

BRIEFS

NIMSAT receives \$604K grant to help with fuel supplies

The Department of Natural Resources has partnered with the University of Louisiana at Lafayette to enhance the state's efforts to help ensure fuel supplies in times of hurricanes and other emergencies. UL Lafayette'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 Lafayette President Joseph Savoie, Ph.D., 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.

The team included DNR, convenience store owners, refiners, fuel transporters and fuel and transportation groups. That work, still ongoing, has led to the project that will be funded with the stimulus money.

"This project is a very appropriate and timely one as the state of 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. "Consistent with the economic development plans of the state, we are pleased to partner with and leverage our state university assets in this effort."

NIMSAT works to improve the emergency preparedness, response, recovery and mitigation activities for people, businesses and infrastructures through the conduct of research leading to innovative tools and applications that empower the homeland security and emergency management community through education, training, outreach and operational support.

Angelle said the impact of the planned work will not be meaningful only to Louisiana.

"It is my expectation that this will produce a work product that will not only help Louisiana, but be a model for the entire country," he said.

Form + Function all part of engineering tool

Form meets function in the College of Engineering at UL Lafayette. That's at least true for a red steel structure outside of Madison Hall, the Engineering building on campus.

On Sept. 1, college and university administrators with alums E.R. "Ray" DesOrmeaux and David Huval cut the ribbon on this unique teaching tool.

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