

November 9, 2012

The Honorable Andrew M. Cuomo
Governor of New York State
NYS State Capitol Building
Albany, NY 12224

The Honorable Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg
City Hall
New York, NY 10007

Dear Governor Cuomo and Mayor Bloomberg,

We write first to thank you for your dedication to the constituents of this City and your support in addressing the unprecedented crisis of Hurricane Sandy. While there has been an incredible outpouring of help and attention to our friends and neighbors struggling throughout the five boroughs, we have learned in recent days that constituents of Queens in the Rockaways and Hamilton Beach, home to approximately 80,000 people, continue to live without vital necessities. As we continue to hear stories from the residents there, we are particularly concerned that this area will be without power for a minimum of the next three weeks, including the Thanksgiving holiday.

As concerned citizens of New York City and neighbors to those worst affected by the storm, the groups who have signed below would like to know the steps being taken to address these areas and, more importantly, to offer our assistance as you and your agencies increase emergency efforts.

From current communication with those in the field, we have assessed that thousands of residents have little or no access to the following resources:

- Electricity
- Heating
- Food and nutrient supplements
- Fuel
- Supplemental generators
- Means of evacuation
- Reliable cell service
- Batteries
- Security
- Physicians and medicine

In public housing towers, people have resorted to using gas cooking stoves to stay warm, risking asphyxiation in the higher levels of the towers. In addition, in parts of the area there is insufficient access to FEMA, Red Cross, and military assistance networks. The most urgent requests are for systematic access to:

- Food and drinking water
- Fuel and Generators
- Evacuation transport
- Communication resources including, but not limited to, handheld radios, charging stations, and relief advisory documents
- Wi-Fi, Wi-Max, and Uplink Networks
- Lighting in high-risk areas where cases of looting, rapes, and gang activity are taking place
- Community and volunteer-run warming and life-support stations (called "Red Horse" teams by the US Air Force)
- Sump pumps
- Medical supplies
- Sanitation supplies
- Hygiene supplies
- Batteries
- Heaters

Included with this letter, please find a list of recommendations from USA Retired Colonel John Hoffman, National Center for Food Protection and Defense, University of Minnesota, and Michael D. McDonald, Dr.P.H., Chairman of the Global Resilience Initiatives. Colonel Hoffman and Chairman McDonald currently coordinate more than 3,000 local volunteers on the ground under the group New York Resilience System, a group that most recently delivered 25,000 body warmers from FEMA on November 9, 2012. Both are volunteers with extensive military and emergency training and have dedicated much of their time to assisting New York City in this time of need.

What now exists is insufficient to meet the demands of the current crisis. While we laud the volunteer groups and current government staff who are providing emergency support day and night, we urge City and State officials to request far more assistance from all levels of government in order to save lives over the next 48 hours and over the next three weeks.

We urge government services to coordinate with the private sector and volunteers to prevent tragedy, and we commit ourselves fully to supporting you in your efforts to secure the safety of our fellow New Yorkers.

Sincerely,

Astoria Recovers
 Bay Ridge Young Dems
 Brooklyn for Barack
 Brooklyn Movement Center
 Chelsea Midtown Democratic Club
 Chelsea/West Village for Change
 Citizen Action of New York City
 Click and Improve, Inc.

Democracy for New York City
Downtown for Democracy
East End Cares
Greater NYC for Change
Hell's Kitchen for Obama
ICNYU: The Islamic Center at New York University
Independence Plaza North Tenants Association
Institute for Rational Urban Mobility
Interfaith Assembly on Homelessness and Housing
Manhattan Young Democrats
McManus Democratic Club
Metro New York Health Care for All Campaign
New Latino Movement NYC
New York City Parents Union
Progressive Democratic Club of East Harlem
Queens Mamas
Red Hook Initiative
Riverside Edgecombe Neighborhood Association
Stonewall Democratic Club of NYC
Transit Forward
Tribeca for Change
Upper West Side Democrats for Progress
Village Reform Democratic Club
Voterbook
Womens Information Network NYC
Working Families Party
****LIST IN FORMATION****

CC: Congressman Gregory Meeks
Senator Joseph Addabbo, Jr.
Assemblyman Phil Goldfeder

Addendum: Recommendations

USA Retired Colonel John Hoffman has 31 years working in a variety of military police, intelligence, combat arms, aviation and civil-military assignments. Dr. McDonald, as Chairman of the Global Resilience Initiatives is actively engaged in emergency and resilience operations in Haiti, Japan, the U.S. and in other areas.

