



STATE OF FLORIDA

DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY AFFAIRS

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Secretary

March 1, 2005

MEMORANDUM

TO: County Emergency Management Directors

FROM:  W. Craig Fugate, Director
Division of Emergency Management

Janice Browning, Director 
Division of Housing and Community Development

SUBJECT: Critical Facility and Hurricane Shelter Assessment

During the 2004 hurricane season, hundreds of shelters safely protected more than 386,000 individuals. Some shelters did incur minimal damage, typically roof covering materials that resulted in rainwater intrusion. Some critical facilities, such as fire stations, police stations and Emergency Operation Centers, incurred some serious structural damage during the hurricanes. Although these emergency facilities do not serve as public shelters, it is critically important that first responders and state and local emergency operation employees are safely sheltered during wind events.

Therefore, the Division of Emergency Management (DEM), in collaboration with the Division of Housing and Community Development (HCD), will be beginning a baseline survey of county critical facilities over the next few months, plus a baseline assessment of hurricane shelters. HCD is funding this initiative. The assessments will include updates to existing hurricane shelter information, as well as including new buildings that have not previously been surveyed. This assessment project will include a limited number of other types of critical facilities. In particular, all county EOCs will be assessed, and certain other facilities that shelter first responders during major storms will be surveyed (i.e., fire-rescue and law enforcement facilities). DEM and HCD estimate that this project will include about 1,800 assessments. Due to limited funding and time, DEM and HCD recommend that only buildings constructed since 1990 and occupied by about 15 or more personnel be included at this time.

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The product of the assessments will be similar to reports from DEM's original baseline hurricane shelter survey. The products will include: an executive summary of findings, an ARC 4496 least-risk decision making table, floor plan sketch(es) that indicate areas that at a minimum meet ARC 4496 standards or could meet ARC 4496 with minor or major investigation or retrofitting, general recommendations to assist in meeting ARC 4496 standards and improve high-wind performance (if applicable), and attach supporting documentation. The information will also be entered into DEM's Assessment Resource for Multi-hazard Operational Risks (ARMOR) database for future planning and impact modeling purposes.

Danny Kilcollins and Dean Griffin will be serving as technical advisors and coordinating much of the field work with our current hurricane shelter assessment consultant PBS&J, and Ms. Ila Jones of HCD will be serving as the contract manager. Please note that this project is on a fast-track. DEM and HCD have been directed to complete the assessments by June 1, 2005. This project will initially focus on assessments where the original survey work is about five (5) or more years old.

The survey process will be similar to previous DEM shelter survey procedures: 1) DEM or its consultant PBS&J will schedule a kick-off meeting for participating local agency staff; 2) PBS&J staff will perform the survey in cooperation with local agencies; 3) a working draft report will be submitted concurrently to both DEM and the local emergency management agency for review and comment (the local emergency management agency sub-distributes draft as applicable); 4) DEM and local agencies return comments to PBS&J's project manager within 15 days of receipt of working draft; 5) PBS&J finalizes reports and submits them to HCD/DEM and local agency.

To assist in expediting this assessment, please provide a prioritized list of critical facilities by March 18, 2005, to be used by our consultant in planning the assessment work. The list should be forwarded to Danny Kilcollins at danny.kilcollins@dca.state.fl.us. The list should include the year of construction and number of staff to be sheltered in the facility during a major hurricane. Given the short time-frame for completion of this project, it is incumbent upon all parties to closely monitor progress.

If you have any questions, please contact Danny Kilcollins at (850) 413-9859.

WCF/dks