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Study of state fuel supply is underway

MARCH 1, 2010

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By The Associated Press

BATON ROUGE, — The National Incident Management Systems and Advanced Technologies Institute has begun a three-year project to review Louisiana's supply and demand for fuel, particularly when it comes to disaster recovery.

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The institute, which is housed at theUL, is developing a public-private communication on the issue with the help of more than \$600,000 in federal stimulus money passed through the state Department of Natural Resources.

The need for such partnerships became evident during Hurricane Gustav in 2008, said Ramesh Kolluru, executive director of the institute, also known as NIMSAT.

Kolluru said two days before the hurricane made landfall, NIMSAT got a call from Wal-Mart, which

is one of its partners. Company officials said the state would not have enough summer fuel blend to handle an evacuation of the entire coastal region.

Working with a number of state, federal and private partners, winter-fuel blend was allowed to be distributed and the evacuation moved forward.

"That spoke to us very clearly that there needs to be a public and private endeavor," said Kolluru.

NIMSAT also will look at the overall energy profile of the state and present a better look at the consequences if certain fuel supply lines go down during a disaster such as a hurricane.

NIMSAT is currently working on a project that's

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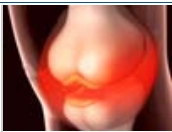
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expected to benefit the Department of Natural Resource, the agency in charge of managing fuel to help people during disasters.

Louis Buatt, assistant secretary of DNR's Office of Coastal Management, said a long-term goal of DNR is to develop a system where fuel tank

sensors can also share information with the state so that real-time fuel availability can be measured.

During a hurricane evacuation, real-time data from traffic cameras to road sensors will be added into a model so that if there is a detour along one route, emergency managers can see that traffic is being rerouted and plan for fuel accordingly, said Raju Gottumukkala, software development manager with NIMSAT.

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