

25th ANNUAL NATIONAL CONFERENCE ON MANAGING ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY SYSTEMS

APRIL 24-27, 2006

Marriott Renaissance, Austin, Texas

Technical Papers

Topics in Hurricane Response

- D. Gregg, Hurricanes Katrina and Rita: Region 6 Laboratory Response - 1:00 PM
- G. Noah Ambient Air Monitoring and QA in the Hurricane Katrina Disaster Relief - 1:30 PM
- M. Kantz, (title TBA) - 2:00 PM

TECHNICAL SESSION:
Topics in Hurricane Response

Technical papers by D. Gregg and M. Kantz are not available.

Ambient Air Monitoring and Quality Assurance in the Hurricane Katrina Disaster Relief Effort

*Greg Noah, US EPA, Region 4
Science and Ecosystem Support Division
Enforcement and Investigations Branch
Superfund and Air Section
980 College Station Road
Athens, GA 30605
email: noah.greg@epa.gov
phone: 706-355-8635*

Emergency response always provides unique challenges to responders. Hurricane Katrina provided an immediate challenge where EPA had to bring all of its resources to bear including providing ambient air monitoring for the residents of the affected area. Region 4 is no stranger to hurricane relief, but the Katrina relief was above and beyond anything performed in the past. Among Region 4's response activities was the implementation of a temporary air monitoring network to measure PM_{2.5}, PM₁₀, VOCs, SVOCs, chromium +6, carbonyls, and asbestos in the areas affected by open burning and mass demolition. With such a wide range of pollutants monitored using various methods by a rotation of employees, general quality assurance can prove to be a daunting task.

EPA has many regulations and quality assurance guidance which give direction to how a network and sites are to be constructed, but how are these to be translated into an emergency response event where time is of the essence and resources are limited? In the hurricane Katrina case, these directives were all considered and strategies were made at the regional level for its own particular needs. New samplers were used, including the BGI from OMNI and PQ100, and samplers were adapted for different uses which required the investigation of what each of these needed in terms of quality assurance. Through the technical expertise of the field crews and the research and input of various technical experts across the nation, an acceptable level of quality assurance and quality control was able to be achieved to ensure accurate, precise, and representative data.

The author will give a summary of the network design, equipment used, quality assurance parameters, sampling strategy, present status, problems encountered, and suggestions for better response in future events.