



## **Abstract of Presentation by Sharon Strain**

Housing Authority of Galveston

*Readiness for Recovery: HAG Evacuation & Management Model*

January 18, 2007

Introduction: At the Galveston Housing Authority we serve a population of people with low incomes, many of whom do not have transportation. The population for our housing authority right now is 65 percent elderly, handicapped or disabled. Although we do not have a legal obligation to take people off of the island, the HUD regulations under which we function say that people have to be able to live independently to live in public housing. And although there is no legal responsibility, we know we have a strong moral responsibility to help those who need transportation.

**Thoroughly review one's evacuation plan on an annual basis:** Generate new ideas through discussion. Revise partner Memorandums of Understanding such as with bus services and shelter facilities.

**Identify essential employees who will need to return to the island when the hurricane is over and how to return them:** Train and retrain employees in this regard.

**At evacuation time dispatch the resident services team to notify residents:** The team will deliver a letter to each resident to advise regarding the evacuation bus departure time and how much luggage each resident can bring.

**Assign staff to accompany residents, especially those with medical needs, to the bus, to the shelter and to stay in the shelter.**

**Equip employees** who will accompany residents on evacuation with a backpack including walkie talkies, emergency money, and a list of residents whom they are accompanying:

**Evacuate when possible upon early notification to avoid traffic jams:**

**Evacuate the finance director with important records to ensure continuity of operations:** The finance director should evacuate with records backup information, blank checks; cash; and copies of all deeds, insurance policies, and everything needed to be able to establish operations in another location.

**Move the computer server off of the island to maintain access to resident records:** Move the server off island to ensure the ability to access housing

authority resident records and to communicate with other housing authorities and HUD to find places to house people if returning to the island is not possible.

**Allow for the maintenance director to stay at the island community center to direct employees and to assist people from the City** with their evacuation process until it is time to board up and go:

**Prepare for returning to one's community after evacuation:** Purchase and share groceries. Be receptive to a sister city's help with temporary housing and other support.

**Maintain flexibility with one's emergency response plan:** Plans provide a framework for decision making when disaster circumstances are off plan:

**Maintain partnerships in one's emergency response plan:**

**Factor into the response plan the knowledge that under current law not all public housing authority residents will leave when a mandatory evacuation is called:**

**Double the amount of essential staff performing various tasks during the evacuation period due to the extreme demands of an evacuation scenario:**

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