

August 2005



FEMA

National Situation Report

As of 5:30 a.m. Wednesday, August 31, 2005

This information is provided as a public service. Information presented is considered public information and may be distributed or copied. Use of appropriate byline/photo/image credits is requested. Published daily by the FEMA National Response Coordination Center (NRCC). Available on the internet at: <http://www.fema.com/emanagers/natsitup.shtm>. For questions or comments, call the NRCC at (202) 646-2828/4541 (staffed 24 hours a day, 7 days a week).

Homeland Security Threat Level:

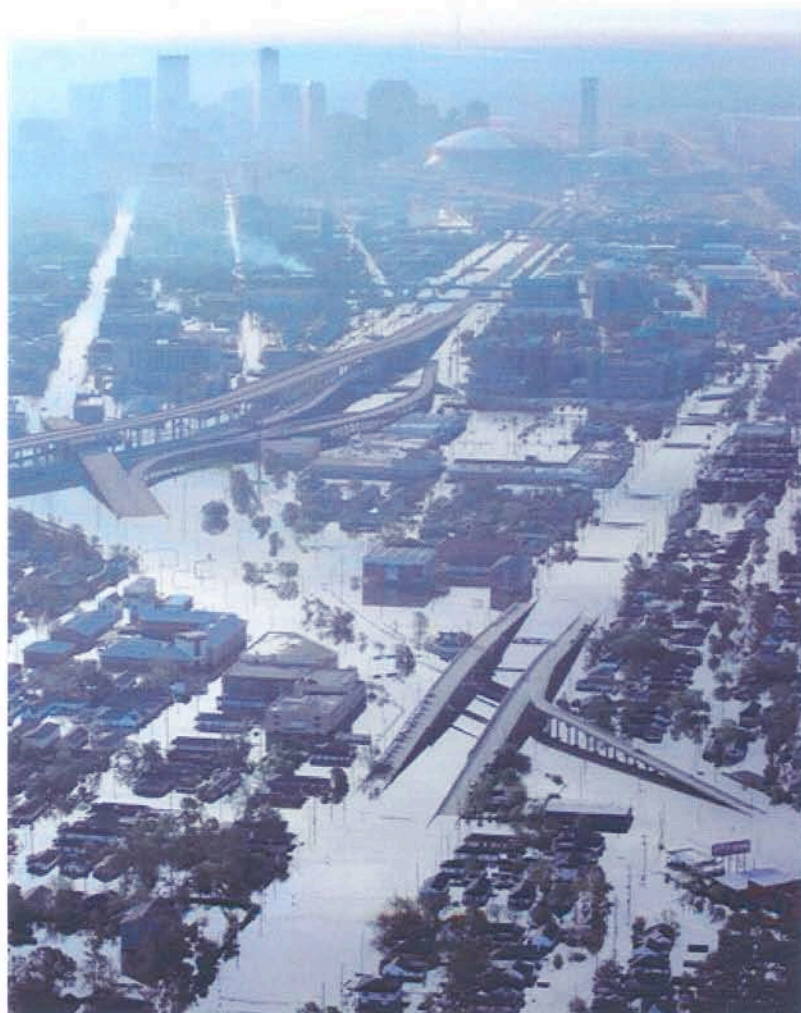
ELEVATED

New Orleans 80 Pct Flooded; Dike Breach Letting In Lake Water - Officials

New Orleans is 80 pct flooded, with water still rushing into the city after Hurricane Katrina due to a 200 foot breach in a dike protecting the city from Lake Pontchartrain, city officials said.

New Orleans, most of which is below sea level, is surrounded on three sides by bodies of water, with Lake Pontchartrain in the north, Lake Borgne in the east and the Mississippi River in the south.

Most of the flooding was being caused by a breach in the levee holding back Lake Pontchartrain, officials said, and US military engineers were searching for ways to plug the hole, including dropping shipping containers filled with sand from airplanes.



