

TREASURE COAST REGIONAL PLANNING COUNCIL

MEMORANDUM

To: Council Members AGENDA ITEM 7

From: Staff

Date: September 21, 2018 Council Meeting

Subject: Regional Response – Rural Disaster Preparedness Exercise - Presentation by Kathryn Boer, Emergency Programs Director, TCRPC

Introduction

The Treasure Coast Local Emergency Planning Committee (TCLEPC) has served the region since 1986 with the inception of the federal SARA Title III - Emergency Community Right-To-Know Act. The TCLEPC provides technical assistance via education and outreach, planning and exercises to the region's first responders, emergency support departments and agencies and public and private sector facilities that produce, store, use and transport Extremely Hazardous Substances (EHSs). The intention is to prepare responders for hazardous materials releases, whether natural, accidental, or intentional, while preserving the safety of the community and minimizing losses to critical infrastructure.

On August 16, 2018, the TCLEPC conducted *Operation Road Block*, a tabletop exercise that focused on the rural cities of Belle Glade, Pahokee and South Bay, better known as the Glades region, in Palm Beach County. During Hurricane Irma, major electric cables collapsed blocking the 20 Mile Bend roadway cutting off all access to the area's cities for emergencies that might overwhelm the local fire and police assets in the area. The TCLEPC worked collaboratively with Palm Beach County responding agencies to build a scenario that tested the capabilities of responders to reach these rural communities in an effective and efficient manner to provide emergency services. One hundred twenty-nine responders and local officials representing fourteen responding and supporting departments and agencies participated in the planning effort and the exercise.

Council staff is currently working to develop the After-action Report for the exercise planning committee review. This report will identify strengths and areas for improvement allowing departments and agencies to produce an action matrix to list potential enhancements to plans and procedures that will improve response to the rural areas of the County.

Recommendation

For information only.