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## **Burlington County Participates in Evacuation Study**

### **Regional Phone Survey of Residents to Start Jan. 7**

Beginning Thursday, January 7, a regional evacuation phone survey of residents will be conducted on behalf of emergency management officials in Burlington County and other parts of South Jersey and Southeastern Pennsylvania to assess their evacuation needs and opinions.

The survey will be conducted through phone interviews on a limited basis on January 7 and 8 with the full survey implementation to begin on Saturday, January 9. It will take approximately two to three months to complete all the interviews.

Nearly 3,500 residents who live in Burlington, Camden, Cumberland, Gloucester and Salem counties, as well as Bucks, Chester, Delaware, Montgomery counties and Philadelphia in Pennsylvania, will be randomly selected and asked to participate in the survey to evaluate their evacuation needs and to assess their decision-making process as to whether or not to evacuate when officials give an evacuation order.

"This is the first-ever evacuation behavior study conducted in South Jersey. We encourage Burlington County residents who are called to participate in the survey," said Freeholder Mary Ann O'Brien. (more)

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“The experiences and opinions of our residents count and will help us fine-tune local evacuation plans based on their needs,” O’Brien added.

Typical questions that residents will be asked include whether they have had to evacuate in the past, why they needed to evacuate, where they would go if they have to evacuate, the mode of transportation they would use, do they have a family emergency plan and have they prepared a family emergency kit, how they will most likely hear about an emergency, and how they plan to stay informed during an emergency.

Residents will also be asked if they ever chose not to evacuate when an evacuation order was given and why. Residents will not need to identify themselves during the survey and their answers will remain confidential.

The \$150,000 survey is being funded by the Southeastern Pennsylvania Regional Task Force through U. S. Department of Homeland Security funds on behalf of the 10 county emergency management coordinators. The phone interviews will be conducted by Kerr and Downs Research (KDR).

In addition to the emergency management officials in the participating counties, other agencies assisted in developing the survey questionnaire. Including: the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission, Delaware River Port Authority, Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority, Philadelphia Police Department, NJ Office of Homeland Security, NJ State Police, NJ Department of Transportation, NJ Transit, the Southeastern Pennsylvania Chapter of the American Red Cross, and the Center City District of Philadelphia.

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