'The breach in the 17th Street canal is about 200 feet wide,' New Orleans Police Lieutenant Julie Wilson told reporters. 'The water is going to keep coming in until it reaches the level of the lake. I don't know what they are going to do.'

'The devastation is greater than our worst fears,' said Louisiana state Governor Kathleen Blanco. 'It is just totally overwhelming. It is a tragedy of great proportions.'

'There's no electricity and won't be any for quite a while,' the governor told reporters in Baton Rouge, the Louisiana capital. 'There's no water. And there's no food to be had.'

'The communications network is completely gone,' Blanco said. 'We think there may be only one major way into the city right now.'

Governor Blanco said rescuers have saved hundreds of people, but 'many lives' have been lost. 'We know that many lives have been lost,' she said, but there was no way for authorities to put together any kind of reliable death or casualty toll.

Telephone communications with New Orleans were cut off and around 700,000 people were without power.

The Superdome, which is holding at least 10,000 evacuees, was surrounded by water on Tuesday. Evacuees sat tight in the massive sports arena, which itself bore Katrina's scars after having much of its outer dome ripped off on Monday. *(Media Sources)*

National Forecast

Northeast: Rainfall of 3 to 5 inches is forecast from eastern Ohio through northern Pennsylvania, New York state and Northern New England as remnants of historical Hurricane Katrina race into the region. According to hydrologists it would only take 3 to 5 inches to cause flooding throughout New England and New York state. In parts of western Pennsylvania it would only take 2 to 3 inches of rain to cause flooding. There is also a chance for scattered strong to severe thunderstorms, with isolated tornadoes, from New Jersey to New England. Weather conditions should improve into the holiday weekend.

South: With much of southeast Louisiana and coastal Mississippi devastated by Hurricane Katrina, at least it will be mainly dry across the South for awhile. It will be hot along the Gulf Coast with highs in the lower 90s with the heat index in the lower 100s with no change in the near future. A few scattered thunderstorms are possible along the Southeast Coast and Florida today, while the Southern Plains will be sunny and hot with highs in the 90s to lower 100s. The only problem area over the holiday weekend will be parts of central and southern Florida where a stalled front will trigger scattered thunderstorms.

Midwest: Look for scattered thunderstorms to head out of the Dakotas into Minnesota today as a cold front slides eastward through the region. Some of the thunderstorms could become locally heavy but only isolated severe weather. Morning rain from Katrina will still plague areas from the Ohio Valley to the Great Lakes. High temperatures will range from the 60s in northern Minnesota to the 80s in the Missouri and Ohio Valleys.

West: High pressure at the surface and aloft will keep the West plenty warm and dry for awhile. A cold front will press eastward out of the the Rocky Mountains early, lowering the temperatures to the 60s and 70s. No relief is coming to the desert regions of the Southwest with high temperatures back around 110 degrees. *(NWS, Media Sources)*

Wildfire Update

National Preparedness Level 3

CURRENT SITUATION: Initial attack activity was light nationally with 136 fires reported. Eight new large fires were reported, five in the Eastern Basin and one each in the Western Great Basin, Southern and Southwest Areas. Six large fires were contained. Very high to extreme fire indices were reported in Arizona, California, Colorado, Idaho, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, Oregon, South Dakota, Washington and Wyoming. An Area Command Team (Rounsaville) has been tasked by the National Multi-Agency Coordinating Group to evaluate radio communications on incidents with consideration to training and education, maintenance and replacement of equipment, narrow banding, communication and coordination with cooperators, and usability.

