

Message from the Directors and Officers

“If we are wise, let us prepare for the worst.” George Washington

A confluence of events: our economy in recession, government and non profit partner budget reductions and two years of relatively quiet hurricane seasons has led to a decline in our ability to adequately train and prepare ourselves, and our state, to respond to and recover from hurricanes.

Training and education are essential to our ability to respond to tropical storms and hurricanes and must remain a priority within the constraints of lower budgets. For the sake of our citizens we must continue to move forward and maintain Florida’s position of having the premier emergency response capability in the nation.

The GHC Board of Directors, who represents our four sponsoring agencies, understands the situation and its potential impact on attendance for the next several years. We have looked for ways to assist our attendees in receiving the necessary hurricane related training at the same or lower cost than in 2009. In addition to our workshops, the 2009 Conference provided almost 10,000 training hours to attendees. To date, the GHC has taken the following actions:

- There will be no increase to training or conference registration fees in 2010. It should be noted that there has been no increase in registration fees since 2004, even though expenses have increased;
- Training has been expanded to three full days to accommodate more certified courses at the same registration fee as 2 ½ days in past years;
- Our conference hotels have again worked with us to keep your costs as low as possible. All hotels have agreed to keep rates at the 2009 level, rather than holding us to our 2010 contracted rates, for a savings of up to \$30 per night;

The Board of Directors will continue to look for ways to reduce attendee costs for the 2010 conference and will make every effort in maintaining a cost structure that will not only provide more training for the same dollar spent, but also continue with a quality venue that allows the opportunity for the response community to receive the training necessary to protect the citizens of Florida.

We appreciate your past support and feel confident that together we can continue to ensure that the high level of training and education for all responders is maintained and that it does not stagnate due to a lack of foresight and funds. Please mark your calendar and plan to attend the 24th Annual Governor’s Hurricane Conference in Fort Lauderdale.

Sincerely,

Richard R. Smith
GHC President