

Employees serve

Rapid response to hurricane relief, recovery

In the wake of hurricanes Katrina and Rita making landfall on the Gulf Coast, CH2M HILL mobilized employees and resources at a rapid pace to aid in relief and recovery efforts. As task orders come in from a variety of government as well as private clients, CH2M HILL is continuing to deploy employees to the region and provide staff support from several U.S. offices.

The firm is working for the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), the Army Corps of Engineers, the Air Force, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, state agencies and private clients on a variety of projects ranging from establishing temporary housing to assessing damage to Superfund sites.

Employees are working with FEMA to provide temporary housing for displaced people

in Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana and Texas. CH2M HILL is responsible for site identification, installation and maintenance for temporary housing. Locations include state parks, mobile homes, RV (recreational vehicle) parks and cruise ships. As of Sept. 28, nearly 1,300 furnished travel trailers were ready for occupancy in Alabama.

In addition, the firm is providing 122 quality assurance inspectors for debris removal and temporary roofing construction in Louisiana. This contract value increased nearly 80 percent to a total of \$9.1 million from an original awarded value of \$5.5 million for the 60-day contract. Two teams were deployed to New Orleans and a third team was deployed to Lake Charles, La.

In a second Corps contract, CH2M HILL is providing temporary classroom and municipal space in more than 35 locations in Mississippi.

Of major concern are the high levels of waste in and around affected areas. CH2M HILL is working with EPA to conduct assessments of Superfund sites in Louisiana and Texas. Initial assessments and sampling are being done to determine if the sites were damaged by the hurricanes.

Employees are preparing remediation cost estimates for the client whenever damages are identified.

The firm is working with the Air Force and Defense Logistics Agency to repair, maintain and operate military bases in the Gulf States. Minor construction and roofing repairs were undertaken. Environmental impact of the hurricanes is being assessed by the firm. Santa Rosa Island near Eglin Air Force Base in Florida was damaged by prior hurricanes and again by Katrina. CH2M HILL is working to repair damage to roads, seawalls and sand dunes.

Information technology and geographic information system support was provided to the Mississippi Emergency Management Agency. The firm was part of a communications team tasked with establishing communication infrastructure for key emergency management facilities in southern Mississippi.

Employees mobilized immediately to continue meeting the needs of industrial clients located in the affected areas by providing recovery efforts at manufacturing facilities, establishing communication networks and assessing damages to facilities and offices.



CH2M HILL is working with the Army Corps of Engineers to construct 300 temporary schools and municipal buildings in Mississippi. One of the larger projects is the DeLisle School, a combined K-12 school in DeLisle.

CH2M HILL has an office on Poydras Street in downtown New Orleans, just blocks from the damaged Superdome. These photos, taken one week after Hurricane Katrina, show the damage to office buildings as well as the surrounding area where more than two feet of water remained. The office remains closed pending an internal health and safety inspection. About 40 New Orleans employees have been working out of the Baton Rouge, La., office or are teleworking. The Baton Rouge office has nearly doubled in size to accommodate displaced New Orleans employees.



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One of the most immediate concerns following Hurricane Katrina was flooding from Lake Pontchartrain into New Orleans. Kaiser-Hill employee Jerry Long, while watching television coverage of the initial response efforts, saw that the effort to dam levee breaches could be greatly improved by using specially designed polypropylene fabric bags from Kaiser-Hill's nuclear cleanup project in Colorado. More than 3,800 bags were provided to successfully stop the flow of water into the city. Each bag was filled with 16,000 pounds of sand and dropped into the levee breaches by Chinook and Blackhawk helicopters.

Throughout the hurricane-ravaged region, hazards abound—auto congestion, construction equipment, and widespread debris. Before CH2M HILL employees are deployed to do field work, they are provided vaccinations and special Health & Safety equipment and training, customized for specific areas. Employee working in New Orleans, for example, are given protective clothing and dust-masks to prevent possible contamination exposure. As with any project, the goal is to have no injuries, and to date, there have been no recordable incidents involving CH2M HILL personnel.

Hurricane Katrina severely damaged ports in Gulfport, Miss. CH2M HILL conducted initial assessments throughout the Gulf Coast to identify ports where cruise ships could be docked. The firm also provided fender and bollard upgrades to allow the ports to accommodate the large ships. Four ships were identified by FEMA to provide temporary housing for displaced people, first responders and local officials in affected areas. The ships include the Carnival ships Sensation, Ecstasy and Holiday and the Scotia Prince, a seagoing ferry with more than 1,000 berths.