OUTLOOK: Fire Weather Watches: For southeast Wyoming and northern Colorado for winds, very dry relative humidity and fuels. For northeast Utah for strong winds and low relative humidity. Red Flag Warnings: For low humidity and gusty winds for Mono and eastern Alpine Counties in California. In southern Idaho and western Utah for strong winds and low relative humidity. Red Flag Warning valid until 0600 Tuesday morning. Along and east of the entire Cascade-Sierra crest from Oregon to Lake Tahoe for strong gusty winds and low relative humidity. For the foothills surrounding the Sacramento Valley and in the north end of the valley tonight until Wednesday afternoon for strong gusty winds, low relative humidity, and poor overnight humidity recovery. Weather Discussion: A surface cold front will move across the Rockies today with much cooler temperatures in the Northwest and Great Basin. Strong gusty winds will spread from the western portion of the Rockies into the Eastern Great Basin today. Also, dry and windy conditions will develop in the northern Sacramento Valley. Mainly wet thunderstorms will accompany the front in the Rockies. Showers will continue in Alaska with greatest precipitation across the southern portion of the state. Remnants of Hurricane Katrina will move across western Kentucky, near Cincinnati, and into northwestern Ohio today with very heavy rainfall and strong winds.

Idaho

NEW Bell Rapids 2 (Twin Falls District, Bureau of Land Management): 4,000 acres at 50 percent contained. This fire started on private land one mile north of Hagerman in grass, sage, and riparian areas. Residences, transmission and power lines, cultural resources, and critical wildlife habitat are threatened. A power line was damaged. Road closures are in effect. Rapid rates of spread with ten foot flame lengths were observed.

NEW Patterson (Salmon-Challis National Forest): 800 acres at zero percent contained. This fire is two miles north of Patterson in timber. Residences and commercial property remain threatened. Wind driven runs with crowning was observed.

Frank Church (Payette National Forest): 18,758 acres. This lightning-caused Wildland Fire Use (WFU) incident, comprised of the Bear Creek, Root Creek, West Fork/Joe, Missouri Ridge and several other fires is 50 miles northeast of McCall. The fire is being managed to accomplish resource objectives. Commercial property, residences and historical structures are threatened. Fire growth was observed on six of the fires. The West Fork/Joe fire experienced a six mile run.

Montana

Signal Rock (Beaverhead/Deerlodge National Forest): 4,000 acres at five percent contained. The fire is 17 miles southwest of Philipsburg and is burning on both the Bitterroot and Beaverhead/Deerlodge National Forests. Highway 38 was closed as a safety precaution. Multiple crown runs and long range spotting were observed.

Cottonwood Creek (Southern Land Office, Montana Department of Natural Resources): 3,485 acres at 80 percent contained. The fire is eight miles east of Columbus. Residences, rangeland and cropland are threatened. Smoldering in heavy fuels was observed.

Rockin (Bitterroot National Forest): 4,500 acres at 60 percent contained. The fire is 10 miles northwest of Darby. Narrow canyons, steep and rocky terrain continue to hamper containment efforts. Higher temperatures, lower humidity and windy conditions increased fire activity. Smoke and high winds prevented helicopter recon of the fire. Suppression operations were temporarily suspended until after passage of a cold front.

Seepay #2 (Flathead Agency, Bureau of Indian Affairs): 3,200 acres at zero percent contained. The fire is two miles southwest of Perma. A microwave communications site, structures and cultural sites are threatened. Area road closures are in effect. Winds and low relative humidity enabled the fire to make major runs.

Selway-Salmon Complex (Bitterroot National Forest): 11,546 acres. This lightning-caused Wildland Fire Use (WFU) complex, comprised of the El Capitan, Wapiti, Beaverjack, Reynolds Lake and numerous other fires, is 26 miles southwest of Hamilton. This complex, burning on both the Salmon-Challis and Bitterroot National Forests, is being managed to accomplish resource objectives. A ranch, campground, work center, historic ranger station, cabin and two lookouts remain potentially threatened, and structure protection remains in place. Magruder Corridor Road remains closed to through traffic. Trail closures remain in effect in active fire areas. Active surface spread was observed with short range spotting and intense burning in heavy downed fuels on several fires. Other fires exhibited creeping and smoldering.

