



The Flood Protection Authority-East

News of Your Flood Defense System

July 1, 2020



Floodgate closure in preparation for Tropical Storm Cristobal

The Flood Protection Authority
6920 Franklin Avenue
New Orleans, LA 70122

Telephone:
504-286-3100

www.floodauthority.org

Flood Protection Authority

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Message from Board President Herbert Miller

As I begin my second term, I find myself reflecting on the past year, my first as President of the Board of Commissioners.

A week into my first term we were hit with Tropical Storm Barry. Leaning on my nearly two decades of previous government experience dealing with hurricanes as a department head in Jefferson Parish, I did what I knew I should do: stay out of the way and let the staff do their jobs. I made myself available to discuss any issues that came up and deal with any political matters involving our fellow government agencies should they arise. However, I found the need for my services were minimal. I was impressed by the professionalism of the entire staff – both field and office personnel – in getting the system protected in record time and dealing with every issue that arose. I was not surprised by this. I knew from my prior three years as a Commissioner that we had an outstanding staff from top to bottom.

Most of the rest of the year was uneventful, standard stuff. That is until COVID-19 hit. This was new territory for everyone. Yet, due to the leadership of the Senior Staff and the unparalleled cooperation of our employees, the FPA managed to keep our facilities fully operational. Further, by following the rules for social distancing and wearing PPE, the incidences of infection were kept down to a minimum, even while the Parishes around us are looking at an upward trend after initially flattening the curve regarding infection rates. Most of this newsletter is devoted to the efforts undertaken by our employees during these difficult times.

In the meantime, I know that the employees of the FPA will continue to perform at the highest level. We on the Board of Commissioners have gotten used to that.

Stay safe and stay well.

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Board Recognizes Dr. Andrew J. Englande for His Service



At its June 18th meeting, the Board recognized Andrew J. Englande, Jr., Ph.D., P.E., DEE, for his dedication and contributions during his tenure as a member of the Board of Commissioners of the Southeast Louisiana Flood Protection Authority-East and for his devoted service to the citizens of Southeast Louisiana.

Dr. Englande served as a member of the Flood Protection Authority-East Board from September 28, 2016 through July 1, 2020. He has been an enthusiastic advocate of the Flood Protection Authority's Public Outreach efforts, and, in particular, the education of the region's youth about flood defense and coastal restoration.

Dr. Englande's outstanding qualifications, expertise and professional experience, including over fifty years of professional experience in the fields of water resources and environmental and civil engineering, made him an invaluable resource for the FPA.

Dr. Englande graduated from Vanderbilt University in 1974 with a Ph.D. in Environmental and Water Resources Engineering and from Tulane University with a Masters in Civil Engineering (1969) and a B.S. in Civil Engineering (1967). He is currently Professor Emeritus, Department of Global Environmental Health Sciences, Tulane University School of Public Health and Tropical Medicine.

Dr. Englande has published over 150 papers on water resources and the environmental sciences and received numerous awards and recognitions for his many achievements, academic accomplishments and generous public service.

Dr. Englande will be sorely missed by the Board of Commissioners and FPA staff.



FPA Board Members (L-R) Mark Morgan, Quentin Dastugue, Herbert Miller, A.J. Englande, Herbert Weysham and Clay Cosse

Board Welcomes New Member Gene Joanen



Eugene Joanen will become the newest member of the Board of Commissioners of the FPA-East on July 2, 2020. He will officially be sworn into office at the July 16, 2020 Board meeting.

Gene Joanen is the Owner, CEO and Senior Scientist of Balance Consulting, Inc. In 1991 he received his Masters degree from LSU Baton Rouge in Environmental Sciences, and in 1990 he graduated from LSU with a B.S. in Environmental Management Systems.

Mr. Joanen has over 30 years' experience as lead consultant/program manager in the areas of land management, site assessment and remediation, laboratory development, technology integration, wildlife assessment and invasive species management, program development, water quality assessment, permitting and disaster assessment.

In his application for appointment to the FPA-East Board, Mr. Joanen states as his reason for wishing to serve, "I believe my unique skill sets with over 30 years' experience as a team leader on important environmental projects, practical minded approaches in risk management and acumen for solving complicated technical problems will benefit the Board's vital mission. I have always hoped to have the opportunity to serve the public especially in such a consequential role in protecting the citizenry, infrastructure, and assets of not only local and state importance, but significant national assets."

