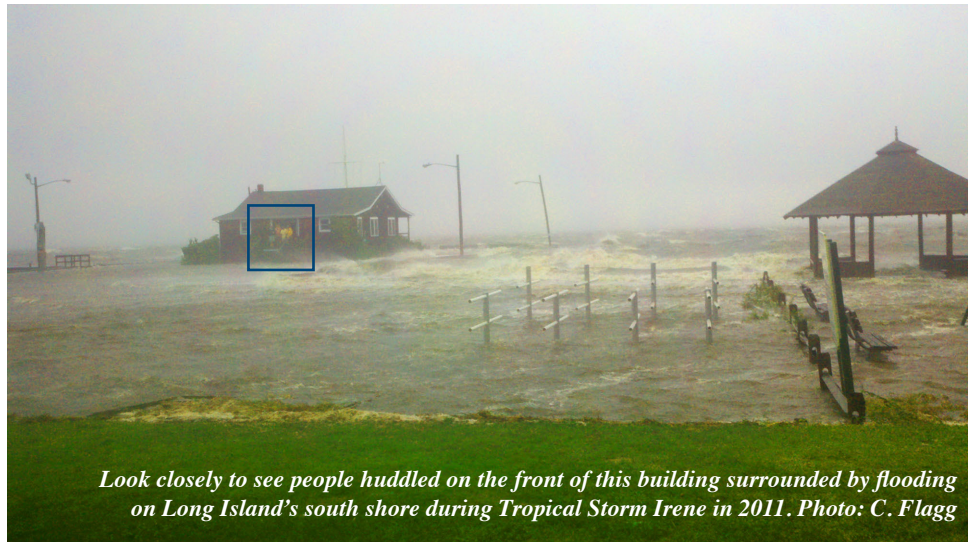


Improving Coastal Community Evacuation Planning and Response

Many of the 53 deaths in New York caused by “Superstorm” Sandy were due to the fact that residents did not heed evacuation orders. The New York State Resiliency Institute for Storms and Emergencies (NYSRISE), formed by Governor Andrew Cuomo to improve coastal resiliency in the aftermath of Sandy, was tasked with assessing evacuation plans and requested New York Sea Grant (NYSG) assistance in developing information on existing evacuation procedures and decision-making processes with a focus on evacuation operations at the local government level.



Look closely to see people huddled on the front of this building surrounded by flooding on Long Island’s south shore during Tropical Storm Irene in 2011. Photo: C. Flagg

NYSG Responds

With NYSRISE funding, NYSG worked with Stony Brook University to analyze and evaluate existing evacuation plans and community response capabilities, as well as informational and operation gaps.

NYSG researched and compiled regulatory and technical materials on evacuation planning and implementation and identified local emergency responders responsible for developing and participating in evacuation planning and procedures.

NYSG coordinated meetings with local officials to gather information on the processes and resources used to develop plans, performance of plans, critical information gaps, and changes needed to improve evacuation planning and implementation.

This information was compiled in a NYSRISE report containing lessons learned and recommendations submitted to the State where it is being used to identify actions to improve evacuation response.

A coastal village Emergency Management Director reviewing the report wrote:

“Outstanding report. For once a report real and on point to all issues. I see nothing I can add to this.”

By fostering local participation and incorporating local knowledge, NYSG is improving evacuation planning and helping save lives.

Partners:

- New York State Resiliency Institute for Storms and Emergencies
- Stony Brook University School of Marine and Atmospheric Studies

The Sea Grant Focus Area for this project is New York Resilient Communities and Economies

New York Sea Grant is a joint program of Cornell University, the State University of New York, and NOAA.

New York Sea Grant Extension

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