



Fort Bend County Continues HARIS Implementation

Three days of informational sessions for emergency managers and leaders from across the county and a two (2) day Quick Start Workshop created the foundation of Fort Bend County's HARIS Project Implementation. Janette Walker, the Senior Planning Coordinator of the Fort Bend County Office of Emergency Management led the Quick Start Team.

"The informational sessions introduced the HARIS project and the i-INFO product to our mayors and emergency managers and others from across the county, and generated a lot of interest in participating in the project," said Ms. Walker. She described Fort Bend County's long term objectives for the HARIS Project. "We plan to manage resources and credentialing for our own organizations as well as to share critical information across the UASI region when needed."

The system allows emergency operations offices to access data about every kind of resource. Initially, organizations submit their contact information with a "three by three" contact method, which consists of three methods to reach each of three primary emergency contacts in every individual agency. "The more organizational information registered quickly, the greater the value the system provides for all of us. Once we have everyone in the system, not only do we have the emergency contact information we need, but with the i-INFO Gadget available to us, we can quickly get to all the information we need on a day-to-day basis," said Ms. Walker.

Fort Bend County is the second county to register data within the HARIS Network. The first stage of the project involves gathering organizational data about agencies and departments from across the region that would likely be involved or need information for preparedness, response or recovery. As each county completes the initial registration process, the next steps are already beginning. Responders and volunteers have already begun entering their skills, credentials and other key information into the network and several hundred mutual aid resources have been loaded into the system, creating of a common regional method of locating and communicating with the agencies that have the right equipment and skilled personnel.

"We are committed to make the HARIS Network the best regional resource tool that it can be", said Summer Scheel, the Regional Deployment Manager for the HARIS project who works for the Montgomery County Office of Emergency Management. "Fort Bend County is doing an excellent job of moving the project forward and helping to meet and exceed our regional goals." She added, "We look forward to working with many other regions across Texas as we collaborate and share more information."

For more information about the HARIS Project, contact Summer Scheel at Summer.scheel@mctx.org or 935-582-3102, or contact Joe Abrams at Joe.abrams@apex-innovations.com or 913-461-6012