Mr. Joanen brings a tremendous amount of professional expertise and experience to the Board and to the management and operation of the critical \$14 billion Hurricane and Storm Damage Risk Reduction System protecting the lives and property of the citizens of the Greater New Orleans region.

COVID-19 Storm Season Impacts



Maintenance crews close floodgates in advance of TS Cristobal

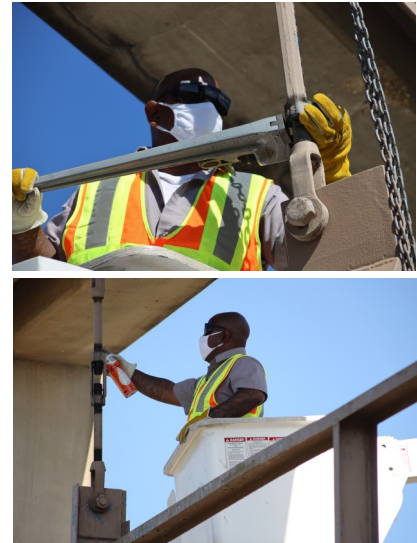
Historically, the Flood Protection Authority-East (FPA) begins preparations for the 2020 Hurricane Season months prior to its June 1st commencement. Such preparations include the complete inspection of the flood defense system, updating the Comprehensive Emergency Operations Plan, participating in hurricane preparedness exercises, and ensuring that sufficient equipment, supplies and materials are on hand and ready for deployment, just to mention a few.

This year, however, staff also had to address the enormous challenges presented by the COVID-19 pandemic and ensure that the Hurricane and Storm Damage Risk Reduction System (HSDRRS) and the Mississippi River Levee are not only maintained and fully operational, but also that a sufficient workforce is

healthy and able at any given time to close the flood defense system in advance of a tropical storm and remain on 24-hour duty to operate the system, monitor the storm and flood defense system, and address any potential unforeseen issues during a tropical storm, hurricane or other event.

In addition to the protocols and measures implemented to allow the FPA's essential employees to safely continue their duties and responsibilities operating and maintaining the flood defense system while Louisiana was under a Stay at Home Order and during Phases I and II of the reopening, staff devised plans to mitigate the challenges imposed by the coronavirus in advance of and during a tropical storm.

The Emergency Operations Center layout was redesigned to account for social distancing and schedules were developed staggering sleep times for the essential staff remaining on 24-hour duty. Finance Department staff who provide support for personnel remaining on duty will prepare and provide healthy, well balanced take out meals for hard working crew members and system operators. The FPA contracted with local medical providers capable of providing results within two hours of testing so that personnel can be tested immediately prior to an anticipated tropical storm and employees who test positive can be released home or allowed to evacuate. This will prevent employees who are COVID-19 positive and asymptomatic from effecting coworkers when all personnel remaining on duty must shelter in the FPA's safe rooms during hurricane force winds.



The FPA has also taken advantage of current technology and will utilize videoconferencing and other capabilities for Emergency Operations Center operations.

Hurricane Barry proved that under normal conditions all of the gates in the flood defense system can be closed within 60 hours. COVID-19 impacts, such as wearing masks, single person occupancy per vehicle, and the additional coordination that will be required, are expected to increase the timeline by about 12 hours. Therefore, to mitigate the increased timeline, 21 non-essential floodgates were closed on June 1 and 2 for the season, thereby decreasing a potential full closure by six hours.

Tropical Storm Cristobal presented an opportunity to implement and test the additional protocols and measures that were developed. The FPA's Maintenance crews began closing floodgates on Thursday, June 4th, to mitigate the impacts of Cristobal—the earliest third named storm in the North Atlantic Ocean on record. All eight Complex Structure gates were closed. The crews continued thru Saturday night (June 6th) closing a total of 73 land based floodgates. This brought the system relative to the land based floodgates to an elevation of 7.0-ft. Staff monitored the tropical storm as it approached the coast and no further floodgate closures were necessary. Operations crews activated the three Permanent Canal Closures and Pumps (PCCP) stations at the foot of the London, Orleans and 17th Street Canals during Cristobal.

As always, the FPA's dedicated employees remain at the ready to respond to all events, whether tropical storm, hurricane or high river, that threaten the region.

FPA Administration Tackles COVID-19 Challenges

From the very start, the guidance given to staff was **Mission First, People Always!** The Flood Protection Authority-East (FPA) maintained compliance with all Proclamations and Directives by Governor John Bel Edwards as well as Parish officials. However, flood defense is *essential* for the citizens of this region; therefore, the mission of the FPA had to go on — and all measures necessary for FPA employees to *safely* continue carrying out their duties and responsibilities had to be developed and implemented throughout the organization.

