

Reeves Assists in Hurricane Response Efforts

WHEN HURRICANE GUSTAV BLEW ashore around 9:30 am on September 1, 2008 near Cocodrie, Louisiana, a low lying community 72 miles southwest of New Orleans, forecasters feared that it would remain a Category 2 hurricane, blowing winds at over 100 mph. But just four hours later, it had dropped to a Category 1 as it steamed inland towards Texas.

Although the storm did not cause the life-changing damage wrought by Katrina three years ago, New Orleans residents were not without obstacles.

In Plaquemines Parish, a levee was in danger of collapse. Roofs were torn from homes, trees toppled and roads flooded. More than one million homes were without power and the extent of any damage to the oil and gas industry was unclear. Residents who stayed behind during the evacuation were encouraged to flee.

Wind-driven waterslashed over the top of the Industrial Canal's flood wall – the same structure that broke with disastrous consequences during Katrina – and several nearby Ninth Ward streets were flooded with ankle- to knee-deep water.

As part of the City of New Orleans' Office of Emergency Preparedness response effort, the City deployed DRASH systems to various parts of the city.

More than 30 displaced residents were housed in a large J Shelter (1,250 square feet) with an accompanying trailer and generator for four days. A six-stall shower system was also set up, allowing at least 300 aid personnel a day to clean off the grime from their work day.



A six-stall DRASH shower system was set up in Algiers, allowing at least 300 aid personnel a day to clean off the dirt after a long work day.



More than 30 displaced residents were housed in a J Shelter System for four days for New Orleans' relief efforts during Hurricane Gustav in early September.

As part of the City of New Orleans' Office of Emergency Preparedness response effort, the City deployed DRASH systems to various parts of the city.

Plaquemines Parish purchased three DRASH small Command Post shelters, each providing 109 square feet of usable space, to use as point of distribution locations to provide water, supplies and aid to those in need.

A total of 700 kW of power from various DRASH generators were used to provide backup power to fire stations and power to disaster shelters that did not have power.

And this was only for those preparedness efforts related to DRASH.

Wary of repeating the mistakes of Hurricane Katrina, the city ordered mandatory evacuation of the whole of New Orleans commencing on the morning of August 31.

By that afternoon 1.9 million people had evacuated southern Louisiana, 200,000 of whom were residents of New Orleans, making it the largest evacuation in the history of the state.

A state of emergency was declared, activating up to 8,000 members of the Louisiana National Guard.

In Plaquemines Parish, local officials constructed a sand levee across Louisiana Highway 23 to save Belle Chasse from being overcome by flooding. The levee was completed eight hours later and did its job. Despite some damage and the temporary displacement of residents, New Orleans did not suffer undue amounts of damage from the hurricane. And with careful planning, and a little input from DRASH, they were well prepared to meet the worst.

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ICP Deployed During Air Show

THE REEVES ICP WAS RECENTLY deployed to assist local first responders during “A Salute to all of Connecticut’s Veterans,” a three day air show organized by the Veterans of Foreign Wars honoring veterans from World War II to the war in Iraq and Afghanistan, as well as the men and women currently serving in the military. Held at Brainard Airport, the event featured vintage aircraft and was attended by more than 7,000 guests.

Working with local agencies, Connecticut’s Department of Public Health provided two of its DRASH shelters to serve as a command post and first aid station to help the various first responder units at the show. The shelters were originally purchased in 2005 to be part of the State’s 14,000 square foot Ottilie W. Lundgren Mobile field hospital.



A DRASH 6XB is booted at a Reeves Incident Command Post (ICP), completing the medical shelter set up during an air show at Brainard Airport.

Though tripping and falling are the most common injuries at shows like the one held at Brainard, agencies serving at the event viewed it as an opportunity to test their ability to respond to a possible emergency.

Throughout the show, personnel used the Reeves ICP, 6XBI and 6XB DRASH shelters to better communicate with one another and offer the space needed to treat any medical incidents.

Doug Whalen, Deputy Chief for Brainard Airport, explained, “This is exactly what we need for a command post. In here we can hang up all of our worksheets and talk to one another. We have lighting, hook ups for electricity, printers, and televisions.”

By serving as the central location in which emergency personnel could organize and execute their efforts, the Reeves ICP and DRASH shelters not only helped local first responders, but the show’s organizers as well.

Jerry O’Neill, the display coordinator of “A Salute to all of Connecticut’s Veterans,” suggested that both the community and air show benefited from Reeves’ presence.

“It’s been a real benefit because it’s pulled everyone together and provided the town and its emergency personnel with a training exercise, and it’s provided us with the ambulances and medical support we need,” observed O’Neill. “It’s been a pleasure to work with the Command Post.”



DRASH medical shelter set up at the air show.

Reeves Deploys During Democratic National Convention

REEVES RECENTLY PROVIDED several shelters and generators at the Democratic National Convention. The shelters, including a large scale decon shelter, were used for command and control functions, as well as to assist in any possible chemical or biological attack during the event.

