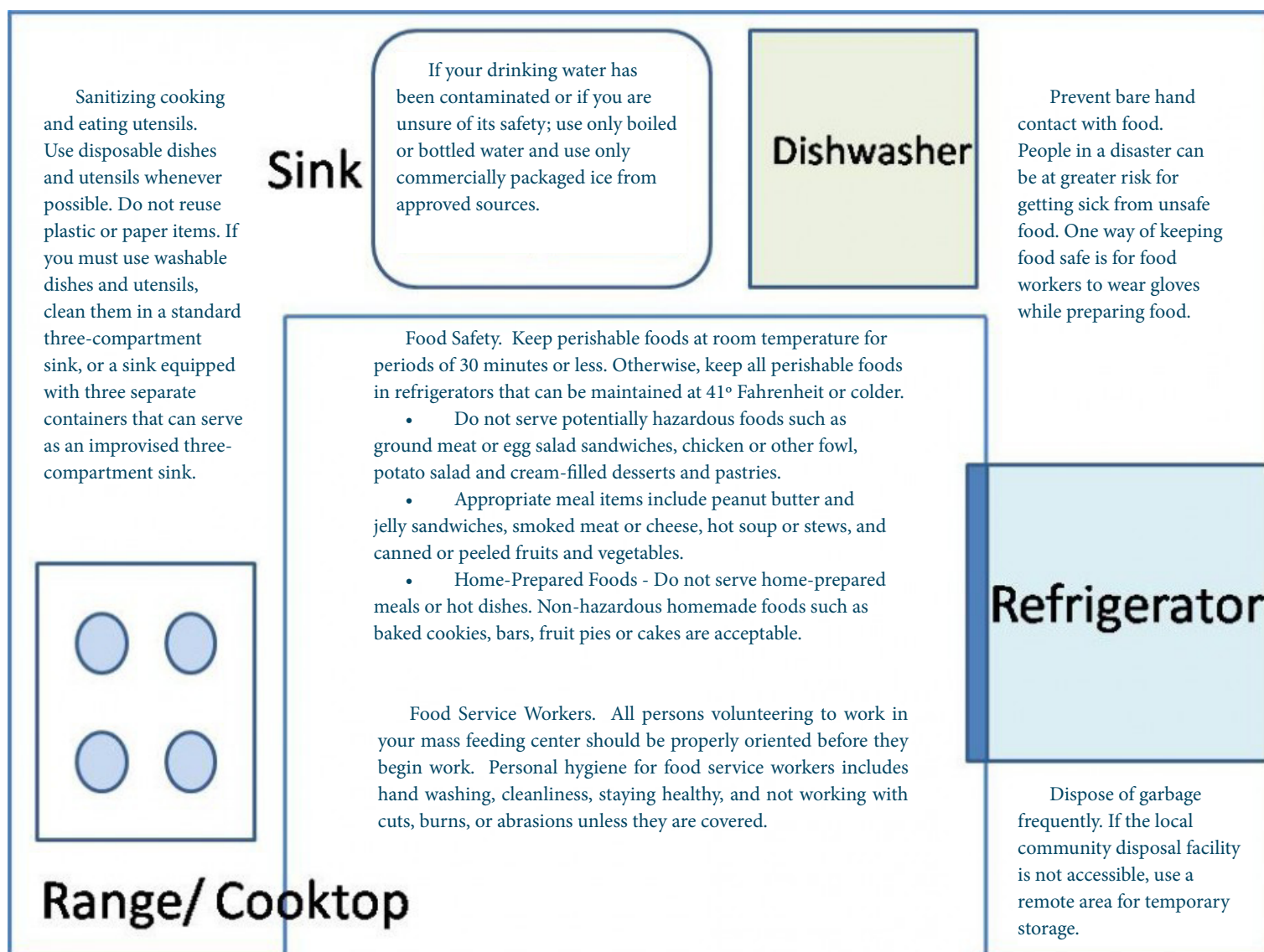
**ESF 02: Communications**  
**Steve Jonas, ARES EC, Chatham County**



D-STAR Repeater Stack with 70 centimeter duplexers.

