



George County Board of Supervisors
Ken Flanagan, Communications Director
Office: 601-247-2104

George County officially opens Emergency Shelters on Dec. 10

Release Date: Nov. 26, 2013

The George County Board of Supervisors will officially open two new Emergency Shelters with a ribbon cutting ceremony and an open house on Dec. 10 at 10 a.m. at the Benndale Community location.

The County began simultaneous construction of the Agricola and Benndale Emergency Shelters two years ago. Each of the shelters is approximately 3,800 square feet, built to withstand 200 mph winds, has 12 inch thick concrete walls, self supportive utilities, and will be able to house 139 people during a hurricane.

Altogether, the shelters cost approximately \$3.2 million and were funded 100 percent through a FEMA grant.

“The construction of these two shelters marks one of the largest public safety projects in the history of the County,” said Board President Kelly Wright, Beat 2. “Obviously, we have run into major delays but these shelters are now ready for the protection of our residents.”

Along with the shelters’ overall construction strength; their locations on the east and west sides of the County is another major asset.

“These shelters give residents on the edges of the County a much closer safety option,” Henry Cochran, Beat 5 Supervisor, explains. “This has been a long time coming for the Benndale Community. This will be a building that will serve us in a wide variety of ways for years to come.”

During an emergency, the shelters will be opened by the County’s Emergency Management Agency (EMA) and staffed by the American Red Cross along with MS Dept. of Human Services. EMA Director Nancy Smith says the new shelters are a great addition to the current “Sheltering Plan.”

“These shelters are now our first and preferred option during an emergency. They allow us to open a shelter and not lean so heavily on local schools. Our local partners at the Red Cross have



already visited and inspected each location, so these shelters are officially ready for use,” Smith said.

George County EMA will display the recommended items a resident should bring to a shelter in case of an emergency during the open house. Community leaders along with representatives from MEMA, DHS, and the American Red Cross are scheduled to join Supervisors for the ribbon cutting.

The Benndale Shelter is located on Hwy. 26 just east of the Hwy. 57 intersection and the Agricola Shelter is located at the intersection of Hwy. 613 and Cooks Road. For details about the shelters, call 1-601-947-7506.

###