



HURRICANES IRENE & SANDY: VA MEDICAL CENTER MANHATTAN

Evacuations, Recovery and Reconstitution

VA New York Harbor Campuses



Veterans Integrated Service Network 3

J.J. Peters (Bronx) VAMC

Northport VAMC

VA New Jersey Healthcare System

East Orange Campus

Lyons Campus

VA Hudson Valley Healthcare System

Montrose Campus

Castle Point Campus

VA New York Harbor Healthcare System

New York (Manhattan) Campus

Brooklyn Campus

St. Albans Campus

Community-Based Outpatient Clinics



ADDRESS SEARCHED:

★ **423 EAST 23 STREET, Manhattan**



Zone A

Zone B

Zone C

No Zone

Residents in Zone B may experience storm surge flooding from a MODERATE (Category 2 and higher) hurricane.

Leadership Questions

- Should VAMC Manhattan, the tertiary care referral center for VISN 3, be evacuated?
- Could >100 acutely ill (post-op cardiac and neurosurgical, ventilator-dependent and mental health) inpatients be safely evacuated?
- Where would the inpatients be sent?

Manhattan in December 1992



Irene: Thursday, August 25, 2011

- 1:00pm: VISN 3 Directors' Call – Evacuate/Not?
- 4:28pm: NY Governor declares State of Emergency
- 6:30pm: NYC Mayor orders mandatory evacuation of Zone A hospitals
- 8:00pm: Director conferences with VISN Director – Decision made to Evacuate

Challenges During Irene

- ❑ Transport of Patients to Receiving Sites
- ❑ Tracking of All Patients
- ❑ Transportation for Staff with Shutdown of NYC Subways and Buses
- ❑ Electronic Health Record: Access for Manhattan Employees at Receiving Site
- ❑ Safeguarding of Vacant Manhattan Campus

Transportation During Irene



Saturday, August 27, 2011



Key Components of Success

- Full Support/Cooperation from:
 - All VISN 3 Sites
 - Medical School Affiliates
 - Employees and Unions
 - Veterans and Families
- Communication
 - E-mail Messages
 - Social Media
 - Frequent Situation Reports

Sunday, August 28, 2011

“Most New Yorkers emerged ...
to find little of the widespread
devastation the authorities had
feared.”

The New York Times



Hurricane Sandy

Fourteen Months Later ...

Hurricane Sandy 2012

- Friday, Oct 26: NY Governor declares State of Emergency
- Saturday, Oct 27, 7pm: Director conferences with VISN Director – Decision made to Evacuate
- Sunday, Oct 28: VAMC Manhattan evacuates; New York City transit system shuts down at 7pm (subways, buses, commuter rails); Mayor orders mandatory evacuation of Zone A residences only



VA MEDICAL CENTER



New York City Monday, October 29



Water Enters Ground Floor

4'– 5' deep – 150,000 sq ft



Water
line



Tuesday, October 30 “The Day After”