Nevada

NEW Grass Spring (Winnemucca Field Office, Bureau of Land Management): 350 acres at zero percent contained. The fire is three miles southeast of Austin in grass, sagebrush, and pinyon/juniper. Residences, commercial property and cultural resources are threatened. Running and spotting fire behavior were observed.

Chance (Northern Region, Nevada Division of Forestry): 17,500 acres at 30 percent contained. This fire is six miles northeast of Elko, NV in sagebrush, grass and juniper. Residences, power lines, and radio communication equipment are threatened. Steep rugged terrain and high winds are hampering containment efforts. Extreme fire behavior was observed with rapid rates of spread and spotting. Fire has jumped containment lines in numerous places.

New Mexico

NEW Mountain (Gila National Forest): 350 acres at an unknown percent contained. The fire is six miles east of Reserve. Creeping and smoldering was observed. Natural barriers are helping to limit the spread of the fire.

Oregon

Deer Creek (Southwest District, Oregon Department of Forestry): 1,548 acres at 80 percent contained. This fire is eight miles north of Cave Junction. Residences and other structures remain threatened. Steep terrain, heavy fuels, and hot and windy weather are hampering containment efforts. Creeping and smoldering fire behavior were observed. Decrease in acreage is due to better mapping.

Granite Complex (Wallowa-Whitman National Forest): 27,560 acres. This lightning-caused Wildland Fire Use (WFU) incident is 30 miles east of Enterprise. This complex is being managed to accomplish resource objectives. Structure protection remains in place for historic cabins in the area, and an area closure remains in effect. Torching with short uphill runs was observed prior to passage of a cold front. Fire behavior moderated with passage of the front.

Utah

North Neola (Uintah and Ouray Agency, Bureau of Indian Affairs): 4,038 acres at 75 percent contained. The fire is two miles north of Neola. One residence was lost and structures and a commercial property are threatened. Road closures are in effect. Moderate fire activity was observed. (*National Interagency Fire Center, National Interagency Coordination Center*)

Other Tropical Cyclone Activity

In the Eastern/Central Pacific, no storms threaten land or any U.S. interests.

At 11:00 pm EDT, Typhoon (ty) 14w (Nabi) position near 15.7N 145.8E, or approximately 35 nm northeast of Saipan. Typhoon Nabi has tracked west-northwestward at 10 mph over the past six hours. Maximum sustained winds - 103 mph, gusts 127 mph, and significant wave height is 35 feet. (*National Hurricane Center, Joint Typhoon Warning Center*)

Earthquake Activity

A light earthquake occurred at 00:24:03 am EDT on Tuesday, August 30, 2005. The magnitude 4.6 event has been located in Central Alaska about 174 miles southeast of Anchorage. There were no reports of damage. (*USGS National Earthquake Information Center*)

