

Post-storm update from Executive Dean Bob Goodman to the George H. Cook community
Message #2

November 14, 2012

Dear colleagues,

I hope that your lives, however disrupted by super-storm Sandy, are on the mend. For many of us living inland in New Jersey and Pennsylvania, and in upper Manhattan, I know this is mostly the case. For those living on or near the coast, I am sure there is a wide range of remaining issues and concerns. You all are in my daily thoughts and those of your colleagues, especially those more fortunate.

We continue to record and document losses and other issues, as well as operate a program of outreach to our stakeholders, donors, and partners. While, to date, I have heard mostly good news: “we’re safe,” “damage not as bad as it could have been,” “we’ll be fine,” but sadly, this is not true for everyone. There are also many personal stories ranging from persistent inconvenience to worry, travail, even trauma.

I’d like to use this message and the next one (due out next Monday) to relay some news and stories about our colleagues and programs, and in many of the stories tell you about the important things we as a school and agricultural experiment station have experienced, contributed, and accomplished.

Ways we served New Jersey:

- Stories abound on the ways in which the Rutgers community has come to the aid of others across the state of New Jersey. The university has created [a website that offers an organized way to continue to offer our help as well as ways to get help](#).
- Several faculty members served as important resources for [news reports on the immediate impact of Hurricane Sandy, its aftermath, and prospects for the future](#). A number of us at Rutgers are participating in an ongoing project to develop a climate change adaptation plan for New Jersey. David Robinson (Department of Geography) is the NJ State Climatologist, a position that resides within and is supported in part by the NJ Agricultural Experiment Station.
- Rutgers Cooperative Extension (RCE) agricultural agents worked with farmers and the New Jersey office of the USDA Farm Services Agency to assess damage to crops, facilitating a unified multi-county disaster declaration.
- Extension faculty helped identify those farmers with critical generator needs and assisted in getting generators to them.
- RCE faculty and staff also participated in a statewide program to rescue and care for pets and livestock that were marooned or otherwise threatened as the result of evacuation or storm damage to barns, stables, and homes. 4-H agents helped displaced homeowners deal with the difficulty of relocating with pets.
- Extension offices posted and distributed FEMA’s Disaster Assistance poster with telephone hotlines, online applications, and smart phone apps.
- Research originating from our school has had a central place in the news, like [the Rutgers glider deployed off the Jersey coast to collect data before, during, and after Hurricane Sandy](#).
- To view more news on the ways in which our faculty and research have served the state during and after Hurricane Sandy and the nor’easter, visit [SEBS in the News](#).

Students:

- As you may know, one of our students Zoe Everett lost both of her parents, a tragedy that brought home the destruction of Hurricane Sandy directly to our campus. This story touched many people deeply as a result of the [widespread coverage](#) it received across New Jersey. Zoe made an appeal for help through the Wish Upon a Hero Foundation, [raising \\$56,000 in bridge funds](#) until she and siblings can gain access to family assets months down the road.
- Most of you would have seen the email, but I wish to reiterate Executive Vice President of Academic Affairs Dick Edwards' call for all faculty to strongly consider academic accommodation for students whose performance has been affected by Hurricane Sandy. [Edwards' full message can be found here](#).

Statewide facilities:

- Our [state 4-H camp](#), located in Sussex County, was severely affected. A total of four buildings sustained tree damage; three buildings are salvageable; one is beyond salvage. Total estimated replacement cost is \$250,000.
- Preliminary figures for cost of storm recovery at our Monmouth County farm at Adelphia are \$24,000 for tree removal.
- The Cape Shore Laboratory, a hatchery supporting research on oysters and distribution of oyster spat, reports initial losses totaling \$22,000. This does not include the damage assessment to our 400-ft long bulkhead, which sustained massive damage; the original installation cost for the bulkhead was about \$300,000. We do not yet know the cost of repairs. The good news is that the hatchery is back in operation.
- One of the more significant losses we suffered in our infrastructure supporting coastal science and services to society is the [high-frequency radar network](#) or [CODAR](#) that we operate. Four of [the sheds housing these units, and 17 of the radar antennae, were destroyed, blown out to sea](#), or in one case ended up in a backyard in Rumson (pictured below).



Cook campus:

- So far, over \$150,000 in losses have been reported by various departments and centers for damaged equipment, tree removal, pumps flooded by seawater, mud clean up, and various pumps damaged due to electrical outage.
- The ancient oaks in the pastures along Route 1 again suffered severely (as they did last year in Irene). Over a half dozen more of these magnificent trees were downed in the latest storm.
- Hort Farm I research greenhouses were damaged and we lost one small greenhouse that is no longer safe to occupy.
- Our forests (Helyar Woods, Rutgers Ecological Preserve, and Hutcheson Memorial Forest) all have downed trees and the roof of one of the caretaker homes in the HMF sustained tree damage.

Research losses:

We continue to collect reports from faculty and staff regarding the research losses on the Cook campus and throughout the state.

- Over \$400,000 in reagent losses have already been reported.
- The loss of the CODAR units mentioned above is still being evaluated but an early estimate that I've heard to fully restore this system exceeds \$2 million.
- We sustained losses to freezers and research equipment; those estimates are still being tabulated.

In addition, we have requested that faculty report the impact this is having on their research program. Lisa Estler, Xenia Morin, and Brad Hillman will be meeting this week to map out next steps, including a tabulated and prioritized listing of infrastructure improvements that are needed in support of and to better protect our research.

Information on reporting losses

I'd like to repeat here the reporting chain I've put in place:

- The point person for all loss reports is my chief of staff, Gail Alexander, at execdean@aesop.rutgers.edu.

Please copy the following persons, as indicated:

- For insurance filing and to report any Cook campus facilities needing repairs, copy Lisa Estler at estler@aesop.rutgers.edu.
- All RCE issues and needs reported through department chairs and CEDHs should also be copied to Larry Katz at katz@rce.rutgers.edu.
- All reports of issues at our farms and other NJAES facilities in the state, including coastal locations, should be copied to Brad Hillman at hillman@aesop.rutgers.edu.

I wish you all the very best as you work to restore your personal, family, community, and professional lives after this unprecedented event. Members of my cabinet are working hard to assist in restoration of our programs and activities, and also in preparedness planning so that when another disaster happens, we'll be better prepared. If you need our help with something that we don't yet know about, PLEASE be in touch (execdean@aesop.rutgers.edu) and let us know.

Sincerely,

Bob