

NIMSAT receives fuel grant

The Department of Natural Resources has partnered with University of Louisiana at Lafayette to enhance the state's efforts to help ensure fuel supplies in times of hurricanes and other emergencies. UL's National Incident Management Systems and Advanced Technologies institute was awarded an American Recovery and Reinvestment Act grant of more than \$600,000 through the DNR.

The \$604,703 in funding will help create a system that allows the state to most effectively coordinate government and private industry efforts to provide citizens and businesses with needed fuel during and after mass evacuations due to hurricanes or other major emergencies. UL President Joseph Savoie said he appreciates the confidence the state has placed in the university in looking to NIMSAT to provide service on an area of such vital concern to Louisiana.

"We welcome the challenge and the opportunity it brings to continue to apply innovative thinking to issues that will be of benefit to the state of Louisiana for years to come during one of the most critical recurring events it faces — the landfall of a major hurricane," Savoie said.

DNR was tasked with managing fuel supplies for the evacuating public during hurricanes Gustav and Ike in 2008. Nearly 2 million people in the state of Louisiana evacuated as Gustav approached, and fuel supplies remained a concern as Louisiana felt the effects of Ike as recovery from Gustav was just beginning.

Following the storms, DNR led the effort to continue the work of the fuel team to improve processes that were put in place for the 2008 hurricanes. That work, still ongoing, resulted in the project that will be funded with the stimulus money.

"This project is a very appropriate and timely one as Louisiana continues the work of helping assure citizens and businesses that they will have the fuel they need to evacuate in the face of an oncoming hurricane and begin the recovery after a hurricane has passed," Scott Angelle, DNR secretary, said.