The 2013 Atlantic Hurricane Season began June 1, and experts are predicting a busy season. NOAA forecasters predict between 13 and 20 named storms, of which 7 to 11 could become hurricanes including 3 to 6 major hurricanes.

So far this season, four named storms have formed, Andrea, Barry, Chantal and Dorian, all with top wind speeds peaking as tropical storms. Tropical Storm Andrea directly impacted Florida, making landfall in the Florida Big Bend on June 6th. The storm brought minimal impacts to the state, including increased rainfall and some severe weather.

Director Koon and representatives from FDEM kicked off the 2013 Hurricane Season at the International Hurricane Research Center at Florida International University in Miami, touring the “Wall of Wind” research and testing center.

Engineers with the Wall of Wind initiative are able to recreate conditions of a Category 5 hurricane on the Saffir-Simpson Hurricane Wind Scale. Data collected by the FIU research team is then used in conjunction with FDEM to help Floridians mitigate the impacts of storms year round.

FDEM employees, along with all Floridians, should be prepared for the 2013 Atlantic Hurricane Season by reviewing their family emergency plan and disaster supply kit. Information on creating a plan and building a supply kit is available via the FDEM website, www.FloridaDisaster.org.
DEM Partners With Dyle Mobile TV

DEM is partnering with the National Association of Broadcasters (NAB), the Florida Association of Broadcasters (FAB) and Dyle Mobile TV as part of a pilot program to assist first responders with accessing important information during the 2013 hurricane season. As part of the program, Dyle Mobile TV is providing DEM and the SERT with a device that will allow them to convert a smart phone, tablet or other “on the go” device to deliver live, local TV coverage. During a disaster, local broadcasters are often one of the only sources of on the ground information. This program allows the SERT to add “another tool to the toolbox” in gathering information when responding to a disaster. The partnership was announced at a June 1st event at Florida International University, in conjunction with Dyle Mobile TV, the NAB and the FAB.

2013 Public Private Sector Disaster Preparedness Summit

The Public-Private Sector Summit was held June 11-13, 2013 at the International Palms Resort in Orlando. This was the second annual Public-Private Sector Summit. It provided a statewide forum for members of the public and private sector to further strengthen working relationships and foster partnerships, as well as to continue to identify ways to integrate the private sector into all phases of emergency management. The summit was attended by over 200 members of the public and private sector, including representatives from the local, state and federal government.

Speakers at the Summit focused on various areas of Public Sector-Private Sector partnership, and strategies for incorporating the private sector into emergency preparedness and planning. Aside from the presentations, the Summit was an opportunity for the public and private sector to interact and network. A key to the economic return of a community following a disaster is to ensure that the private sector is able to return to normal as soon as possible. All stakeholders must come together prior to a disaster and discuss those barriers which stand in the way of the private sector returning to work.

From left to right: Pete McNally, Polk Co. EM Director, FDEM Dir. Koon, Winner of the Florida Small Business Resiliency Award 2012 Robert Kincart with ACT Environmental & Infrastructure, Inc, and Bryan Lowe, DEM Private Sector Coordinator.
2013 Statewide Hurricane Exercise

The 2013 Statewide Hurricane Exercise was held May 20-23 at the State Emergency Operations Center in Tallahassee. This year’s exercise was held in conjunction with the U.S. Military’s “Ardent Sentry” and the U.S. National Guard’s “Vigilant Guard” exercises. The exercise centered around the fictional Hurricanes Kirk and Lay making impact on Florida, as well as three separate CBRNE events.

This exercise worked to challenge all members of the State Emergency Response Team, as well as to test coordination and communication between Florida, our neighboring states, our local and federal partners, as well as the military. “This year’s exercise involved a very complex scenario that we hoped would test and expand SERT’s capabilities to respond,” said Necole Holton, Lead Planner of the 2013 Exercise. Eleven different states participated in this year’s exercise, helping the SERT to not only test and strengthen plans, but form relationships among all our partners.
Dutch Delegation Visits the State Emergency Operations Center

A delegation of eleven people from the Netherlands visited the State Emergency Operations Center June 24. The group was composed of individuals working in emergency management, public safety, crisis communication, and water management.

The day long visit included a breakdown of the emergency support functions, a SERT Concept of Operations overview, and presentations on Evacuation in Florida and Geographic Information Systems. An important goal of the visit was to learn more about public education and getting the message to residents before, during, and after a disaster. Florida’s implementation and success of the “Get A Plan!” and “Kids Get A Plan!” public education campaigns were a hot topic for the group.

