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FYSA- Media Monitoring Report for DR 4241 SC 02/19/16

NEWS CLIPS

SOUTH CAROLINA-DR-4241

Friday, February 19, 2016

Issues:

- None.

Summary:

- Continued Information regarding various recovery efforts and after action response.

Analysis:

- None.

Floods

[County likely to close down Lower Richland flood recovery center soon \(The State\)](#)

[Sumter Community Comes Together for Flood Rescue \(WLTX\)](#)

[Agencies, faith groups discuss flood relief \(The Times and Democrat\)](#)

Floods

County likely to close down Lower Richland flood recovery center soon (The State)

Lower Richland Operations Center has seen no walk-in traffic since Christmas week

Low-traffic donated goods warehouse on Shop Road also likely to close soon

Volunteer organizations have taken over the functions county has been providing

By Sarah Ellis

RICHLAND COUNTY, SC

More than four months after Richland County opened the Lower Richland Operations Center to help handle residents' post-flood needs – and two months since the last person walked in for help – the county likely will soon it close down.

A full-time county employee has been manning the operations center off Lower Richland Boulevard where, since Christmas week, no one has come for flood-related assistance.

In the six weeks prior to Christmas, 11 people visited the center, which shares a space with the Lower Richland sheriff's substation and has provided one-on-one assistance for any manner of flood-related help requests, from connecting people with volunteer organizations to helping them fill out applications for recovery funds.

County Council will consider at its March 1 meeting a recommendation from its Blue Ribbon Committee flood recovery advisory group to shut down the center along with the county-operated flood donations warehouse on Shop Road.

The donated supplies warehouse, also meant to serve post-flood needs for individuals and organizations assisting with flood relief, has mostly housed items such as clothing, diapers, books and toys and in recent weeks has drawn minimal traffic, according to Mike King, the county's flood recovery chief. A part-time county employee has been manning the warehouse, King said.

"We don't believe the county government is operating this as well as the other organizations," assistant county administrator Kevin Bronson said at a Blue Ribbon Committee meeting Thursday. "We're not good at soliciting donations. And if we were soliciting donations, we would then be competing with the other folks who are soliciting donations."

"I don't see a need for what the county has been doing. We kind of took that role on," said Rachel Larratt, a member of the Blue Ribbon Committee who runs the South Beltline-Gills Creek Community Relief Foundation. "We've been serving more people with more items than have been coming out of that goods warehouse."

The functions served by the center and the supply warehouse are now being funneled to a consolidated case management system of volunteer organizations. The items remaining in the county-run warehouse likely will be redistributed to volunteer organizations.

Reach Ellis at (803) 771-8307.

Sumter Community Comes Together for Flood Rescue (WLTX)

Sumter, SC

Despite the destruction, the historic October Floods brought our communities together and perhaps there is no place that shows that more than in Sumter County.

The Sumter Fire Department says there is no way they could have rescued more than 300 people without the help of civilians, DOT, the South Carolina National Guard and lots of borrowed boats.

Captain Richie Brogdon tells News 19 the most harrowing was on Lakewood Drive on October 4. He says "A vehicle crossing over the dam was swept away and you could not even see the person."

Brogdon and his crew had never experienced anything like this before. And they certainly never had to train for anything like this. But they tied off and tried to get through the swift water, more than 200 yards, to rescue the driver. Brogdon says, "Eventually when all else failed, we ended up calling in the national guard and they came in with a helicopter and did an aerial rescue."

The SC National Guard brought in the South Carolina Helicopter Aquatic Rescue Team (SC-HART) which includes the S.C. Army National Guard's UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter and flight crew and pilots.



Sumter Fire Department Called in the SC-HART team for an aerial rescue. (Photo: SC National Guard)

For the Sumter Fire Department more than 300 other rescues followed in a 72 hour period. They might not have been quite as harrowing but just as important. Lieutenant Jeffrey Shirley recounts how the community came together to help them.

He tells News 19, "We were taking people out of their houses and putting them into dump trucks to take them to the DOT building and from there, they were taken to the high school."

But one incident in particular stood out to him when they had to rescue an elderly woman who could not walk by herself.

He says, "DOT brought a four wheel steer back hoe and he brought it in there and we wrapped the lady up. She was in her late 80's. We wrapped her up in blankets and put her in the bucket and drove her the three blocks to the DOT building and put her in a van."

And in the Covington area, like all over the county, Captain Kevin Ray says they had the help of borrowed boats. They came in helpful when they had to remove people from Sumter Health and Rehab.

Ray says, "We had almost 80 people that we had to move and all of those were wheel chair and bed ridden."

Sumter resident, Ken Riggs thought his family was safe, until a local dam suddenly gave way. He tells News 19, "Its pitch black and we heard the rushing of the water. and with the second rush we just got frightened. My biggest fear was that the foundation was going to give away and that the foundation was going to collapse on us. With a boat, they waded out to our front porch, and I kid you not, the water was up to their collar bones as they were walking. They had waders on and they were walking. "

He says they brought the boat right into his foyer. Since he had a broken foot, Riggs says one of the firefighters lifted him and his children and wife right into the boat.

Darlene Hilditch had just beaten cancer when the flood hit in October and the rising water trapped her in her home too. She says she was weak from chemotherapy and a fireman lifted into a boat. She says a neighbor took her in, gave her warm socks and coffee until she was taken to the shelter at Sumter High School.

Hilditch says to the people who helped her that day, "I just want to say thank you really because I don't know what I would have done if they hadn't come along "

Lt. Shirley says the danger was very real for many people. He says, "The potential for casualties was tremendous."

But luckily, there were no casualties in Sumter County during the October flood. Hilditch says, "Everyone was so kind that day. It was like you had angels out taking care of you that day."

The Sumter Fire Department did not have swift water training before the flood because they had no reason to need it. But, they tell us they will be attending swift water rescue training as well as boat rescue training.

Mrs. Hilditch had to live with a friend until recently but she was able to move into a different home. The Riggs family is finally getting back into their home this weekend.

Agencies, faith groups discuss flood relief (The Times and Democrat)

The Orangeburg County Emergency Services Office is hosting a long-term flood recovery workshop with faith-based organizations Friday morning in Santee.

The purpose of the workshop is to bring the faith-based community into the long-term flood recovery process, Orangeburg County Emergency Services Director Billy Staley said.

"We know we have people in the county who have unmet needs from the flood," Staley said.

The workshop is free and open to all any faith-based organization.

The event begins at 9:30 a.m. and will run until 11:30 a.m. It is going to be held at the Santee Conference Center.

The workshop will be attended by county, state and Federal Emergency Management Agency officials.