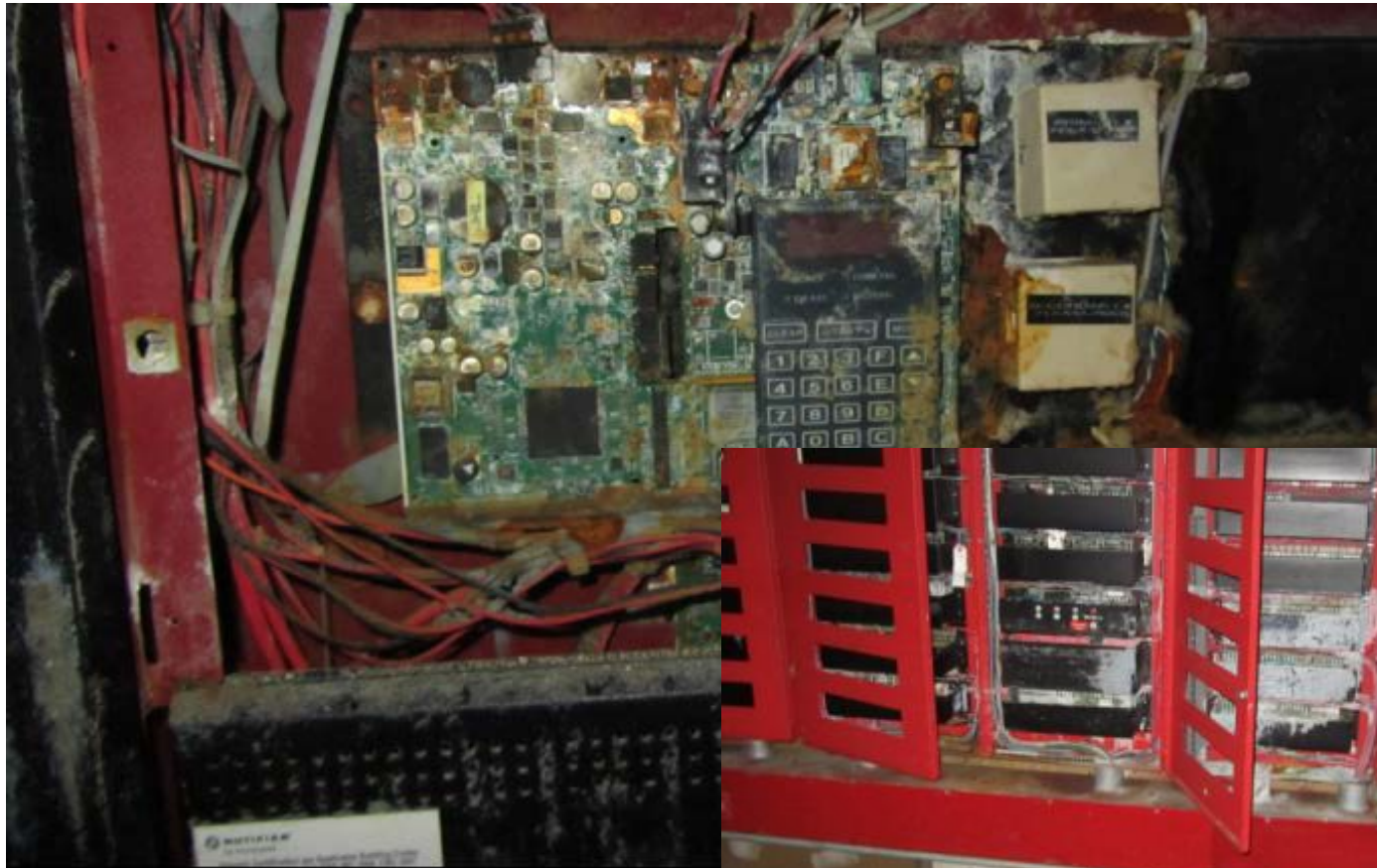
Water has begun to recede



Major Utilities/Equipment Damaged

- Electrical
- Generators
- Fire Alarm and Pump
- Water Pumps
- Heating/Ventilation/Air Conditioning
- Elevators
- Medical Gas
- Sterile Processing
- Steam System
- MRI
- Morgue
- Security System

Fire Alarm System Destroyed



Medical Gas and Vacuums Destroyed



Sterilizers and Instruments

Water
line



Outpatient Clinical Space



Recovery and Reconstitution

- Setting Goals is Very Important
- Establish a Timeline
- Ask for Help and Lessons Learned
- Communicate Over and Over Again
- Be Flexible

Former Primary Care Space



Critical Utility Repairs Required to Re-occupy Building

- Electrical Switchgears
- Fire Alarm and Suppression
- Elevators
- Water Pumps
- Air Handling Units

November/December 2012

- Established Call Center for Patients and Staff
- Primary Care Phoned/E-mailed Patients
- Primary Care/Specialty Clinics Set-up at other VA facilities with Manhattan Staff
- Medical/Mental Health Triage Presence Maintained in Lobby of Manhattan

November/December 2012

- All Operating Rooms at Brooklyn opened and hours extended
- Cardiac Surgery and Neurosurgery for the Network established at Brooklyn
- Mental Health Inpatient Unit at Bronx expanded and staffed by Manhattan
- Additional Nursing Home Unit Opened at St. Albans

November/December 2012

- Mobile Vans Parked at Manhattan Entrance for Phlebotomy, Anti-Coagulation Clinic and Vaccines
- NYU Residents on VA rotation go to the appropriate VA facility
- Research temporarily established at affiliate space or at other academic centers
- Lab animals maintained at Brooklyn Campus

March 2013

- Most utilities are up and running – all brand new
- Urgicare Center in place at Manhattan and Outpatient Care has begun to return in phases
- Planning is underway to open ER and Inpatient Care
- Planning has begun for the \$207 million Major Project funded by Congress

May 13, 2013

- ER Opens
- ICUs and Inpatient Units Open
- Operating Rooms Open
- No Med/Surg Patients are Transferred from Other VA Facilities to Manhattan, Only New Admissions

Major Project

- Build a Sea Wall
- Relocate Utilities to Upper Floor
- Relocate Outpatient Clinics to Upper Floors
- Relocate MRI
- Rebuild Sterile Supply, Chapel, Warehouse
- Modernize Inpatient Units

Summary

- Know your Site's Vulnerabilities
- Where would Patients/Staff go during a Disaster?
- Do you have realistic and multiple ways of communicating with Patients/Staff?
- How does transportation factor into your Plan - Before and After the Disaster?