# Mass Feeding Sites and Food Safety

**After a disaster, many agencies and organizations establish mass feeding sites for those affected and the first responders working in the area.** The ideal site for a mass feeding operation is a building that has a licensed kitchen. Satisfactory sites might include a school lunchroom, a church, or a club facility where large meals are regularly prepared and served. The site should include adequate refrigeration equipment, large ranges, sufficient work surfaces, adequate dishwashing areas, and hand washing facilities for staff and guests.



**Supervision.** If possible, someone who has experience with large food service operations should supervise your mass feeding operation. Possible supervisors include school or institutional food service managers, or people who have worked as cooks, employees or managers in large restaurants.

# After the Disaster:

## How to Prepare Your Pets

The impact a mandatory evacuation due to an approaching hurricane has on a family pet is often far more traumatic and potentially devastating than it is on the human population of the affected area. Unfortunately, in many locations animals are often not allowed in evacuation shelters and owners rarely think about making other arrangements for their pet's safety and security before the disaster strikes. Because of this reality, pets are often left behind by their owners during an evacuation.

Since Hurricane Katrina, Emergency Planners have gone to great lengths to include pet issues in Emergency Plans and Procedures; and more hotels and motels accept pets during emergency situations. Sometimes disasters like tornadoes and fires happen with little or no notice and pet owners can often find themselves separated from their animals. Steps owners can take to increase the possibility of finding a lost pet after a disaster include:

Your pets should have a collar, with tags; and/or a permanent ID such as a microchip implant or tattoo.

If you use a collar and tags make sure that the tag has your current contact information and a rabies tag. A rabies tag is very important because your pet may be euthanized if a rabies alert is issued and it is found as a stray without a tag.

If you have lost your pet as a result of a disaster, there are websites specifically for posting descriptions of the missing pet using the message boards provided.

When you return after a disaster first look for your animals around your home. The animal may be traumatized by the disaster and as a result may be hiding. Take a flash light with you, and (if your home is safe to enter) perform a systematic search for the animal looking in all spaces that the animal may fit into. Most lost pets will not travel more than a 150 yards away from your home. Your strategy should be to produce a flyer containing:

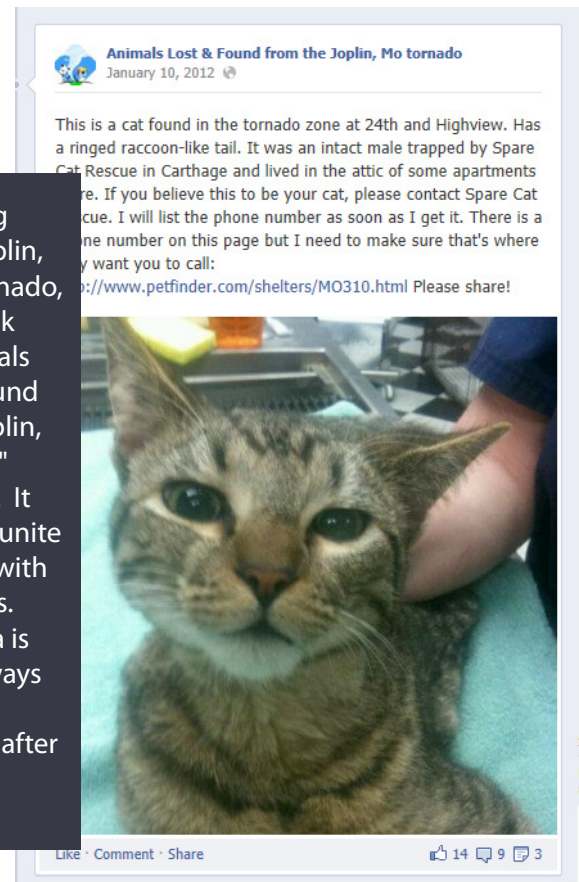
- A description of the pet (include color, markings, age, weight, size, and sex)
- The name of the pet
- Your name and contact information
- The location and date the animal was last seen (use a general description of the area and don't give out your address)
- Indicate if a reward is being offered
- And a photo of the animal.

Take copies of the flyer with you and visit the homes in your neighborhood calling out the name of your pet as you go. Knock on the doors of these houses and ask if the resident has seen the animal and to hand out copies of the flyer. If they are not home leave a copy of the flyer at the house.

