

# Northeast Florida Regional Council **HIGHLIGHTS**

*Bimonthly Report of the Northeast Florida Regional Council*

February/March 2020

## **Regional Leadership Academy (RLA) Visits Putnam County**

RLA Class of 2020 candidates recently visited the City of Palatka for an interactive day of activities focused on topics related to the environment and urban revitalization. The class began its day on the St. Johns River where City Public Works Director, Jonathan Griffith, invited candidates along for a walking tour of Downtown Palatka. He shared insight about stormwater management projects that had recently been implemented; and highlighted urban revitalization efforts that were currently underway. Following the walking tour, candidates participated in a working lunch at Palatka Water Works where presentations were given by the St. Johns River Water Management District (SJRWMD) and local volunteer experts. The day wrapped up with a visit to Ravine Gardens State Park where an FDEP ranger guided candidates along the park's many scenic trails and suspension bridges.



## **LEPC HazMat Day**

During the February Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC) meeting, attendees were given the opportunity to meet and greet members of the Jacksonville Fire Department Hazardous Materials Response Team. JFRD brought station 7 & 21 and a variety of hazardous materials response assets to the LEPC meeting; giving members of the LEPC and members of the public the ability to see what assets are involved in a response to a hazardous materials incident. This also allowed attendees to view demonstrations and ask questions about the equipment used by JFRD.



## Hospital Surge and Evacuation Exercise

The Healthcare Coalition, a program of the Council, conducted hospital surge and evacuation exercises on March 11, 2020. Three hospitals from the Northeast Florida region participated, totaling over 900 acute care hospital beds.

Over a 90 minute period, participating hospitals were asked to activate their hospital incident command system (HICS) and plan for the evacuation of their hospital facility. Participants were asked to focus on a few primary missions, followed by ancillary considerations to assist in the process. For purposes of this exercise, they needed to identify appropriate bed space in other hospital facilities and coordinate medical transportation for all patients that required evacuation.

This is the 4th year the Healthcare Coalition has conducting hospital surge/evacuation exercises across the region. This exercise has been adopted by the hospital sector as a best practice, and has fostered more coordination and communication across the providers in the healthcare sector.



## Infectious Disease Workshops

The Healthcare Coalition, a program of the Council, conducted three Infectious Disease Workshops across north Florida in March. The Workshops brought together subject matter experts from public health, hospitals, long-term care (nursing homes, assisted living facilities, etc.) EMS, home health and many others. The participants met to discuss and document infectious disease best practices for the various disciplines in the healthcare sector. Several techniques were used to collect data, including a survey tool distributed to the 600+ members of the Healthcare Coalition.

A final report with infectious disease best practices will be developed and made available to the healthcare sector in the near future.

