

# The Region III Report

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Region III Information Source

Philadelphia, PA, March 21, 2003

## ICC Maximum Increased

The National Flood Insurance Program has increased the amount it will pay to bring qualifying flood-damaged buildings up to local floodplain ordinance requirements. The Increased Cost of Compliance (ICC) maximum amount has been raised from \$20,000 to \$30,000 for losses occurring on or after May 1, 2003.

FEMA Federal Insurance and Mitigation Administration officials said information based on the number of losses reported in this category since 1997 has led to a decrease in the estimated number of future annual ICC claims. Based on this information, the NFIP can increase the limit of coverage with no change in the insurance premium.

See "ICC" page 3



## Irish History Month Observed

President Bush proclaimed March 2003 as Irish-American Heritage Month. He calls upon Americans to observe this month by "learning about and commemorating the contributions of Irish Americans to our Nation." Region III celebrated the event on Tuesday, March 18. Terri O'Connell, director of public relations for Irish Memorial, Inc., spoke about the memorial to be dedicated at Penn's Landing in Philadelphia in October. The bronze, 12-foot high, 22-foot long and 12-foot wide monument, designed by Glenna Goodacre, will mark the 150th anniversary of The Great Hunger (*An Gorta Mor*, 1845-1850). The famine, triggered by the failure of the potato crop and the forced exportation of food by Ireland's foreign rulers, resulted in the starvation of a million Irish and the emigration of a million more. Today, one in four Americans can trace ancestry to Ireland.



## SEPLO Visits Regional Office

Philadelphia Judge Seamus McCaffery met with Acting Regional Director Pat Arcuri on March 13. Judge McCaffery currently serves as the State Emergency Preparedness Liaison Officer (SEPLO) for Homeland Defense to the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. As a SEPLO he works with FEMA and the Defense Coordinating Officer to ensure military response requirements are coordinated and provided efficiently. McCaffery, a trial judge in Philadelphia, is known for creating the NFL's first and only court and establishing the Nuisance Night Court Program. He has also had a distinguished military and law-enforcement career.

## The News in Brief...

▶ **FEMA Increases Its Share for Secure Rooms:** FEMA's cost-share for EOC Secure Room grants has been increased to a 75/25 match instead of the 50/50 match stated in previous guidance. The 75/25 cost-share applies to the Phase II competitive grants and will retroactively apply to the FY 02 Secure Room grants. The \$50,000 that each individual state received to complete an EOC assessment will remain 100 per cent federally funded.

Secure Room construction grants will be awarded on a non-competitive basis. Currently, FEMA Region III has received and is reviewing applications from all its states for this phase of the grant. *For further information, call, Cedric Cherry at 215-931-5605.*

▶ **HMGP Fund Base Reduced:** The amount of money available for Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) projects will be reduced as result of an amendment to the Stafford Act. Effective on February 20, 2003, the pool of funds available for HMGP Projects has been reduced to 7.5 percent (from 15 percent) of the total Federal assistance provided

▶ **Snow Emergency Guidelines Listed:** All five Region III states and the District of Columbia requested emergency declarations to help with snow removal cost during the Presidents Day holiday. Certain guidelines spell out the types of work eligible for reimbursement. FEMA assistance is limited to eligible costs incurred within a 48-hour period selected by the community. Communities may request an additional 24 hours of assistance if their snowfall far exceeded the record accumulation for that community.

All contract costs relating to snow removal and emergency protective measures during the 48-hour period are eligible, but only overtime for regular employees may be eligible. FEMA's assistance helps communities remove snow from emergency routes and other primary roads for emergency vehicle use.

The governor, or mayor of Washington, D.C., must submit a request for emergency declaration to the President, through the Regional Director and Director of FEMA. The governor also must have declared a state of emergency and certify that the event is beyond the state's capability to effectively respond.

▶ **FEMA Senior Managers Appointed:** FEMA's five top managers have been named. Ron Castleman will serve as Chief Operating Officer; Dave Paulison, Director of the Preparedness Division; Anthony Lowe, Director of the Mitigation Division; Eric Tolbert, Director of the Response Division; and Reynold Hoover, Director of National Security Coordination. Larry Zensinger is Acting Director of the Recovery Division. The appointments were announced Feb. 28 in preparation for FEMA becoming part of the Department of Homeland Security. Under Secretary designee Michael D. Brown, Emergency Preparedness and Response Directorate, said there are no changes to the current regional structure or the Regional Operations Directorate at Headquarters at this time. *For more information, call Phil Clark at 215-931-5716.*

▶ **Why We Don't Lower Reservoir Levels:** When the potential for flooding is high, one of the questions a concerned citizen may ask is: Why don't we lower reservoir levels to provide more storage capacity? The Delaware River Basin Commission (DRBC) cited three reasons.