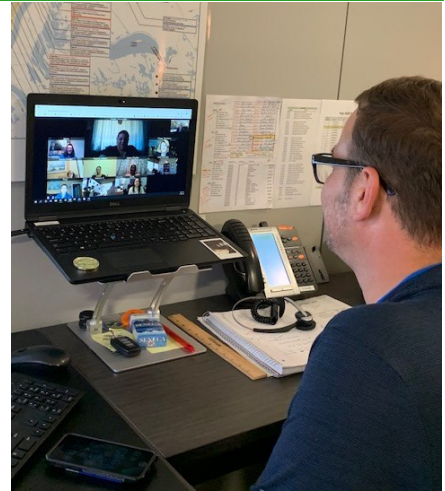
In response to the rapidly developing pandemic, staff had to quickly develop plans to comply with the guidelines that were issued. Staff immediately implemented plans that would allow all functions of the organization to continue in as safe a manner as possible.

Personnel who were able to do so, mostly Administrative staff, were provided the equipment needed to transition to working from home, which continued until the phased reopening of the Parishes. Departments utilized videoconferencing to conduct meetings and training sessions. Meanwhile, FPA offices were being outfitted with Plexiglas dividers and other adjustments were made to accommodate the safe return of staff.

Procedures were set up to support employees with child care needs and employees who were required to self-quarantine.

Through hard work, perseverance and creativity staff procured the Personal Protection Equipment and other necessary supplies during an unprecedented time of scarcity of these items. The FPA established a Personal Protection Equipment (PPE) Policy and provided the PPE needed by employees, such as masks (cloth and N95), gloves, eye protection and hand sanitizer. Staff also ensured that all facilities were sanitized and that sufficient cleaning products and sanitizer were available for all employees for wiping down office spaces, vehicles and equipment on a daily basis.

East Jefferson and Orleans Levee District Police officers received the essential PPE to continue their duties in support of the FPA's flood defense mission and the protection of the public.



Board members Mark Morgan, Quentin Dastugue, Herbert Miller, CAO Derek Boese, Herbert Weysham, Andrew Englande and Clay Cosse

FPA staff was required to address the COVID-19 challenges while continuing their normal duties. The FPA will continue seeking ways to keep its employees safe and prevent the spread of COVID-19 while this unpredictable coronavirus continues creating global havoc.

From the start, the FPA stressed that safety is both an organizational and individual responsibility. The practices of wearing masks and social distancing were mandated along with daily temperature checks. The result is that the protocols and PPE are working.

At its June 18th meeting, the FPA Board of Commissioners presented Chief Administrative Officer Derek Boese with a plaque recognizing and commending him for outstanding leadership and exceptional management during the COVID-19 crisis.

FPA Operations and Maintenance Staff Plow Ahead During COVID-19 Shut Downs

In spite of COVID-19 challenges, Operations and Maintenance crews did an outstanding job keeping all aspects of the flood defense system maintained and fully operational. At times it became necessary to require whole crews to self-quarantine when an employee tested positive for the coronavirus; however, the crews that continued the FPA's mission did an excellent job maintaining all aspects of the system.



FPA employees proved their commitment and understanding of the *essential* nature of their mission, which was recognized in Governor John Bel Edwards' Mandate issued on March 22nd, as defined by the federal Department of Homeland Security, Cybersecurity & Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA), to include:

- Public personnel in law enforcement;
- Workers who support weather disaster/natural hazard mitigation and prevention activities;
- Workers who support the operation, inspection, and maintenance of essential dams, locks and levees.

Procedures were put into place to safeguard employees and prevent the spread of COVID-19 along with Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) policies developed in accordance with the Centers of Disease Control (CDC).

Sanitizing and disinfecting facilities, vehicles and equipment became a top priority, as did providing the PPE needed for defense against the virus. An occupancy restriction of one individual per vehicle, truck or piece of equipment was put into place.

Crews were broken into smaller groups, work schedules were staggered, and alternating day and night shifts were implemented to minimize employee interaction. Adjustments will be made as circumstances allow.

Some crew members were assigned temporary duties outside of their normal scope of work in order to create a safe working environment for coworkers and they performed this work in an extraordinary manner.

All employees of the FPA are committed to working together to ensure the success of our mission of flood defense and public service.



