



"RE-BUILDING THE CITY'S WATER SYSTEMS FOR THE 21ST CENTURY"

Sewerage & Water Board OF NEW ORLEANS

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TO: News Media

From: The Sewerage & Water Board of New Orleans

Re: Katrina Overview Document

Contact Robert Jackson, 269-7978, or Brenda Thornton, 269-7819

S&WB Overview Details The Many Successes In Restoration Projects and New Construction During the Past Five Years Since Katrina

The Sewerage & Water Board of New Orleans has prepared an overview of its successful recovery, restoration and new construction projects in the past five years since Katrina's flood destroyed most of the

Entitled, "Katrina Five Years Later: A Brief Glimpse Back With Full Focus On The Future," the document traces the efforts to restore the Board's sewer, water, drainage and power systems from day one after the storm to the present.

It details the work of the men and women of the Board in jump-starting and successfully continuing the Sewer System Evaluation and Rehabilitation Project, a federally mandated consent decree project, despite massive damage to the sewage collection system.

It also describes the effect of the storm on the Board's massive, multi-million dollar drainage restoration program of building new canals and pumping stations throughout the City. The SELA program, as it is called, is a cooperative agreement with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, with as much as 65 or 75 per cent Federal funding on the various projects.

Another feature of the document is a re-cap of major construction projects underway and their costs. It shows that overall, the magnitude of all of the work after Katrina marks the most aggressive and important rebuilding of the water, sewerage and drainage and power systems in the 110-year history of the Sewerage & Water Board.

Additionally, major projects scheduled before the storm are now beginning, have been completed or are substantially underway.

The Sewerage & Water Board's recovery efforts began the day after Katrina hit and have continued constantly thanks to the dedication of the Board members, management and employees.

Executive Director Marcia St. Martin said, "With the full support of our Board of Directors, our goal then was, and still is, full restoration to provide maximum service to those residents and business owners who stayed in the City and those who are planning to return.

"We did get a jump on repairs, but we did not rest on our laurels. Instead, we used our minds, expertise and knowledge of our systems to restore many of our pumps, machinery, equipment, computers, facilities and vehicles and put them back into service more quickly than expected."

She stated, "We know we still have a lot of critical work to do, and that's why we want our customers to be aware that we have put together a most competent team which has already had many successes in the rebuilding process in all departments."

Other highlights include: excerpts of a March 2006 speech given by Mrs. St. Martin during a conference of the Association of Metropolitan Water Agencies. In her talk she detailed the immediate steps taken to begin the recovery and restoration challenge and the above and beyond work of the men and women of the Board in de-watering the City and using a team effort to begin the long effort of work and dedication to come.

Board officials said, "We should take a brief glimpse back for this fifth anniversary of Katrina, full focus on the future. This report does both, showing how the Board dealt with the challenges of the now moving quickly and efficiently to the rapid recovery and strengthening our infrastructure from be ground up."

Tommie Vassel, president pro tem of the Board, addresses the future and funding of the multitude of projects to come, stating, "For all of the Sewerage and Water Board's financial needs (immediate, mid term and future) we have been appealing to the federal government, White House, Congress and state government. "We will continue to appeal until we get the critical funds needed for the sewer, water, drainage and power generation systems."

Copies of the overview may be obtained by contacting the Community and Intergovernmental Relations Department, 504-585-2169.

It will also be posted on the Board's website: www.swbno.org. A click-on will be provided on the home page to direct users to the overview.

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