1. Night time warming challenges for the elderly and disabled.

- a. Currently the NY Housing Authority residential units in the Rockaway area have no heat, no electricity and the prospects are dim for restoration of these utilities in the next week or longer. Night time temperatures over the next few nights are forecast to be low enough to cause concern for hypothermia cases among the elderly and disabled. Most occupants of these Housing Authority residential units in the Rockaway region are unable to leave the area and may be on higher floors of these facilities. As a consequence, they often cannot move at night to warming stations or even evacuate the area.
- b. What is required to prevent hypothermia cases is a means to enable these isolated occupants to remain warm in a safe but reliable manner where there is no heat or electricity. A common solution used by the military, forestry teams and rescue services are chemical heat packs. We have identified a source in Michigan who can supply individually packaged 24 hour heat pads: Grabber, Inc.
- c. The price for these pads is normally around \$3 retail. They are offering them to the New York Resilience Network for \$99 per case, each case contains 240 pads.
- d. This will provide 24 hours of supplemental heat for the elderly and disabled at a per person cost of \$0.41.25 for 24 hours.
- e. Shipping is estimated to be somewhere between \$1000.00 and \$2400.00 for overnight delivery to the Rockaway, NY area. The final cost will be based upon the shipping method selected and the available special pricing.

2. Security Enhancements for the Rockaway Disaster Area:

- a. The lack of 24 hour security presence in the areas most severely impacted has been a significant problem on many levels. It has limited access to the area for those attempting to provide assistance. It has created a situation where the residents in the severely impacted areas do not have confidence in the local authorities to protect their property if they evacuate. It has enable gangs to operate with relative impunity in the area and this has resulted in theft, assault and violence on the residents or their property and it is has been reported to have resulted in inter-gang violence.
- b. It would be highly effective to employ National Guard Military Police personnel as a force multiplier via joint patrols with the NYPD in this area.
- c. Employing these trained MPs to enhance security recognizes the fact that the NYPD is stretched far beyond anything they could normally expect to face.
- d. This is a nationally recognized National Guard mission that does not present Posse Comitates issues when the unit is activated under State of New York authority for duty within the state under the command of the Governor.

- e. The Guard personnel are trained for this mission and the presence of an armed Army National Guard combat MP has proven to be an effective means to intimidate law breakers of all types.
- f. National Guard units have been employed in the precise capacity for most major disasters around the United States over the past 25 years, to include Hurricanes Andrew, Fran, Floyd, Ivan and Katrina.
- g. This mission for National Guard MPs has normally been implemented within 3 days of the onset of these disasters. It has now been 10 days since Hurricane Sandy struck and the demands upon the NYPD have not abated. At the same time the incidence and potential for further criminal activity in the severely impacted areas has risen.
- h. Implementing a 7/24 joint patrol program with Guard MPs for the most severely impacted areas of New York City will create a security climate that will make a more acceptable environment for families agreeing to temporary evacuation of their residence.
- i. Finally, it will unburden local law enforcement by adding to the available manpower for this task and enabling more reasonable rest and recuperation for the line officers of the NYPD.
- j. The cost to the State for the activation and use of the National Guard units is partially (reimbursement can be up to 90%) reimbursable under the Stafford Act.

3. Temporary housing to support the potential evacuation of regions of the Rockaways:

- a. The availability of temporary housing for potential evacuees from the severely impacted areas of Rockaway and Queens is very limited cannot possibly need the actual need now faced by the city.
- b. Feeding and food/water distribution is a major challenge complicated by the lack of transportation, private or public, in the vast impacted area. Many residents in Housing Authority facilities live on floors far above a reasonable climb for anyone but those who are very fit and able, particularly carrying water and food supplies.
- c. As there is no electricity and no heat, the homes and apartments in these areas are not habitable. Water and sewer service is also not available for most in these severely impacted areas.
- d. Attempts to provide feeding stations has not worked well due to the fact that the stations must be set up so far from where the residents are located, with no public or private transportation – most private vehicles in the area have been rendered inoperable by the storm-, that most cannot reach them on foot.
- e. The U.S. Air Force has a capability for deploying temporary base support sites that can house and feed up to 1200 persons. These rapid deployment forces are referred to as “Red Horse” for Rapid Engineer Deployable Heavy Operational Repair Squadron Engineers.
- f. This capability has been employed in the past, under Civil-military support agreements, funded by provisions in the Stafford Act and coordinated and tasked through FEMA to DOD to NorthCom, to support short term housing of displaced persons until FEMA can set up longer term temporary housing sites.

- g. It is recommended that FEMA be requested to seek this type of temporary evacuee housing support for the neediest residents of Rockaway and Queens.

Michael D. McDonald, Dr.P.H.

President, Global Health Initiatives, Inc.

Coordinator, U.S. Resilience System

Cell: 202-468-7899

Michael.D.McDonald@mac.com

USA Retired Colonel John Hoffman

hoffm584@umn.edu