

Katrina, two years later: Statement by Gil Jamieson, Associate Deputy Administrator for Gulf Coast Recovery

Hurricanes Katrina and Rita came crashing ashore two years ago. Those memories are still vivid in my mind, as they are with most Americans – and with much of the world. This nation has never seen destruction of that magnitude on its own soil. Much has been accomplished in the past 24 months. That is the purpose of this new FEMA Gulf Coast Recovery Web site – through this tool you will see how, through federal, state and local partnership, families and communities are recovering and rebuilding. The numbers tell the story.

Since that day in August of 2005, FEMA has funded the removal of over 111 million cubic yards of debris. This staggering amount of rubble, enough to fill 20 Superdomes, had to be removed before rebuilding could begin.

More than 120,000 households were provided temporary housing units. Temporary units sheltered many who had nowhere else to turn, but also allowed many thousands more to stay closer to home and get started on the grueling job of rebuilding. Thankfully, over half of those families are now out of their trailers and have moved back to permanent housing.

In addition, FEMA provided approximately \$7.6 billion to over 1.4 million households who suffered damage or, in many cases, lost everything – homes, cars and all their belongings. This is money used to make 185,000 damaged homes habitable again. For homes beyond repair, it is money used to rebuild, replace or relocate, and to re-acquire many necessary items lost in the disaster. This money has also given rental assistance to over 720,000 households.

At the same time we were addressing the longer term needs of families and communities, we were also making great strides to rebuild a battered society. So far, FEMA has obligated \$8.3 billion to repair or replace hospitals, schools, police and fire stations, government buildings, roads, bridges, airports, utilities and virtually every other form of public infrastructure damaged or destroyed in the storms.

These numbers demonstrate FEMA's steadfast commitment to rebuilding the Gulf region – and rebuilding it stronger. We still have a ways to go, but real progress is being made and we are deeply committed to that recovery until the job is done. Our primary mission all along, and will continue to be, is to help families recover and communities rebuild. We will be here until the job is complete.

Gil Jamieson