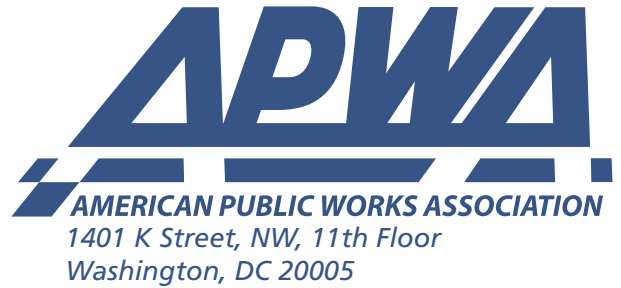


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RTAP Readies Release of Threat & Vulnerability Toolbox

WASHINGTON, D.C. – In the wake of last year’s tragic hurricane season, the National Rural Transit Assistance Program (National RTAP) will release a new interactive DVD helping transit managers across the country to more effectively assess hazards and threats and develop emergency response plans.

The initiative, which has been underway for nearly 9 months, will be unveiled June 8 in Orlando, Florida at the annual conference of the Community Transportation Association of America.

The *Threat & Vulnerability Toolbox* leads the transit manager through a planning process in which they 1) identify which assets are most essential to their mission, 2) assess safety hazards and security threats to these critical assets, 3) develop plans to reduce the likelihood and/or impact of those risks, and 4) establish protocols for managing critical incidents if and when incidents do occur. This process helps transit managers to set priorities in safety and security, regardless of agency size.

“The devastation in Louisiana and Mississippi has forced communities all across the country to take a second look at their evacuation plans, and indeed their disaster response strategies,” noted Dave Barr, acting director of the National RTAP. “Our goal with this product is to give transit operators the tools to prepare for, survive and recover from the hazards they face.”

The interactive DVD and accompanying student workbook include instructional materials, tests and exams, exercises to help managers set priorities, and essential protocols for a variety of disaster scenarios. The DVD also includes video vignettes capturing industry best practices, powerpoint presentations for training and outreach efforts, a 10-minute stand-alone video on the topic, and a template Safety, Security and Emergency Preparedness Plan (SSEPP) appropriate for transit systems large or small. The initiative gives transit systems clearer federal guidance safety, security and emergency preparedness in the context of community transit.

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2/2/2 RTAP Threat and vulnerability toolbox

“September 11 really changed the map in terms of security issues in this country. Hurricane Katrina did the same for emergency preparedness. This Toolbox brings together in one resource your critical safety, security and emergency preparedness guidelines for community transit providers,” said Gary Gleason, team leader for the consulting group heading the project and a founding member of the Department of Homeland Security. “It is designed to help transit agencies respond more effectively to a wide range of threats including accidents and incidents, acts of nature, hazardous materials spills, criminal activity and even terrorist threat. I think it’s the most important work to date in this arena.”

The initiative has been piloted in several states, notably Alabama, Idaho, New Mexico and Utah. Final draft materials were presented to the National RTAP Board at the end of April. The final product will be distributed through state Departments of Transportation, and through the National RTAP Resource Library, beginning late June.

Funded by the Federal Transit Administration and administered by the American Public Works Association, National RTAP provides training products and technical assistance at the national level for use by state Departments of Transportation and local transit agencies.

The American Public Works Association (www.apwa.net) is a not-for-profit, international organization of more than 27,000 members involved in the field of public works. APWA serves its members by promoting professional excellence and public awareness through education, advocacy and the exchange of knowledge. APWA is headquartered in Kansas City, Missouri, and has an office in Washington, D.C.

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