If someone calls claiming to have found your pet, take care. Some people try to advantage of situations like this. Unfortunately it is not uncommon that an individual will try to take advantage of the situation by contacting you long distance and indicating that they need money to send your pet back home to you. Never go alone to meet anyone who may claim to have found your pet.

After a disaster, shelters will be set up to house found animals. Visit

Following the 2011 Joplin, Missouri tornado, the Facebook page, "Animals Lost and Found from the Joplin, MO tornado" was created. It helped to reunite pet owners with their animals. Social media is one of the ways to help find animals lost after a disaster.



these shelters in person to look for your lost pet. Bring a photo of the animal or other proof of ownership. Many web sites will be set up after a disaster to assist people in locating missing animals. Unfortunately, many animals are never claimed by their owners whose lives have been affected by disasters. Consider pet adoption after disasters. Another reality is many pets are never found by their owners after a disaster. They may have been found dead, and their bodies buried to prevent the spread of diseases.

Report the lost pet to your local animal shelter and ask them about the holding time for pets. You will want to visit the shelter in person before the pet may be euthanized. Also visit local veterinarian offices, and place copies of the flyer in other locations visited by the public, such as grocery stores, and laundry mats.

For some people the loss of a family pet following a disaster can be a traumatic event and family and friends should remember to be concerned about that person's well-being. Hopefully by taking the appropriate steps pet owners can increase the chance of keeping their pets safe.



# Ready-Set-Know Festival

CHATHAM COUNTY CERT SHOWS RESIDENTS HOW TO PREPARE



Let's face it, talking about being prepared isn't fun. In fact, it can be downright boring. Make a kit, have a plan and stay informed. If you live in Coastal Georgia, you likely have heard this stuff before, and if you have lived here for very long, probably more times

that you would like to admit. While we may hear about emergency planning and preparedness, especially at the start of hurricane season, how many of us actually get a kit, develop a plan, and stay informed? Odds are your neighbor isn't prepared, and probably neither are most of your co-workers. If someone asked you, would you be able to say yes?

Because of the reality of complacency, the Chatham County Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) thought of a neat idea in hopes of gaining a little momentum when it comes to preparing. Volunteers with CERT wanted to actually SHOW people how easy it is to prepare, rather than just tell them. CERT is a Federal program that is extremely active on the local level; in Chatham County it falls under CEMA. The program is focused on helping residents survive immediately following a disaster BEFORE first responders can arrive. Participants are taught how to extinguish small fires, administer basic first aid skills, conduct light search and rescue and a number of other useful safety techniques. There are well over 400 CERT trained residents in Chatham County, and more than 60 active CERT volunteers within the community.

CERT volunteer Bert Adams was one of the founders of the Ready-Set-Know Festival. "Sensing that people are busy and have little time to spend in seminars and separated from their families, I thought whatever we developed to prepare our population for emergencies should be family oriented with a festive air about it. That way folks would be more inclined to come with their families and learn. Children, brought there by their parents, would learn survival skills in ways that make them less frightening. It could offer an opportunity for parents and children to learn together," said Adams.

During the brainstorming process, CERT was presented with the opportunity to partner with Gulfstream and from there, Ready-Set-Know took off. Gulfstream Aerospace Corporation designs, develops, manufactures, markets, services and supports advanced business-jet aircraft. The company employs more than 13,500 people at 12 major locations. Gulfstream is proactive when it comes to preparedness and allowed CERT volunteers to hold the first ever festival on the

Gulfstream campus. Each year during National Preparedness Month in September, they encourage emergency preparedness among employees. "Gulfstream is grateful for the many organizations that provided resources for this debut event. We had an opportunity to work with a fine team of volunteers and were able to further strengthen the already strong relationships we have with those groups. It was "win-win". We appreciate CERT's strong sense of teamwork and support," said Tom McIlvaine, Gulfstream's Business Continuity Manager.

