

As We Mark the Third Anniversary of 9/11...

WEROC's Efforts to Support Its Member Agencies in Security and Terrorism Preparedness Planning

Prior to 9/11, weapons of mass destruction (WMD) — i.e. nuclear, biological, and chemical weapons — was the key phrase being used by the Department of Justice (DOJ), and the California State Office of Emergency Services (OES). Local emergency planners focused the majority of their time and efforts on natural and manmade disasters, and WEROC took a pro-active role in coordinating information sharing with Metropolitan's Security and Response staff and Orange County's Operational Area emergency staff.

Today, as we mark the third anniversary of 9/11, water agencies continue their efforts in security and terrorism mitigation, preparedness, and response. Many agencies have now completed their Vulnerability Assessments and are starting to update their Emergency Response Plans (ERP).

Recognizing that the WEROC member agencies will need to receive information and guidance to assist them in the ongoing development of their ERPs and general day-to-day security programs, WEROC staff expanded its role as a clearinghouse for security and terrorism information.

In order to provide this service, WEROC participated in the following activities:

- ◆ WEROC joined the Orange County Operational Area (O.A.) Terrorism Working Group, which includes members from County and City Law Enforcement, Fire Services, Utilities, County Health Services, Red Cross, and Special Districts. The group meets quarterly to discuss and analyze security and terrorism information, issues, and activities from international, national, and regional intelligence sources that have the potential to affect Orange County. The group also provides expertise to the O.C. Sheriff to develop a comprehensive alert and response plan for future terrorist events.
- ◆ Kelly Hubbard participated in workshops, which present threat, risk, and response methods and exercises necessary to test an agencies

vulnerabilities and response. She is available to assist member agencies with their own efforts.

- ◆ WEROC joined the FBI-InfraGard Program, Los Angeles Chapter. Organized through the Department of Homeland Security and managed by the FBI regional offices. InfraGard meets quarterly with representatives from local business and industry, utilities and transportation to provide a forum for information sharing on infrastructure vulnerabilities and protection measures. An added benefit of this interaction is the formation of the Water Sector Group within the Infragard group. This provides an increased learning curve for the FBI in understanding the operations and security concerns of local water agencies through separately held sub-committee meetings. WEROC Members can also gain insight by proposing issues and topics to the group through Kelly's attendance at these meetings.

In addition to disseminating information and guidance, a new section on terrorism and security will be added to the WEROC Emergency Response Plan when updated later this fiscal year.

Kelly Hubbard Named WEROC Emergency Services Coordinator

The Municipal Water District of Orange County (MWDOC) is pleased to announce Kelly Hubbard has been named the new Emergency Services Coordinator for the Water Emergency Response Organization of Orange County (WEROC).

Kelly comes to MWDOC from the city of Claremont where she served as emergency preparedness and volunteer coordinator. She was responsible for a multi-agency planning and response group, as well as the city's AR network.

Kelly's firsthand experience includes operating Claremont's Emergency Operations Center and the city's Evacuation Center in September 2002 and again in September 2003 when wildfires threatened the city's borders.

Kelly was recently awarded the *Southern California Emergency Services Association's Silver Public Sector Award* for her efforts during the Grand Prix fire.

Kelly's first objectives are to conduct a test exercise of the south WEROC Emergency Operations Center on September 30 and to meet with all of the member agencies.



KELLY HUBBARD

Deadlines Near for Plan Preparations

Approval of Local Hazard Mitigation Plans by FEMA Due by November 1

As a reminder, the Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000 requires that Local Hazard Mitigation Plans (LHMP) must be approved by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) by Nov. 1, 2004, for agencies to be eligible to receive federal hazard mitigation project funding to assist in recovery efforts.

The LHMP process must include public input and address the natural hazards identified in the local government's jurisdiction.

Once a plan has been drafted, it should be submitted to the State Office of Emergency Services (OES) for their review and then forwarded to FEMA for final approval. Once an agency completes an approved LHMP, it becomes eligible for the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP).

The HMGP is a FEMA grant available to states after each disaster declaration. It provides up to 75 percent in funding for hazard mitigation measures that are cost-effective to reduce the risk of damage and human suffering from future disasters.

Emergency Response Plans Due No Later than December 31

Now that Vulnerability Assessment Plans (VAPs) have been completed, updated Emergency Response Plans (ERPs) are due.

ERPs are due no later than Dec. 31 or six months from the day you turned in your VAP, whichever comes first.

Remember that the purpose of the ERP is to address new areas of vulnerability. It's also a great opportunity to review and update your entire plan.

Please contact Kelly Hubbard, WEROC's Emergency Services Coordinator, at (714) 593-5010 if your agency has questions regarding either plans.

WEROC Emergency Operation Centers Need Additional Staff Volunteers

A significant emergency could press WEROC's two Emergency Operations Centers (EOC) into 24-hour-a-day operations for up to five days, during which a sizable and trained EOC staff would be required.

While WEROC currently relies on a number of staff from Orange County water agencies and consulting firms to volunteer for EOC positions, efforts are now underway to recruit about 35 additional EOC staff.

There are two ways to become a WEROC volunteer. The first is as a "designated" volunteer, reporting to the WEROC EOC during a disaster. The second is as an "assigned" volunteer, reporting to the WEROC EOC only after responding to your agency first and being cleared to provide help elsewhere.

All levels of experience and expertise are needed and training is provided. The time commitment is approximately 12-15 hours per year, excluding actual emergencies.

If you're interested in volunteering, please call Kelly Hubbard, WEROC Emergency Services Coordinator, at (714) 593-5010.

Two-Year Renovation of WEROC Radio System Complete

Reliable communications is at the heart of WEROC's mission. Our two radio repeaters provide radio coverage, as well as system redundancy, across the entire County. After 17 years of service the repeaters have been replaced with new technology to ensure the most reliable communications possible. WEROC's base station radios and its antennas were replaced and or updated last fiscal year with new equipment. The WEROC radio system is available for member agencies' use during any emergency.



New Repeater System

The W · E · R · O · C Water Emergency Response Organization of Orange County

Pipeline

c/o MUNICIPAL WATER DISTRICT OF ORANGE COUNTY
10500 Ellis Avenue ■ P.O. Box 20895 ■ Fountain Valley, CA 92728
(714) 963-3058 ■ Fax: (714) 964-9389

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