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NEWS from the CWC

Municipal officials invited to disaster preparedness workshop

MARGARETVILLE, NY, January 17, 2012 – An informational workshop for town and village officials seeking to be better prepared for the next disaster will be held Thursday, March 22 (weather date March 23) at the Margaretville Fire Hall, Church St., Margaretville.

The event is sponsored by the Catskill Watershed Corporation (CWC). Register free online, www.cwconline.org. Deadline is March 16.

The workshop will begin with a session on “Preparing, and Using, an Emergency Action Plan” Art Snyder, Director of Emergency Communications / Emergency Management for Ulster County, will describe what should be included in a municipal emergency action plan, how it is activated, and who is responsible for seeing that it is implemented appropriately. He will be joined by Carl Chipman, Supervisor of the Town of Rochester, an Ulster County municipality that developed a comprehensive Action Plan and successfully employed it during Hurricane Irene.

Michael Sterthous, an attorney with the Albany law firm Whiteman Osterman & Hanna, will offer a primer on “Declaring a State of Emergency, and Emergency Orders.” He will explain the intent, practical application and legal ramifications of emergency declarations, and the Local Emergency Orders that often follow.

Rich Bell, Delaware County Emergency Services Coordinator, and Gene Rosa, Margaretville Fire Chief, will team up to discuss “Responding to an Emergency.” Topics will include communications issues, transportation challenges, working with county Emergency Operation Centers, securing disaster zones, insuring public safety and collaborating with hospitals, schools, relief providers and public agencies in the initial hours and days of a disaster.

Following a buffet lunch, workshop attendees will hear from four people who will share “Lessons From Irene.” Shandaken Town Supervisor Rob Stanley, Prattsville Town Supervisor Kory O’Hara, Fleischmanns Village Mayor Dave Morell, and Dorothy Maffei, who served as volunteer coordinator in the Town of Middletown during the most recent flood.

They will offer first-person perspectives on the tragedy – how they balanced personal and public trauma, dealt with contractors, struggled to be fair in helping affected constituents, fielded offers of help from volunteer groups and handled the “second flood” – that of donated food, clothes and relief supplies that poured in immediately after the disaster.

The CWC is a non-profit Local Development Corporation based in Margaretville. It is committed to protecting water resources, encouraging environmentally friendly economic development and supporting watershed education in the New York City Watershed West of the Hudson River, a region encompassing parts of five counties – Delaware, Greene, Schoharie, Sullivan and Ulster.

To learn more about other CWC programs to assist residents and businesses in the New York City Watershed West of the Hudson River, visit www.cwconline.org.