More than 400 Gulfstream employees attended the festival held on August 24, 2013; it kicked off National Preparedness Month. Dozens of CERT volunteers were on hand for interactive workshops on various preparedness topics like utility shut off, fire protection, and child safety. Other community organizations and businesses participated including municipal fire departments (Southside Fire Department and Savannah Fire and Emergency Services,) Mosquito Control, CEMA, SERVPRO, American Red Cross, Savannah State University, Armstrong Atlantic State University, Home Depot, National Weather Service Charleston, FEMA, Georgia's Office of Insurance and Safety Fire Commissioner and a freeze dried food company, Thrive Foods. "The Disaster Preparedness Fair was a resounding success! This was a great opportunity for Gulfstream employees to familiarize themselves with the emergency preparedness organizations in the area and to evaluate their own emergency-preparation plans," said McIlvaine.

CERT volunteers who orchestrated the festival said the feedback from attendees was outstanding and they especially enjoyed the hands-on concept. Whether or not the attendees went home and started preparing is unknown; however, volunteers do know for those few hours preparing was fun. CERT volunteers have taken ownership of the event and because of its success, it's likely that volunteers will partner with Gulfstream next year to organize another festival and will plan additional festivals for more Chatham County residents. The overall idea is to reach all residents so when the time comes, they will know what to do and how to do it. "There were products they had never seen before, service agencies they hadn't known about, training opportunities that were new, and survival skills they learned. The kids had fun learning, the men liked the gadgets and the moms were comforted by having some direction in protecting their families. Mostly, I think the families learned to train and plan together for their mutual safety," added Adams.

## Volunteer Programs



Left: CERT members and Gulfstream employees who put on the festival. Right: CERT member Dan Mobley teaches a young attendee about utility safety. (Photos courtesy: Gulfstream)

# Drive Through Flu Clinic Easy as Ever



Drivers pull into the drive through clinic at the Chatham County Health Department. The process was quick and easy. (Photo courtesy: Chatham County Health Department)

**The influenza vaccination is an annual vaccination** using a vaccine specific for a given year to protect against the highly variable influenza virus. The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommend that *everyone over the ages of 6 months* should receive the seasonal influenza vaccine.

More than 300 people took advantage of the Chatham County Health Department drive-through flu vaccination clinic in October. Residents didn't even have to leave the comfort of their own vehicles to get vaccinated against the flu. And while they filed through the organized system of registration and vaccine dispensation, most probably had no idea that they were also participating in a very important emergency preparedness exercise.

The drive-through point of distribution (POD) model is one that public health and other community partners will use if there is ever a need to get medicine quickly and efficiently to the public during an emergency including a pandemic flu or bioterrorism event. In 2009 during the novel H1N1 flu pandemic, the drive-through POD was put to the test as hundreds of thousands of citizens across the United States,

including Chatham County, utilized that method to receive vaccine for the new and unknown strain of flu.

"Holding preparedness exercises such as the drive-through flu vaccination clinic is crucial to making sure that we are ready to respond if and when a public health emergency occurs," said Todd Jones, Environmental Health and Emergency Preparedness Director for the Chatham County Health Department.

The event not only involved the Chatham County Health Department but a host of other community partners including CEMA; Savannah-Chatham Metropolitan Police Department; American Red Cross; and local colleges and universities.

"We depend heavily on community partners to provide essential services in times of crisis," said Jones. "It truly is a team effort and the best way to maximize that effort is to practice, practice, practice."

**ESF 08: Health and Medical**  
**Sally Silbermann, Risk Communicator, Coastal Health District**





# Renovations on Juliette Gordon Low Birthplace Almost Complete

At the Juliette Gordon Low Birthplace the most common question we now answer is “When are you going to be finished?” Since spring of 2012, the site has been surrounded by scaffold fronted by a large pedestrian walkway that takes up a portion of Oglethorpe and Bull Streets. To say that the neighbors and equally important, staff, are ready for us to finish is an understatement. So what is the holdup? It is largely due to the unique challenges associated with historic preservation. Work has alternated between periods of tremendous progress with weeks and months of limited activity while we wait on materials and skilled craftsmen who can make specific components. After twenty months of construction, the completion date remains a moving target.

The original scope of work included many tasks that would protect the building's envelope against the incursion of water. The largest of these was the removal of stucco applied to the building in the 1960s that contained a high percentage of Portland Cement. Water entered the stucco through cracks in its surface but could find no way out. Beginning in April of last year, masons worked throughout our busiest season removing stucco and making brick repairs. The beautiful new stucco coating and colorant are complete but hidden beneath the scrim that covers the scaffold.

