

Chasing Down the Hurricanes

In facing and working through a disaster, access management is a key strategy. Identifying and then prioritizing the needs, relocation and types of employees, citizens and first responders during confusing situations is a disaster management essential. The 2008 hurricane season proved to be a carbon copy of 2005 that devastated New Orleans. Now, on the heels of Hurricane Gustav, preparing companies to face natural disasters takes a great deal of organization and willingness on the part of the business and facility owners. In this case, enterprises in the Gulf Region have been

as well as maintaining the security of the properties. “Our primary goal is to preserve lives. In a disaster zone, a healthcare facility is one of the primary places people will seek out putting an enormous amount of stress on the system. It takes additional personnel with emergency response training to carry out the plan that is in place and has been practiced,” explained McGuire.

LOCAL HELP

One of the biggest problems for locals during a disaster, according to McGuire, is the priority of local responders who have their own families to worry about and

storm. This would have a direct impact on the storm surge that some predicted would surpass all records along the Texas coastline at heights upwards of 25 ft. While surge estimates are not perfect, many estimate the actual surge to be about 15 ft.—the result of which has overwhelmed residents and completely destroyed properties.

The firm sent its advance teams to carry out the emergency response plan that involved first identifying and then moving residents who could be relocated and making preparations for staff and residents who would be remaining. “One of the facilities was only 25 miles from the eye and began



To handle crisis management needs for healthcare facilities, a diversity of means of transportation is needed.



Water was the biggest threat when it came to the hurricane threat.

preparing for this since the hurricane season of 2005.

Did the preparation pay off? It certainly did, reported William McGuire, CEO and founder of Global Security Associates, an international emergency response, aviation security and executive protection firm. The company's team of emergency responders rode out the storm at several area facilities ensuring the safety of residents and staff

secure. “By bringing in out of state expertise, the focus can remain on assisting in optimizing the survival of those who need to stay behind, without any distractions.”

As the storm barreled towards the coast of Texas, weather experts predicted the energy of the storm would be much greater than that of Katrina, while still a category 2 storm, its Integrated Kinetic Energy was 30 percent higher than Katrina, a category 5

to experience flooding on the first floor, we simply stuck to the plan and began moving out of the way of the surge and repositioned generators. There were no surprises, so there wasn't any panic. The key is to be ready for anything.”

In the aftermath of Ike, it is clear that normalcy will be slow to return to many coastal towns in Texas. **SECURITY**