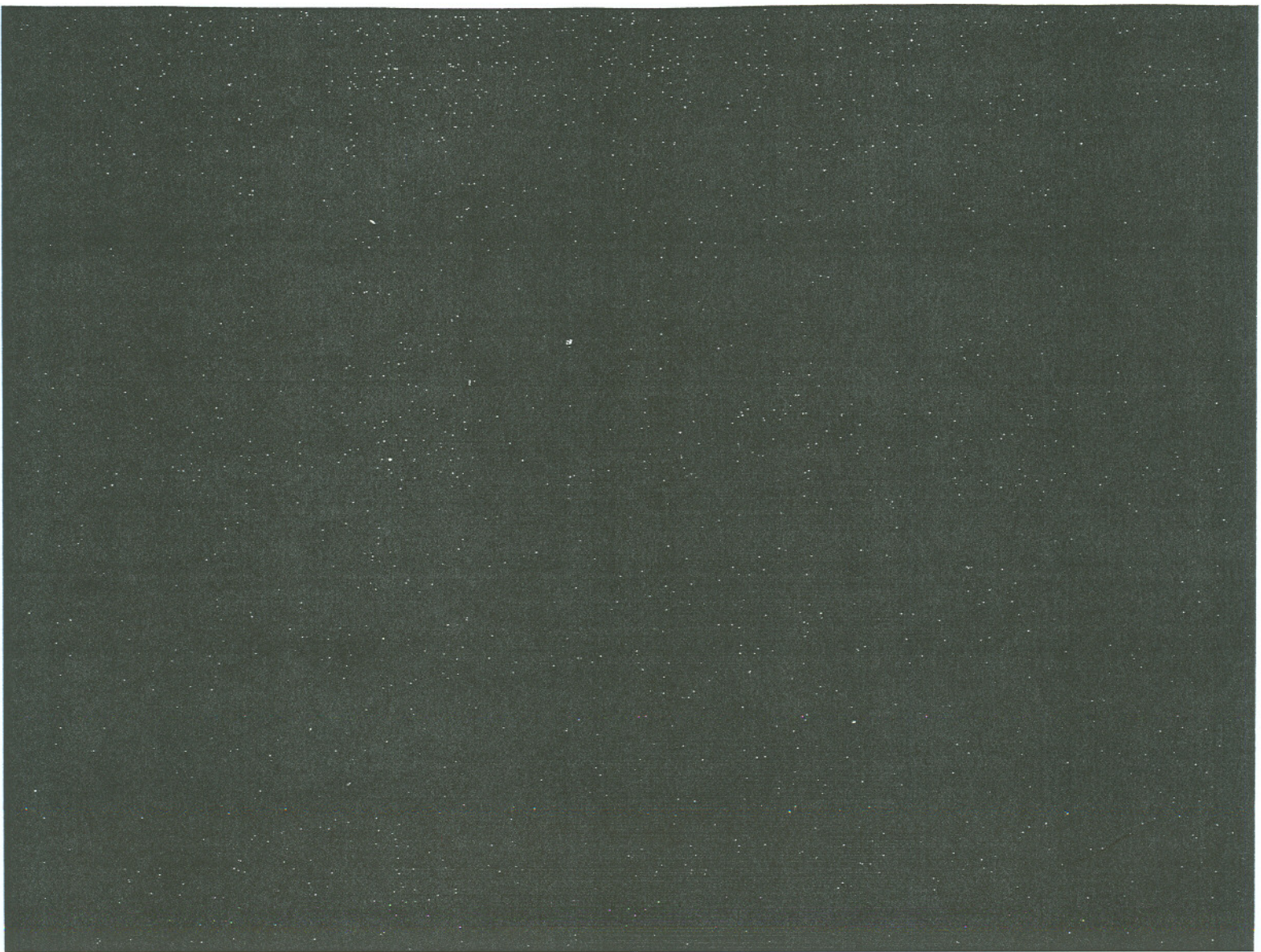
Preliminary Damage Assessments (PDAs)

No significant change during the past 24 hours. (*FEMA HQ*)

