

Thursday, March 21, 2013

Lunch Speaker

Time of Session: 12:00-1:30PM

Session Title: U.S. National Weather Service Weather Ready Nation Initiative

Speaker: **Jim Salzwedel**, National Weather Service

Room: 236

Head Count: 71

Note Taker: Hannah Maharrey

UNO-CHART Disaster Resistant Universities
Thursday, March 21st, 2013
Jim Salzwedel, National Weather Service
Lunch Speaker, 71 attendees

U.S. National Weather Service Weather Ready Nation Initiative

Jim Salzwedel Bio: Jim is from the National Weather Service Office, New Orleans/Baton Rouge Office. He holds a B.S. Degree in Social Science from Northern Michigan University with a minor in Geography. Jim is a Navy veteran having served in Operation Iraqi and Enduring Freedom. He has been all over the world and enjoyed living in Japan for three years. Jim's first assignment with the National Weather Service was in Barrow, Alaska. He will beginning a new position at the Marquette, Michigan office on the south shore of Lake Superior in the next coming months.

Jim began his presentation by showing a video of two children playing in the surf at a sandy beach with what appeared to be warm, temperate weather. He then asked the room if they could guess where this video was shot. This footage was filmed in Barrow, Alaska, which is the northernmost city in the United States and the 9th most northernmost city in the world.

The founding goal of The US National Weather Ready Nation Initiative is building communities of resilience to help offset the U.S.'s increased vulnerability to extreme weather.

Examples of this extreme weather are Superstorm Sandy, and Hurricane Irene.

The USNWS focuses on decision support services, improving technology, and training the workforce.

Take-Aways:

Categories vs. Impacts

- The Categories of storms don't give an accurate forecast of the impact of the storm. In some cases the impact of the storm severely outweighs the category it was given.

Social Media

- Social media is increasingly significant in distribution of information and updating it continuously. It is important to "stay on top of the message"

Deployment Protocol/Etiquette Training

- It is essential that personnel are trained in emergency protocol and etiquette training to properly and efficiently inform citizens and students of disasters or emergencies.

Community/Coordination Improvement

- It is necessary that disaster response coordinators include the community in the initial response planning to understand the needs of the community. Each community will have specific characteristics that will need to be address on the individual level within the disaster response plan.

“Outside the Box” Response Team

- It is important for disaster response coordinators, along with disaster response teams to be a visible part of the community. The New Orleans USNWS office has created a memorable advert for their services by refurbishing a FEMA trailer into a mobile billboard. This trailer is then displayed at large events within New Orleans, such as the SuperBowl or music festivals. This improves community awareness, and educates the public about the USNWS services and resources in the event that there is a disaster or emergency.

Technology

- Technology is greatly changing the way the USNWS and other organizations are receiving information about storms and weather patterns. Examples include the Gulf of Mexico water spouts that are being filmed by cell phones. This lead the USNWS to believe that water spouts occur more frequently than weather experts realized. Another example is the Deep Water Horizon oil spill. The first images of this crisis were also captured on a cell phone. Therefore, it is important to realize how technology can help deliver information instantly.

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