Working with four Civil Support Teams, including units from Colorado, Utah, Wyoming and Nevada, as

well as two Chemical, Biological, Radiological/Nuclear and Explosive (CBRNE) – Enhanced Response Force Package (CERFP) teams, including units from Colorado, Nebraska, and Georgia, DRASH shelters were deployed at several locations throughout the event.

During the four-day convention, shelters appeared at the Pepsi Center, Johnson & Wales University, and the INVESCO field on the night of Senator Obama’s speech.



New Guard Unit Ready for Hurricane Dolly

WHEN HURRICANE DOLLY ARRIVED on the Gulf Coast on the morning of July 23, the Category 1 hurricane was expected to dump up to 15 inches of rain, breach levees along the heavily populated Rio Grande valley and turn into a Category 2 with wind speeds of up to 96 mph.

To combat the anticipated damage, more than 700 Texas National Guardsmen were deployed through a special task force dedicated solely to emergency preparedness and disaster relief.

This was the first time that the newly formed Texas National Guard's Standing Joint Inter-Agency Task Force (SJIATF) was deployed to take care of a real world situation, and they were ready.

The day before the storm the SJIATF set up a main body command post in nearby San Antonio comprised of one 1,120 square foot and two 442 square foot water and wind resistant Deployable Rapid Assembly Shelters. To provide immediate on the ground command and control and an immediate communication link to the main body command post, the SJIATF also deployed a 442 square foot DRASH tactical command post northwest of Brownsville, TX. Crowd control was implemented, points of distribution (PODs) were set up, and transportation was organized. Additionally, water rescue crews and aircraft were on standby in San Antonio.

Because the anticipated damage from the hurricane was less than expected, the SJIATF only needed to deploy 700 of its 1,200 authorized soldiers. The area did experience 100 plus mile per hour winds, loss of power and some rainfall, but the levees along the Rio Grande were not breached.

The Texas National Guard's SJIATF is the first unit of its kind to focus exclusively on emergency preparedness and disaster relief, and is a direct result of follow up studies on the National Guard done in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina and Rita.

Since disaster relief and emergency preparedness is an additional duty for the National Guard, regular Guard units tend to focus on it less than a unit whose only function is disaster relief. Additionally, in today's wartime climate with Guard units regularly deployed overseas, the state needed a dependable unit that would always be ready to take care of disaster relief.

"To have an organization that has singularity of purpose, the expertise to come in and assume command of a domestic crisis, and to be able to link in domestic relief efforts was really critical," says Trent Baer, manager for the DRASH Fort Hood Regional Support Facility.

"The Texas National Guard SJIATF is the first organization of its kind that is doing this."

In order to be sufficiently prepared, the commander of the SJIATF maintains direct contact with the government organizations in charge of emergency preparedness and disaster relief. When a disaster occurs, the unit is then able to respond immediately by establishing an interagency command post that can be used by any agency involved in rescue and rebuilding operations.

"The Texas National Guard SJIATF is the first organization of its kind that is doing this."

Texas Military Forces from the Standing Joint Interagency Task Force (SJIATF) staged equipment and supplies at the San Antonio Emergency Operation Center in preparation of Hurricane Dolly striking south Texas Aug. 23.



Shelter Used as Drive-Thru Flu Vaccination Clinic



ON WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 8, THE Champaign-Urbana Public Health District in Champaign, Illinois had the opportunity to demonstrate and use a Reeves shelter as a drive-thru flu vaccination clinic during its annual vaccination event.

According to Emergency Response Planner John M. Dwyer the shelter took only four minutes to set up with only five personnel.

"The shelter was a complete success," says Dwyer. "We were able to provide over 150 pneumonia and flu shots within a twelve hour period. We wouldn't have been able to deliver shots out of the elements without it."

According to Business Development Representative Mark Vidovic, the drive-thru vaccinations took place during a demonstration where multiple community partners were present to see the operation of the shelter.

"This may lead to improved plans and incorporate new concepts in emergency management," says Dwyer.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Visit the Reeves EMS booth at these upcoming events or contact a Reeves representative at 800.328.5563.

Fire-Rescue East

January 28-31, 2009
Daytona Beach, Florida

Disaster Response and Recovery Expo

April 5-7, 2009
Dallas, Texas



ABOUT REEVES EMS

For more than 100 years the Reeves name has been synonymous with quality emergency medical products and accessories. The company's current product line includes fully-operational emergency treatment facilities; command and control shelters and trailers; decontamination systems and accessories; stretchers; disaster consulting services; and gear bags. Reeves EMS mass casualty systems have been deployed as part of the U.S. Homeland Defense initiative to terrorist incident locations and in disaster recovery situations. Additionally, a large number of mobile medical decontamination systems have also been sent to emergency response organizations in the United States and around the world, including departments of the U.S. Army, Navy, Air Force and Army Reserve; state, county and local government entities; U.S. corporate entities; and international companies. Although the company's headquarter facility is located in Frederick, Maryland, Reeves representatives are available throughout the United States and in various parts of the globe. To find out more about the company and its products, visit www.reevesems.com, send us an email at info@reevesems.com or contact a customer representative at 800.328.5563.

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