

A scary simulation

On July 19 to 23, 2004, Federal Emergency Management Agency officials joined with their counterparts from the Louisiana Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness and other agencies for a Gulf Coast hurricane simulation exercise called Hurricane Pam.

The Louisiana Department of Natural Resources and FEMA provided statistics on the computer simulation. Here's how Hurricane Pam compares with Katrina:

Hurricane strength and wind speed

Pam: Category 3, with winds up to 130 miles per hour

Katrina: Category 4 at landfall; winds up to 150 mph

Fatalities

Pam: 60,000 fatalities, mostly from drowning

Katrina: Officials estimate deaths in "thousands"

Damage

Pam: Levees breached, pumps failed, debris and devastation

Katrina: Levees breached, pumps failed, debris and devastation

Flooding

Pam: 10 to 15 feet of water left in streets of New Orleans

Katrina: Up to 20 feet of water in some parts of the city

Aftermath

Pam: Tornadoes, communications lost, 500,000-600,000 buildings destroyed

Katrina: Tornadoes, commu-

nications lost, widespread destruction

Evacuee care

Pam: An interagency shelter group identified the need for about 1,000 shelters in a catastrophic disaster

Katrina: Interagency officials scramble to empty overloaded shelters in New Orleans, find makeshift facilities elsewhere, including Houston and surrounding states

Recovery

Pam: The search-and-rescue group developed a transportation plan for getting stranded residents out of harm's way, according to FEMA

Katrina: Disjointed rescue effort lasts for more than a week