



Governor's Office of Storm Recovery

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Officials Hold Ribbon-Cutting for New \$8 Million Emergency Operations Center in New Paltz

New Paltz, N.Y. - The Governor's Office of Storm Recovery (GOSR) today announced the completion of a new emergency operations center and fire house in New Paltz in Ulster County. The new project that will improve New Paltz's ability to prepare for and respond to emergencies.

GOSR Chief Strategy and Program Officer Paul Onyx Lozito, Town of New Paltz Supervisor Neil Bettez, and Village of New Paltz Mayor Tim Rogers joined local officials including State Senator Hinchey, Acting Ulster County Executive Joanna Contreras, and representatives from Congressman Ryan's office to cut the ribbon on the center.

GOSR Executive Director Katie Brennan said, "The new emergency facility in New Paltz will better accommodate emergency equipment and help ensure that first responders have the resources they need to coordinate their efforts during disasters. This project shows how GOSR's bottom-up, community-driven process is building resilient communities that are better prepared for emergencies."

During Hurricane Irene and Tropical Storm Lee, New Paltz was overwhelmed by nearly 10 inches of rain, causing widespread flooding. The Wallkill River overtopped its banks which flooded roadways, stranded residents, destroyed acres of farms, and slowed first responders. The two fire houses in New Paltz – one that was undersized and another that was not easily accessible due to narrow and crowded roadways – made it challenging to meet the community's needs.

The new center replaces both fire houses with one large Emergency Operations Center and Municipal Fire Department at 117 Henry DuBois Drive.

The new facility will consolidate the town and village emergency services while also serving as a dedicated space for coordinating response and recovery efforts during emergencies. The new 14,000 square foot building includes five double bays to accommodate all the fire departments' vehicles and equipment, meeting spaces, and a training mezzanine. It also contains a full kitchen, ADA-compliant restrooms, and sufficient sheltering capacity to house first responders called into action.

GOSR contributed approximately \$5 million to the project with the remainder of the funding coming from the town and village.

The new facility improves resiliency and preparedness. First responders will be able to plan and coordinate more efficiently. The location of the facility outside the floodplain also minimizes exposure to flooded roadways and reduces emergency response times.

Congressmember Pat Ryan said, "This new consolidated emergency operations will improve resiliency, emergency preparedness, and quality-of-life for New Paltz and the surrounding communities. These types of solutions and resources are becoming more and more necessary as extreme weather, caused by climate change, becomes more common. Thank you to the Office of Storm Recovery, the Village and Town of New Paltz, and our partners on this important project."

Senator Michelle Hinchey said, "Our communities are safer and better served when our volunteer emergency services are strong and fully equipped with the resources to save lives. The all-electric New Paltz Firehouse is already a model of energy efficiency and, with newly expanded facilities, an example of forward-looking emergency response. I thank the Governor's Office of Storm Response, Town and Village leaders, and all New Paltz firefighters for their visionary work on this facility."

"I congratulate the New Paltz Fire Department and the people of New Paltz on the completion of this emergency response center. This state-of-the-art, environmentally friendly firehouse will help protect New Paltz area residents, businesses and public spaces," said **Assemblymember Kevin Cahill**. "Climate change is making storms more violent, their aftermaths more profound. Securing resiliency has become a greater challenge as a result. This facility will help our emergency responders deploy rapidly, pervasively and appropriately. I applaud the Office of Storm Recovery and the local officials who advocated for and brought to fruition this much-needed project."

Acting Ulster County Executive Johanna Contreras said, "I want to thank the Governor's Office of Storm Recovery for working with New Paltz to build a centralized emergency operations center and fire house where our first responders will be better equipped to do their important work. Ulster County saw three extreme weather events so far in this year alone, and our firefighters and first responders are on the front lines of these climate emergencies. This facility will allow us to bring emergency services to the southernmost and rural areas of our community. Thank you to Governor Hochul, the Village and Town of New Paltz and everyone involved in realizing this critical infrastructure for our community."

"In addition to their regular jobs and volunteering, our firefighters pored over details with architects and engineers in numerous meetings over years," said **Village of New Paltz Mayor Tim Rogers**. "They designed a state-of-the-art building to provide fire protection, but also made sure the firematic features that they selected made fiscal sense for taxpayers. Our firefighters' commitment to serving their neighbors runs deep."

"It's extremely gratifying to see this project come to fruition as it's been in the works since 2015, when the Governor's Office of Storm Recovery awarded funding in the aftermath of Hurricanes Irene and Lee," said **Town of New Paltz Supervisor Neil Bettez**. "I'm glad the town and village were able to come together to strengthen the resilience of our community in this way."

"The firefighters are excited to have a new facility to train in, respond from, and bond together in," said **New Paltz Fire Department Chief Cory Wirthmann**. "This will definitely expand our ability to continue providing exemplary service to the community."

About GOSR

Established in June 2013, GOSR coordinates statewide recovery efforts for Superstorm Sandy, Hurricane Irene, and Tropical Storm Lee. More recently, GOSR is also coordinating recovery and resiliency efforts

for Hurricane Ida. Through its NY Rising Housing Recovery, Small Business, Community Reconstruction, Infrastructure, and Rebuild by Design programs, GOSR invests \$4.5 billion in federal Community Development Block Grant-Disaster Recovery (CDBG-DR) funding to better prepare New York for extreme weather events. The agency is also leveraging Community Development Block Grant-Coronavirus (CDBG-CV) funds to implement resiliency initiatives More information about GOSR and its programs is available at <http://stormrecovery.ny.gov/>.

Through the NY Rising Community Reconstruction (NYRCR) and Infrastructure Programs, the State takes on a variety of initiatives developed during its bottom-up community planning process to improve resiliency, protect critical infrastructure, mitigate the risks of loss and damage associated with future disasters, and reduce hardship. Now in the implementation stage, GOSR works with a variety of municipal, county, and non-profit partners to bring hundreds of locally devised proposals to fruition.

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