

#### 4.4.1 **Emergency Evacuation Plans; Timelines- Why You Need Them and Why They Don't Work**

**Presenter**

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In 2005, the US Gulf Coast experienced the largest geospatial disaster in American history, Hurricane Katrina. The destruction, physical dimensions and economic impact of this event has eclipsed all previous disasters. Despite this, the loss of life was relatively small. This is, in part, due to the Louisiana Emergency Evacuation Plan, developed in the year preceding the storm. Katrina was the first test of the plan and resulted in the most successful evacuation of a major metropolitan area ever executed. The first indication that the storm would affect Louisiana was 50 hours from the arrival of tropical storm-force winds. The entire 66-hour evacuation plan was executed in 35 hours.

This paper presents analysis of the actual timing of events surrounding Hurricane Katrina and examines the time-lines in the Louisiana Emergency Evacuation Plan. The role of time-lines in planning is discussed, as well as, the important part flexibility played in the ultimate success of the evacuation of New Orleans.