Community Assistance During COVID-19 Crisis

Flood Protection Authority (FPA) employees received essential hand sanitizing products during a time of widespread scarcity due to the generous, thoughtful contributions by some of New Orleans' local distilleries. These products provided a measure of safety that helped FPA's employees to continue performing their essential duties operating and maintaining the critical flood defense system and protecting the region while Louisiana was under the Stay at Home Order and during and beyond Phase I of the reopening.

Following is an article written by a member of the East Jefferson Levee District Police Department that was printed in the Flood Protection Authority's monthly newsletter recognizing and thanking these distilleries for their generosity and support:

During these times of concern and protective measures, we as both Public Service and Enforcement Agencies have had our share of logistical hurdles. COVID-19 has presented unprecedented circumstances for police departments throughout the country.

The Levee District Police Departments work within guidelines of back up and support for all our personnel. When we were confronted with questions on how to protect our on-duty and patrol personnel with sanitization and disinfection measures, we at Police Administration had to move away from conventional practices and learn how to think "out of the box."

On April 20th, 2020 Nola.com published an article stating that local alcohol distilleries were moving away from liquor beverage distribution and into the realm of hand sanitizer and liquid disinfection supplies. *"Hand Sanitizer is a vital tool in the Coronavirus fight, and that has spurred a global shortage for the once ubiquitous product. New Orleans companies have begun their own home-front production efforts, selling or donating their new products to health care providers and direct customers through their storefronts. And their numbers are growing."* (Nola.Com Ian McNulty - Staff Writer 04.01.2020)

We in Police Administration saw this opportunity as an entryway, to not only network with new corporate partners, but to also support the needs of our police officers during COVID-19. I would like to honor the following Local Distilleries who stepped up and answered the call supporting the Levee District Police Departments and the Flood Protection Authority with donated distilled sanitation products:

Sazerac Co. 101 Magazine Street New Orleans La.

Ms. Jana Ritter, Ms. Ashlee Mixson, Ms. Rebecca Dorsky and Ms. Brooke Ethridge allowed for a donation of grain alcohol distilled base agent. This base agent was utilized to produce multiple bottles of surface disinfects, supporting not only the police departments, but Flood Protection Authority personnel agency-wide. This group of representatives were welcoming in all of their communications and were very assistive when we arrived on site!

Celebration Distillation 2815 Frenchmen Street New Orleans La.

Ms. Katie Darling and the Michalopolous Foundation were instrumental in assisting our Police Departments with a fully formulated, alcohol based, hand sanitizer product. Ms. Darling allowed for an open-rapport though her office for the pick-up of these products and assisted other police agencies locally as well. It should be noted that Ms. Darling's husband is currently a Law Enforcement Officer for the New Orleans Police Department. Ms. Darling stated knowing what her husband does for the community, she and her company wanted to do the same!

Atelier Vie 1001 Broad Street New Orleans La.

Mr. Jedd Hass was also a corporate liaison who assisted our agencies with a formulated, alcohol based, sanitizer product. Mr. Hass went out of his way to contact us and advise us that his distillery has been formulating this product and was willing to donate these supplies on site. Mr. Hass brought his donated product to the East Jefferson Levee District Safe House, wearing protective materials so we could accept this donation as well!

All of these products have been distributed throughout the FPA East Administration and the Orleans and East Jefferson Levee District Police Departments. We are thankful for the entities answering the call of Community Assistance and Supporting Our Departments!

Captain Donald Juneau, East Jefferson Levee District Police

New Elevator for the Lakefront Airport Terminal



The new elevator constructed adjacent to the historic Terminal

The new elevator provides ADA compliant accessibility to the terminal's second floor offices, conference facility and atrium. Numerous tourists and art lovers visit the airport to view the fully restored series of eight murals created by renowned artist Xavier Gonzales circa 1934 that line the second floor atrium walls, along with the decorative Art Deco motifs and elements that embellish the ceiling and walls.

