

THE RESILIENCE DART

Parsons Brinckerhoff Resilience Disaster Awareness Report

December 19, 2014

The Parsons Brinckerhoff Resilience DART (Disaster Awareness Report) summarizes key developments related to resilience planning and design across the US, including the region affected by Superstorm Sandy.

Parsons Brinckerhoff's Resilience Information Center: A website established by Parsons Brinckerhoff allows users to track congressional, regulatory, and federal agency funding developments pertaining to Superstorm Sandy and resilience programs. The site provides links to the final Sandy bill, notices of funding availability and funding allocations, Federal Register notices, fact sheets on agency Emergency Relief programs, testimony from Sandy implementation hearings, etc. The website can be accessed via the following link:

http://www.pbtransportationupdate.com/legislation/resiliency_issues_and_hurricane.aspx

State of Affairs:

Washington, DC/National/International

- The White House has issued a new best-practices guide called “Primary Protection: Enhancing Health Care Resiliency for a Changing Climate” to help health care facilities manage the effects of extreme weather and reduce patient risk (links below).

<http://www.usatoday.com/story/news/nation/2014/12/15/obama-health-care-climate-change-best-practices-guide/20425313/>

<http://toolkit.climate.gov/sites/default/files/SCRHCFI%20Best%20Practices%20Report%20final2%202014%20Web.pdf>

- FEMA is setting up an interim office to help victims of Sandy and other participants in the National Flood Insurance Program, with operations beginning on December 22 (link below).

http://www.nj.com/politics/index.ssf/2014/12/after_hurricane_sandy_fema_to_set_up_office_to_help_flood_victims.html

- The National Hurricane Center has released new color-coded maps that will enable coastal residents to understand the risks they would face during a storm surge in 2015 (link below).

http://www.nola.com/hurricane/index.ssf/2014/12/storm_surge_risks_will_be_easi.html

- The Mortgage Debt Forgiveness Act has been extended, helping Sandy victims pay off mortgages on damaged homes without paying taxes on the forgiven mortgage (link below).

<http://newjersey.news12.com/news/congress-extends-mortgage-debt-forgiveness-act-helping-victims-of-superstorm-sandy-1.9725210>

- Beijing's extreme air pollution has resulted in an architectural reconfiguration that includes design of an artificial bubble to simulate a normal environment beneath the smog (link below).

<http://www.theguardian.com/cities/2014/dec/16/beijing-airpocalypse-city-almost-uninhabitable-pollution-china>

- Rebuilding Banda Aceh after the 2004 tsunami in Indonesia offers lessons about rebuilding and resiliency in post-disaster scenarios (link below).

<https://placesjournal.org/article/tsunami-housing-banda-aceh-after-disaster/>

- Recent research by the ESRC Centre for Climate Change Economics and Policy at the University of Leeds and London School of Economics and Political Science have found that cities, which by 2050 will house most of the world's population, could reduce global energy-related emissions by 34% at no net cost (links below).

<http://theconversation.com/cities-could-be-the-secret-to-fighting-climate-change-34915>

<http://www.cccep.ac.uk/newsAndMedia/Releases/2014/New-report-finds-that-cities-could-cut-the-worlds-energy-related-carbon-emissions-by-34-at-no-net-cost.aspx>

<http://static.newclimateeconomy.report/wp-content/uploads/2014/11/Low-carbon-cities.pdf>

- The Rockefeller Foundation has announced its second round of resilient cities – places that have demonstrated a commitment to meeting their resilience challenges and reducing vulnerabilities (link below).

http://www.100resilientcities.org/blog/entry/announcing-our-next-round-of-resilient-cities#/-/_/

Regional (New York/New Jersey/Connecticut/Boston)

- A recent study by Johns Hopkins University uses computer models to illustrate how power grids in coastal cities such as New York, Philadelphia, and Hartford, Connecticut will more vulnerable to more power outages from hurricanes in the coming decades (links below).

<http://www.climatecentral.org/news/nyc-grid-increased-storm-outages-18453>

<http://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s10584-014-1272-3>

- New York State and New York City have pledged a total of \$100 million to help develop a flood protection system for the low-lying Red Hook neighborhood of Brooklyn, as part of a city-wide plan to improve resilience (link below).

<http://www.nydailynews.com/new-york/brooklyn/red-hook-promised-100-million-flood-defense-article-1.2048994>

- The Jamaica Bay Science and Resilience Institute, led by the City University of New York through its STEM Initiative, is spearheading a range of research projects, from studying the resiliency of the bay's salt marshes to developing strategies to deal with the impact of major storms (link below).

<http://www.nydailynews.com/new-york/education/stem/jamaica-bay-offers-ocean-knowledge-stem-students-article-1.2046761>

- The Committee on Recovery and Resiliency in New York City is reviewing a proposal to create a task force to study the damage to houses of worship and charitable organizations during Sandy, as well as expenses they incurred in providing community assistance (link below).

<http://www.theyeshivaworld.com/news/headlines-breaking-stories/276330/nyc-treyger-proposes-task-force-to-help-houses-of-worship-and-non-profits-recover-from-sandy-and-prepare-for-next-major-storm.html>

- Flood mitigation programs and efforts to promote development of resilient infrastructure were among the activities honored at the 2014 Governor's Environmental Excellence Awards event in New Jersey, which was held in Trenton in early December (links below):

<http://www.mycentraljersey.com/story/news/local/new-jersey/2014/12/17/njs-environmental-leaders-receive-governors-awards/20393349/>

<http://www.nj.gov/dep/eeawards/pastwin2014.html>

- The Exchange Place and World Trade Center stations on the PATH system will reopen on weekends beginning December 20, after repairs and upgrades lasting nearly a year (link below).

<http://www.crainsnewyork.com/article/20141209/TRANSPORTATION/141209834/path-stations-reopening-after-sandy-repairs>

- Regulators have approved a rate hike from Connecticut Light & Power to cover the cost of system improvements that would reduce the risk of outages during storms, though not everyone believes the extra charges are justified (link below).

<http://www.nbcconnecticut.com/news/local/Regulators-to-Vote-on-CLP-Hike-Request-286068851.html>

- New Jersey's third round of federal storm recovery aid – totaling \$501.9 million – will be used to complete repairs on Sandy-damaged homes and housing for special needs populations (link below).

<http://philadelphia.cbslocal.com/2014/12/16/501m-round-of-sandy-aid-will-target-housing/>

Contact:

Parsons Brinckerhoff provided immediate support to help clients and communities in the New York metropolitan area recover and rebuild after Superstorm Sandy, and is currently participating in a range of projects to mitigate the effects of extreme weather and build resilience in the region. For information on the firm's activities and capabilities, please contact:

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