Disaster Declaration Activity

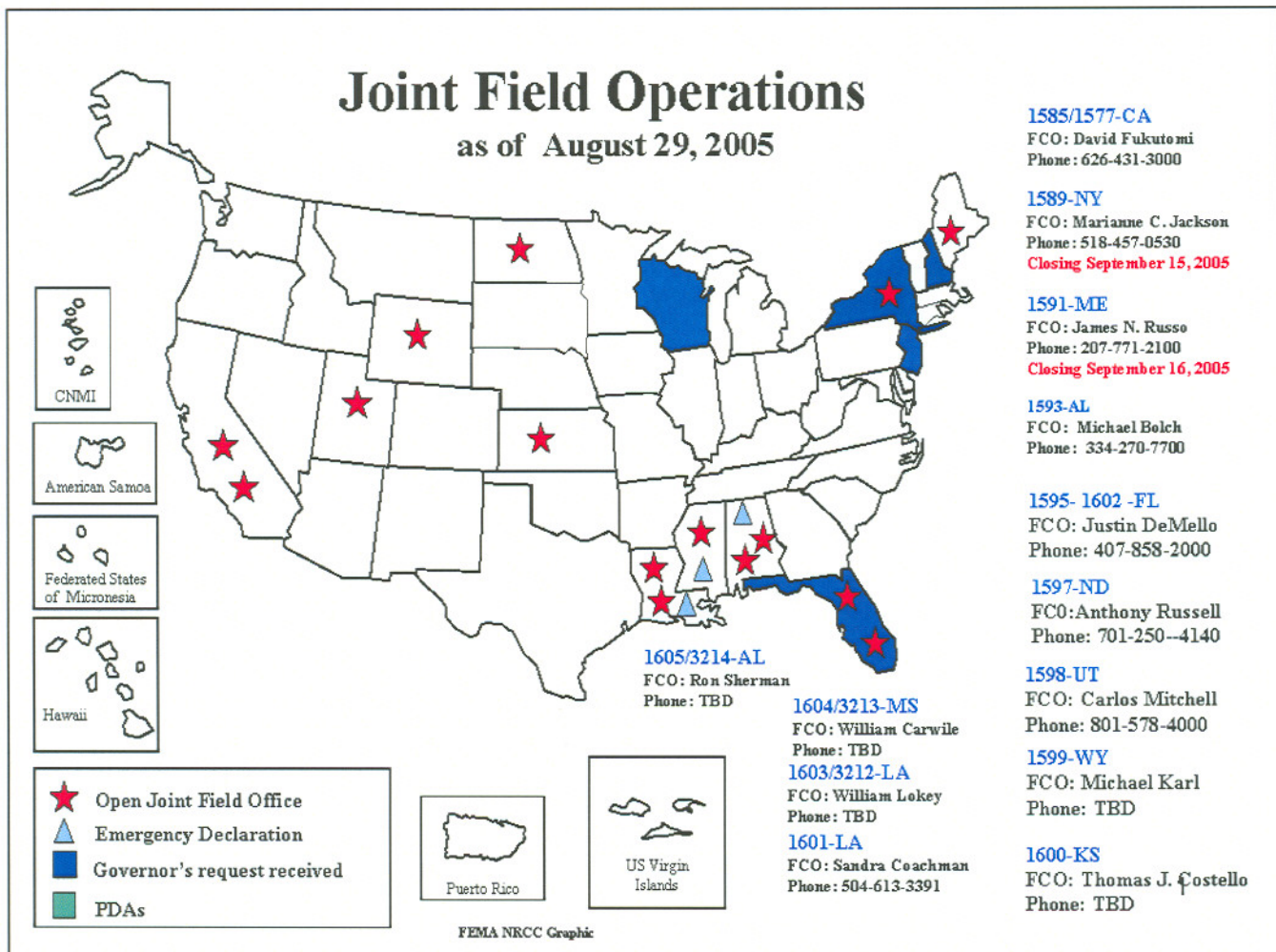
FEMA-1603-DR-FL was amended on August 30, 2005 to add one county for Public Assistance and two counties for Public Assistance Categories C- G. (*FEMA HQ*)

FEMA Readiness Alert Status:



Disaster Teleregistration Activity Chart

DR	Incident Type	08/30/05	Cumulative
1605-AL	Hurricane Katrina	3,578	3,971
1604-MS	Hurricane Katrina	1,448	1,735
1603-LA	Hurricane Katrina	11,964	13,149
1599-WY	Tornado	5	184
1595-FL	Hurricane Dennis	64	39,349
1593-AL	Hurricane Dennis	27	13,734
Total		17,086	72,122



The FEMA Homeland Security Daily Operations Report is prepared by the FEMA National Response Coordination Center (NRCC). Questions can be addressed to NRCC watch officers via phone at 202-646-2828/4541 (staffed 24 hours a day, 7 days a week), via fax at 202-646-4617, or via e-mail at FEMA-NRCC@dhs.gov.