Many of the members had never visited Florida let alone Tallahassee, so it was only right they get the opportunity to tour one of the city’s biggest attractions, The Florida State University. Lunch at the University Center Club and a tour of the school football field proved to be a unique experience for the group.

The day ended with an insightful presentation on the social impact of Hurricanes and Evacuations by Dr. Jay Baker, and the use of social media in crisis communication by the FSU Emergency Management and Homeland Security Program. After leaving Tallahassee, the delegation went on to Miami, FL to visit the National Hurricane Center and the South Florida Water Management District. The group’s trip was a follow-up to Director Koon’s visit to the Netherlands this past November to discuss water management issues. “International partnerships help to expand Florida’s knowledge on emergency management as we exchange information and experiences with other countries,” says Director Koon. “They also work to further our message of preparedness and promote all that we have done as a state to protect our residents.”
2013 Take Your Kids to Work Day

Over 50 of the Division’s kids, grandkids, nieces, nephews and siblings attended the 2013 Take Your Kids to Work Day on April 25. The day was full of activities sponsored by the Bureaus of Response, Planning, Recovery and Mitigation. Kids ranging from ages 4 to 15 participated in hands on activities and learned about the different work done at FDEM. Kids spent the morning in the SEOC, learning about what happens during an activation and engaging in interactive presentations by the State Watch Office and Meteorology Unit. That afternoon Preparedness, Recovery and Mitigation presented on the responsibilities of each bureau all the while keeping everyone entertained through fun activities. Kids were able to create their own disaster supply kit, build houses out of boxes and then learn how to rebuild and improve their cardboard homes after a disaster.

More pictures can be found on the J-Drive:
J Drive>Directors Office> External Affairs> Photos> Take Your Kids to Work Day 04 25 13
Winners of the 2013 SWAW Video PSA Contest Announced

Winners of the 2013 Severe Weather Awareness Week Video Public Service Announcement Contest were announced in March in conjunction with National Severe Weather Preparedness Week. Three winners were selected from high school and three middle school.

For the first time at DEM, the voting was opened up to the public. The videos of top finalists were placed on the SERT Facebook page and people were allowed to place their vote by “liking” their favorite video in each category. The online campaign proved successful with over 1,000 likes in total!

The winning High School and Middle School entries have been professionally reproduced and will air throughout the state as part of FDEM’s 2013 Media Campaign. For their efforts to help Floridians prepare for severe weather, each finalist received a scholarship provided through Volunteer Florida.

High School Winners
- 1st Place - “Flood Safety Puppy” by Justin Burt, Lawton Chiles High School, Tallahassee
- 2nd Place - “Make a Plan: Flood” by Nick Markart and Spencer Perl, Palmetto Ridge High School, Naples
- 3rd Place - “Know Yours!” by Bryanna Stuart, Port St. Joe High School, Port St. Joe

Middle School Winners
- 1st Place - “Get A Plan” by Aolani Brown, Reanne DeGraff, Danielle Charboneau and Amilah Eoonous, Liberty Middle School, Ocala
- 2nd Place - “Breaking News” by Jesse Velazquez, Arvida Middle School, Miami
- 3rd Place - “Listen, Watch, Evacuate” by Sara Reyes, Arvida Middle School, Miami

Safety Corner: Register your Emergency Contact Information with the DHSMV

Part of your severe weather preparation every year should include registering or updating your emergency contact information so police can easily find family members or friends if you need help. The Florida Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles offers Emergency Contact Information registration online at https://services.flhsmv.gov/eci/ and in driver license offices (to include driver license offices operated by county tax collectors).

Floridians who hold a current driver license or identification card can enter up to two contacts into the ECI database. Even if you have registered your information previously, it is a good idea to update your contacts periodically, especially if you or your contacts have moved. It takes only a few minutes, and there is no fee to register. The information you register is only available to law enforcement officers in the event of an emergency.

CONGRATULATIONS!
EMPLOYEES OF THE MONTH

- Jessica Blake, Response
- Mitigation Planning Unit: Alison Kearns, Cory Pelfrey, Bill McCusker, Jana Rosenthal, Harris Berns-Cadle and Amy Miller

Thank you for your hard work and dedication!