One of the most straightforward jobs (or so I thought at the time) was the replacement of the roof. Because we are a historic structure, we cannot buy our roofing material at Home Depot and instead are at the mercy of the one manufacturer that makes terne coated stainless steel, a metal that has the appropriate durability and sheen for our building. We have been waiting almost one year to receive our metal and while we have considered other options, none move us closer to completion than this one. It is precisely this kind of situation that will result in long delays in restoring damaged cultural heritage sites after a disaster.

Building materials and techniques are unique on the Juliette Low

Birthplace as is the case with most historic structures. In 1886, a metal cornice made of pressed and bent galvanized steel panels with metal brackets was added. The cornice appeared to be in good condition and stripping and painting was the only planned work. When the paint was removed a host of issues became readily apparent. Brackets in the best condition had open solder joints and the worst were completely blown apart with detached strips of metal. Hardly an off the shelf item, it took weeks to find companies that can replicate the brackets and then months more to get craftsmen on site to do the work. Given the age and condition of the metal struts that attach the cornice to the building, a big blow would have stripped huge sections from the building. Road crews clearing debris after a disaster would be unlikely to recognize it as significant needing to be salvaged.

After the scaffold is removed, new brownstone treads will be reinstalled on the front portico. The stone came from a quarry in Connecticut and was the last brownstone quarried in the United States. Today stone must be purchased in Europe or India. Despite purchasing stone in the US, shaping, finishing and shipping took close to a year. After a major disaster lead times will be extended as sites scramble to assess damage, prioritize repairs and assemble a team to guide the process. It is safe to say that badly damaged structures will require years to repair assuming that funding is available. As for the Juliette Low Birthplace, Spring 2014 appears to be a reasonable target date for completion. Let's hope that Savannah continues to be spared from hurricane damage because the process of restoring historic structures is fraught with surprises, expense and requires so much more time than planned.

**ESF 11c: Natural, Historical, Cultural**  
**Sherryl Lang, Curator/Property Manager, Girl Scouts of the USA**



# Protect Yourself From Flood Damage

**Flooding does occur in Chatham County.** Are you protected with a Flood Insurance Policy? Only flood insurance can protect your property from flood damages (rising waters).

We have all heard on news programs or read in the newspapers about devastating flooding along the coast of New York and New Jersey, the Gulf Coast, the Mississippi River, in nearby Atlanta and Albany, Georgia and several other cities and communities. There were skeptics living within those areas that at some point stated, "That kind of flooding can never happen here!" For those areas it did happen and it can happen in Chatham County.

An important fact to remember is that flooding is an act of God, but flood damages are caused by the acts of man. For generations, mankind has known about areas in and around where he lives that were subject to flooding. For various reasons over the years, established flooding patterns were ignored and development continued within hazardous flood prone areas. Establishing communities and subdivisions within these areas put countless lives and properties at risk. Chatham County institutes several programs aimed at reducing flood damages and the loss of life and property. Some of these programs include the Flood Mitigation Plan, Chatham County's participation in the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Community Rating System (CRS) program, and the County's Drainage Maintenance Program. Each of these programs institute guidelines, guidance and operating standards to reduce flooding within the County.

Chatham County makes it possible for each homeowner and renter to obtain flood insurance by participating in the FEMA National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP). Flood insurance policies issued within the unincorporated areas of Chatham County can receive up to a 20 percent discount. Having a flood insurance policy is an excellent way to protect your property during a flood event whether you live in the High Flood Risk Zone (Special Flood Hazard Area (SFHA)) or not. Knowing the flood risk and flood history in your area makes you an informed and responsible homeowner. It is an excellent way to protect your life and the lives of your loved ones.

The High Flood Risk Zone SFHA is sometimes referred to as the 100-year floodplain and includes two types of flood zones, AE and VE zones. If your home is located within the SFHA and you have a Federally-backed mortgage (FDIC insured loan) or a Federally-backed home equity loan, flood insurance is required. Flood insurance is made available to homeowners and renters living outside the SFHA (areas typically referred to as Low Flood Risk Areas, X-zones and Moderate Flood Risk Areas, X-500 or X-shaded flood zones).

