

Lessons from Hurricane Irma

BOCA RATON, Fla. (Dec. 6, 2017) – The Center for Urban and Environmental Solutions, along with internal and external partners, recently hosted Lessons from Hurricane Irma for Increasing Resilience, a summit addressing response and recovery after Hurricane Irma. Attendees explored the implications for resilience plans and policies.

The following are among the key takeaways:

- We still have a long way to go to ensure that the most vulnerable members of society are included in evacuation and sheltering plans. This includes the elderly. Planning needs to better consider the fact that a large segment of the population have pets and they are not willing to abandon them during an evacuation.
- Nonprofits like Evacuteer.org, based in New Orleans and KeyStrong.org in the Florida Keys are allowing for direct involvement of citizen volunteers for preparedness and response to disasters. Many more communities could benefit from involving these and other nonprofit organizations in their planning efforts.
- Attendees described refining evacuation and sheltering policy as a top-priority for the Florida Legislature this upcoming session, especially with regard to the elderly in nursing homes. Is there a way to share the finding from our Summit with the policy makers in Tallahassee?
- The more we can think holistically about how communities and buildings are designed, the more resilient we will be in the aftermath of disasters.