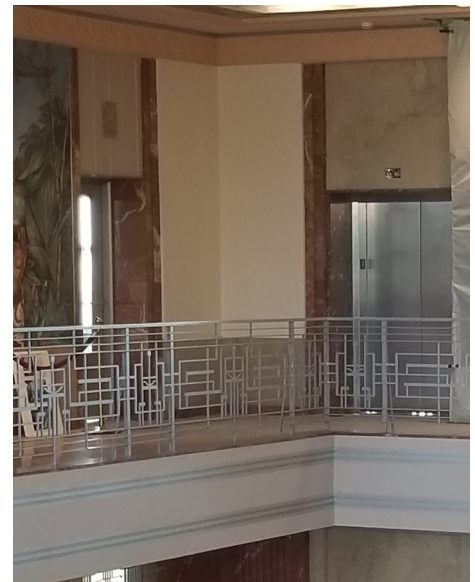
Due to the restoration completed in 2013, the Terminal has once again become a testament to the glory of the Art Deco Period and the Works Progress Administration providing visitors with a glimpse into the Golden Age of Aviation. The Walnut Room and atrium have become popular venues for weddings, corporate meetings and other private and public events.

The Terminal's new elevator (pictured right) is located in a corner of the atrium. The original OTIS elevator (pictured bottom left) remains in place and is another feature of the building that allows visitors a glimpse of a bygone era. The second floor of the atrium (pictured bottom right) is a restored Art Deco masterpiece.

The New Orleans Lakefront Airport Terminal now boasts a modern new elevator that brings the building into ADA compliance. The Lakefront Management Authority's innovative design allowed minimal impact to the historic Art Deco structure. The metal framed glass elevator was constructed adjacent to the terminal on the airfield side of the structure and provides riders with a panoramic view of the airfield and Lake Pontchartrain.

The new OTIS elevator, constructed by Smith Construction at a total cost of \$553,659, is expected to be completed and ready for public use by the end of July, 2020.

The historic OTIS elevator, which was operating when the Airport Terminal was dedicated on February 9-13, 1934, will remain in place. The elevator was originally designed to have a lift attendant or elevator operator and was updated in 2013 to provide push button recall service. The doors (outer door and cage) of the elevator, however, still had to be manually opened and closed. The elevator because of its significant age had over time become increasingly undependable since replacement parts had to be specially manufactured causing lengthy periods of inoperability.



FPA Public Information Alerts

sign-up



If we can't **REACH** you
we can't **ALERT** you

The Flood Protection Authority-East (FPA) strives to provide timely information to the public regarding public safety issues, closures and events that impact people, businesses and communities in order to minimize disruptions and keep the public safe and informed. The FPA recently implemented the Everbridge Management Platform for providing alerts to the public.

Everbridge is the industry standard using the most up-to-date communication technology and is widely used throughout federal, state and local government agencies, organizations, commerce and industry.

The FPA offers subscriptions to the following Keywords:

Floodgate (Any information on floodgate opening, closing or maintenance)

FPAEast (Any general news about the Flood Protection Authority-East)

River (Any information about the High River or the Mississippi River)

HighTide (Information regarding gate openings and closures as they relate to high tide situations)

It's a simple process to register for these Emergency Alerts. Text the appropriate Keyword listed above to "333111" for the alerts you would like to receive. Should you wish to receive alerts offered under more than one Keyword, each Keyword must be texted to "333111".

Virtually Tour Your Flood Defense System

Visit the Flood Protection Authority-East's website to learn about your flood defense system and virtually tour some of the massive components of the \$14 Billion Hurricane and Storm Damage Risk Reduction System (HSDRRS).

Videos include a tour of the Permanent Closures and Pumps (PCCP) station located on the 17th Street Canal, the IHNC Surge Barrier, Complex Structure Gates, levees, floodwalls and floodgates, as well as FPA crews closing these massive structures in advance of a tropical storm.

Visit floodauthority.org and click on Education.

Flood Protection Authority Monthly Board Meetings can be viewed via livestream by visiting the FPA website www.floodauthority.org/ and clicking on the Facebook icon located at the top right corner of the page or going to: www.facebook.com/FloodProtectionAuthority/.

The Flood Protection Authority urges everyone to become informed about their flood defense system and encourages organizations and business and community groups to schedule a tour of the IHNC-Lake Borgne Surge Barrier and Permanent Canal Closure and Pumps (PCCP) Stations.

The Flood Protection Authority has postponed all tours of the IHNC Lake Borgne Surge Barrier and Permanent Closures and Pumps (PCCP) Stations at this time due to the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency. The FPA will resume the tours when conditions allow.

When tours resume, to schedule a tour of the IHNC Surge Barrier and/or PCCP, visit our website at floodauthority.org and click on "Schedule Facility Tours" at the bottom of our home page. Fill out the Tour Information Sheet and click on "submit" at the bottom of the sheet.

Editor: Glenda Boudreaux
Associate Editor: Wilma Heaton

Comments can be submitted to:
gboudreaux@floodauthority.org