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For Immediate Release:

Readying the Region: Southeastern Pennsylvania and parts of South Jersey to Participate in Evacuation Survey

Beginning Thursday, January 7, emergency management officials in Southeastern Pennsylvania and parts of South Jersey will conduct a comprehensive Regional Evacuation Survey.

The Evacuation 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 phone interviews.

Nearly 3,500 residents who live in Bucks, Chester, Delaware, Montgomery counties and the City of Philadelphia in Pennsylvania, as well as residents in Burlington, Camden, Cumberland, Gloucester and Salem counties in New Jersey will be randomly selected and asked to participate in a telephone 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 Southeastern Pennsylvania and in parts of South Jersey,” said Deputy Managing Director for Emergency Management MaryAnn Tierney. “We encourage Philadelphians who are called to participate in the survey. Your experiences and opinions count and will help us fine-tune evacuation plans based on the needs of residents living in Philadelphia.”

Typical questions that residents will be asked include whether or not they have had to evacuate in the past, why they needed to evacuate, where they would go if they have to evacuate in the future, the mode of transportation they will use to evacuate, do they have a family emergency plan developed 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 ten county emergency management coordinators. The phone interviews will be conducted by Kerr and Downs Research (KDR) for the Task Force.

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

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