A flood insurance policy is highly encouraged for Chatham County area homeowners and renters because Chatham County is a coastal community which makes it highly susceptible to hurricanes and tropical storms. Another reason to consider having flood insurance is that although FEMA requires a flood insurance policy for property owners living within the High Flood Risk Zone or SFHA, the majority of flooding that occurs within Unincorporated Chatham County is mostly located outside the SFHA. Flood insurance is not required by

FEMA for homes located within the Low Flood Risk Areas, Zone-X and Moderate Flood Risk Areas, Zone X-500 or X-shaded, but it is highly recommended within both areas. Finally, FEMA offers assistance to all homeowners following Presidential Nationally declared disasters in the form of a small business loan. These are low percentage loans offered by the Small Business Administration (SBA) that must be repaid with interest for terms up to 30 years.

Residents of Unincorporated Chatham County should contact the Floodplain Administrator, Michael Blakely, CFM with the Chatham County Department of Engineering. He is prepared to assist you with learning more about the above topics and to determine your flood risk and flood history. He and other staff members can assist property owners by making site visits to address drainage and flooding issues they may be experiencing on their property. He also has a variety of pamphlets, brochures and booklets printed by Chatham County Department of Engineering and FEMA covering a wide variety of topics from "Homeowner's Guide to Retrofitting" to "The Benefits of Flood Insurance Versus Disaster Assistance." The site visits previously mentioned and the copies of the flood documents are available to the general public free of charge. He can be reached at (912) 652-7814 or via email at [mblakely@chathamcounty.org](mailto:mblakely@chathamcounty.org).

Flood determination letters and elevation certificates are required by insurance companies in order to accurately quote flood insurance policies. Flood zone determination letters are generated by the Department of Engineering. Elevation certificates are generated by Georgia Registered Land Surveyors either during construction of the house/structure or on an existing house/structure. For new construction, the surveyor submits the elevation certificate to Chatham County Building Safety and Regulatory Services to have the Certificate of Occupancy (CO) released so that the house/structure can be occupied. The elevation certificate is then submitted to the Chatham County Department of Engineering for archiving. Unfortunately, we do not have elevation certificates for all properties located within Unincorporated Chatham County. The elevation certificates that we have on file and the flood determination letters are made available to the general public at no cost. Requests for elevation certificates and flood letters should be made in writing to [floodletters@chathamcounty.org](mailto:floodletters@chathamcounty.org), via the web or faxed to (912) 652-7818. Please include the property mailing address and the Property Identification Number (PIN), if possible.

Requests can also be mailed via the United States Postal Service (USPS) to Flood Request, P.O. Box 8161, 124 Bull Street, Savannah, Georgia 31401 or hand delivered to the Old Court House located at 124 Bull Street, Suite 430, Savannah Georgia 31401. We request a maximum turn-around time of two weeks, however, in most cases we can supply you with the requested documents within a few days.

**ESF 14a: Hazard Mitigation**  
**Michael Blakely, Flood Plain Manager, Chatham County**



## SPOTLIGHT



## JENNIFER RODRIGUEZ

CEMA would like to wish Jennifer Rodriguez luck in her next endeavor. Jennifer accepted a position with Orange County Public Schools in Orlando and will begin in December.

Jennifer joined CEMA in August 2010 and among many duties she had, she focused much of her efforts on Emergency Operations Center (EOC) coordination, Training and Exercise, and development of WebEOC.

While at CEMA, Jennifer worked diligently to train the staff who worked in the EOC to include volunteers, and coordinated numerous exercises focusing on damage assessment, Joint Information Center coordination, hurricane evacuation, and spontaneous emergencies.

Jennifer truly has a passion for emergency management. As a duty officer she responded to multiple calls, and many times those calls came late at night or on weekends. It's likely that you have seen her on scene, helping in some capacity.

Prior to coming to Savannah, Jennifer spent time in Colorado as the Emergency Management Coordinator and Interim Director of Emergency Management for the University of Colorado at Boulder.

Jennifer is an avid runner and participated in numerous races here in Chatham County to include the Rock and Roll Marathon.

CEMA will miss Jennifer and we wish her luck in her new adventures in Florida.

