Happy New Year!

I want to take this opportunity to wish our readers a healthy and prosperous 2009!

By the time you read this, President Obama will be in office and facing the worst financial crisis this country has ever seen. Much has been written about this crisis in the daily newspapers and the Wall Street Journal but not much has been written about the effects on emergency management. In many respects this could be considered the perfect storm. Unbridled greed, lack of oversight, predatory lending and lack of risk management have led us to the eye of this perfect storm. While we may feel the storm starting to abate, the back half of the storm is about to hit. All across the country we are starting to see a wave of fiscal shortfalls at the local, county, and state levels. Undoubtedly this is going to affect the funding that emergency management receives over the next five to 10 years. Our suggestion is to prepare now. Utilize new and inventive ways to get your message out to the community. Take advantage of community service organizations like Rotary International and others to lead the personal, family and community preparedness charge. Many of these organizations are well-funded but more importantly, well-organized. Take advantage of these organizations before their resources are tapped out from this crisis and the drought begins. I understand that I am mixing metaphors here but the point is, shortly, emergency management budgets will fall in priority compared to schools, fire, police and healthcare budgets. You will be expected to do more with less, yet the consequences of your planning will never be more critical.

I don’t know if there is a silver lining to this financial crisis. It may be that we will learn to do more with less and possibly become more self-sufficient, a quantity that has been lacking in today’s “batteries needed” populace. Many people today expect the government to solve their woes and as proved in Katrina and other disasters, government cannot be the only solution. Solutions need to come from the people that live in the areas hit by the disasters and they begin with personal preparedness.

On behalf of our Editor-In-Chief and Editorial Review Board, I want to thank you for your support over the past six years. As always I invite comments to be sent directly to me at radjr@pnpc.com and look forward to any constructive comments you may have about the Journal.

Richard A. DeVito Jr. Publisher

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