



Parish of Ascension

OFFICE OF THE PARISH PRESIDENT

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State Officials Encourage Local Businesses to Sign Up With Emergency Information Website

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GONZALES – State officials reminded members of the Ascension Parish Economic Development Family that while home hurricane preparedness procedures should already be in place, businesses should be prepared as well.

Kevin Davis, director of the Governor's Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness, addressed the Economic Development Family meeting on June 20 and encouraged local businesses to go online and sign up with the Louisiana Business Emergency Operations Center (LA BEOC).

The Louisiana Business Emergency Operations Center (LA BEOC) is a joint partnership between Louisiana Economic Development (LED), the Governor's Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness (GOHSEP), the National Incident Management Systems & Advanced Technologies (NIMSAT) Institute at the University of Louisiana at Lafayette and Stephenson Disaster Management Institute (SDMI) at Louisiana State University.

According to their website information, the LA BEOC will work with businesses to improve their disaster preparedness; improve communication with business and industry before, during and after disaster events; rapidly develop sound economic-impact estimates to support decision making and requests for business assistance; coordinate response efforts to assist businesses in their efforts to return to normal operations as quickly as possible; and help coordinate post disaster economic recovery.

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By listing what local companies provide, Davis said needs for services could be provided more quickly by utilizing local companies rather than by established national business connections.

“During those events, we may contact you,” Davis said. “If you remember, when we were eating those MRE’s (Meals Ready to Eat) which were \$8 to \$8.50 a piece, we ate them all because we didn’t have anything else. But, we discovered we could get chefs from right here from your parish that could cook what we are eating here tonight for about \$4. And guess what, we employed them.

“So through the business EOC, what may happen, is we will make a call to them, and say this is what we need. Let’s see if we have it locally first,” Davis said.

Davis said the BEOC is the first of its kind in the U.S. and the concept is being modeled so other nationwide emergency operations centers may start their own.

Davis said businesses may register with the LA BEOC at www.labeoc.org.

Mark Riley, deputy director of recovery with GOSHEP, commended the Ascension Parish Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness saying they have been a key player regionally as well as locally. He complimented the parish’s emergency operations record and the leadership of Director Rick Webre.

“We rely heavily on Rick, not only for what goes on here in the parish, we’ve asked him to come to other parishes to assist those parishes when they’ve been in need.” Riley said.

Riley reminded the audience of the importance of having a family emergency disaster kit put together.

Riley said that information is located on GOSHEP’s website at <http://www.gohsep.la.gov>.

“Regardless of predictions, you’ve got to stay prepared,” Riley said.

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State officials with the Governor's Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness (GOHSEP) spoke recently at the Ascension Parish Economic Development Family meeting. Shown from left to right: Rick Webre, director of the Ascension Parish Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness; Martha Collins, Ascension Parish Grants Officer; Kevin Davis, director of GOSHEP; Ascension Parish President Tommy Martinez; Mark Riley, deputy director of recovery with GOHSEP.

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