## MEETINGS

ESF 11a Quarterly Meeting  
December 3, 10am  
Animal Control Office  
EOC Annex  
Don Sullens  
dwsullens@chathamcounty.org  
912-201-4500

Disability Task Force  
December 11, 10AM  
LIFE Office  
Kelly Harley  
kharley@chathamcounty.org  
912-201-4500

Chatham County Fire Chiefs  
January 13, 7PM  
Location TBD  
Dustin Hetzel  
djhhetzel@chathamcounty.org  
912-201-4500

LEPC Meeting  
January 15, 10AM  
Savannah Civic Center  
Anson Calmes  
awcalmes@chathamcounty.org  
912-201-4500

ESF 02 Meeting  
January 16, 10:30AM  
Annex EOC  
Dustin Hetzel  
djhhetzel@chathamcounty.org  
912-201-4500

CCOAD Meeting  
January 21, 11:30AM  
Salvation Army, Bee Road  
Anson Calmes  
awcalmes@chathamcounty.org  
912-201-4500

CCOAD Board Meeting  
January 28, 11:30AM  
Anson Calmes  
awcalmes@chathamcounty.org  
912-201-4500

COAD Board Meeting  
February 25, 11:30AM  
Anson Calmes  
awcalmes@chathamcounty.org  
912-201-4500

## TRAININGS

CEMA SAR Team Training  
December 13/14, Overnight  
Bivouac  
Skidaway State Park  
Don Sullens  
dwsullens@chathamcounty.org  
912-201-4500

CEMA SAR Team Training  
January 11, 9AM  
METRO Precinct 5  
Don Sullens  
dwsullens@chathamcounty.org  
912-201-4500

EOC Staff Training  
January 23, 8AM - 5PM  
Annex EOC  
Dave Grottyhann  
dsgrottyhann@chathamcounty.org  
912-201-4500

CEMA SAR Team Training  
February 8, 9AM  
METRO Precinct 5  
Don Sullens  
dwsullens@chathamcounty.org  
912-201-4500

CERT Training  
February, TBD  
Kelly Harley  
kharley@chathamcounty.org  
912-201-4500

## EXERCISES/SPECIAL

CCPIOA Winter Conference  
December 13, 8:00AM - 1:30PM  
Memorial University Medical Center  
Kelly Harley  
kharley@chathamcounty.org  
912-201-4500

Outdoor Siren Test  
Dec 4, Jan TBD, Feb 5, 12PM  
Countywide  
Dustin Hetzel  
912-201-4500  
djhhetzel@chathamcounty.org

November 30  
End of Hurricane Season

Winter Weather Awareness Week  
December 2-6  
Georgia

Christmas Eve, Christmas, New Year's Day  
County Holidays

## Calendar

# Family Safety Day: Butler Elementary

The Southeast Georgia Chapter of the American Red Cross held its annual Preparedness Event on Saturday, September 14, 2013 at Butler Elementary School. The event served as a communication tool for emergency preparedness to inform residents what to do if an emergency situation happens in the Savannah area. Attendees were shown what emergency supplies they should always keep stored in their homes and were encouraged to be prepared ahead of time by having a game plan and a designated shelter location. Additionally, participants were informed on the nearby shelters they should travel to; along with the locations where County buses will be in transit to transport individuals to the Savannah Civic Center for public evacuation. (Photo courtesy: Red Cross)



CLAYTON S. SCOTT  
DIRECTOR

DENNIS JONES  
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

## Have an Idea for the Signal

This newsletter focuses on activities and accomplishments for each Emergency Support Function and other areas of the Emergency Management System throughout Chatham County. The newsletter is an available conduit for our partners who may have an interest in submitting a short article or to advertise an upcoming meeting, training event or exercise. For those interested in submitting content for the upcoming newsletter, please follow the submission criteria below:

- **Submissions emailed to:** Kelly Harley, Public Information Officer (kharley@chathamcounty.org)
- **Deadline:** February 7, 2014
- **Article Length:** 100 - 750 words
- **Article Submissions:** Include Article Title, Author Name, Title and Agency
- **Meeting Notices:** Include Meeting Title, Date, Time, Location and Point of Contact (Name, Phone and Email Address)
- **Training Notice:** Include Training Title, Date(s), Time(s), Location, Prerequisites, Registration Deadline, Costs, Point of Contact (Name, Phone and Email Address)
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