First, the release mechanisms are not designed for flood control. The release capacities are so small it would take many days to significantly reduce the pool level. The time required would be longer than the available lead time.

Second, depending on rainfall patterns and channel conditions downstream, the release could worsen flooding and ice jam conditions.

Third, pre-flood release can jeopardize water supply and flow augmentation the following summer.

All large reservoirs in the Delaware River Basin provide flood-control benefits, even when they are full. Full reservoirs, equipped with spillways provide flood control benefits because of the large quantity of water required to raise the lake elevation. *For further information, call Rick Fromuth at 609-883-9500.*

▶ **64 Virginians Help with Columbia Search:** At least 64 residents of Virginia have so far joined the interagency task force searching for debris from the Columbia Space Shuttle. This group includes the 20-person Virginia Job Corps #1 (VAJC #1), which just demobilized from working at the Corsicana base camp. Corsicana was one of the largest camps for ground search operations. Teams from Corsicana have searched 52,000 acres to date and picked 4,485 items. *For more information, call Russ Edmonston at 936-699-1049.*

*More briefs next page*

## More Briefs...

► **Fire Grant Application Period Opens:** The application period for the 2003 Assistance to Firefighters Grant Program opened Monday, March 10. This fiscal year, \$750 million will be available nationwide to help rural, urban and suburban fire departments to better train, prepare and equip themselves. The application form is available on-line at [www.usfa.fema.gov](http://www.usfa.fema.gov). Fire departments have until April 11, 2003 at 5 p.m. to complete and submit applications.

The purpose of the program is to award one-year grants directly to fire departments to enhance their abilities with respect to fire and fire-related hazards. This program seeks to support departments that lack the tools and resources necessary to protect the health and safety of the public and their firefighting personnel. The primary goal is to provide assistance to meet fire departments' firefighting needs.

In 2002, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) distributed more than \$334 Million through 5,316 grants. In Region III, 511 fire departments received grants for a total of \$33,985,945. *For more information, call Lori Bainbridge at 215-931-5641.*

## Region III FIM CD Earns Straight A's

Teachers who tested the Region III educational Compact Disk (CD) presented a report card on the project last week and gave the project straight A's. The Region III Federal Insurance and Mitigation Division prepared the disk following the flooding in Southwest Virginia last summer.

Teachers from Wise, Scott and Lee counties and the city of Norton, Va., used the Compact Disk (CD) to teach preparedness and mitigation techniques to all grades. The material is organized by grade level – from kindergarten to vocational/adult learner.”

At the Virginia Emergency Management Conference in Williamsburg March 11 to 14, two teachers from the pilot project gave presentations showing how the educational CD was used in the classroom.

Mary Dora Smith represented grades K-4. She showed a Claymation story developed by students about a family during a flood crisis. Mrs. Smith also showed a PowerPoint program and

talked about how the CD can be used in other areas of elementary school education.

Betty Collier represented the grades 5-12. She presented an earthquake resistant, model house made by her ninth grade science class. Collier also showed a video about constructing the house and explained how the CD benefits both school and community.

Four workshops Thursday afternoon drew an audience of about 100 people, many of asking about the CD's availability for use elsewhere in Virginia.

“We are excited that background materials . . . and other useful documents will be readily available,” said James C. Firebaugh Jr., of the Virginia Department of Education. Danny Dixon, Scott County Public Schools director of instruction, called disaster education efforts “a timely and urgent matter.” He said the program will “significantly enhance the educational quality of the schools’ disaster training.

Eric Tolbert, director of the Emergency Preparedness and Response

Directorate of the Department of Homeland Security; Michael Byrne, National Capital Region Coordinator for Emergency Response at DHS; and Tom Davies, NCR Federal Coordinating Officer from Region III, spoke during the conference. Also participating from Region III were George Smith from the Response and Recovery Division and Stephanie Nixon from the Federal Insurance and Mitigation Division.

### ICC Cont.

Increased Cost of Compliance is coverage for expenses a property owner must incur, above the cost to repair the damage the structure sustained in a flood, to comply with mitigation requirements of state or local floodplain management ordinances. Acceptable mitigation measures are elevation, flood proofing, relocation, demolition, or any combination those measures as approved by local building officials. ICC coverage is provided on nearly all flood insurance policies.

**More circulation:** *The Region III Report* is a vehicle for FEMA to share information with our federal, state and local partners and our full-time staff and reservists. Thank you for your comments and suggestions in our previous issues. Please send any email addresses or changes and story ideas to Phil Clark at [r3report@fema.gov](mailto:r3report@fema.gov).