RICE

DEPARTMENT OF CIVIL & ENVIRONMENTAL ENGINEERING

CEVE Seminar Series

"LSU Research and Operations Support During and after Hurricane Katrina"

by

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Hurricane Katrina provided a unique learning opportunity and test environment for the LSU Hurricane Center. Prior to landfall, our team was providing real-time meteorological support and satellite storm tracking, ADCIRC storm surge modeling, wind damage modeling, and consultation on evacuation and sheltering decisions. Immediately after landfall, we became the first and primary mapping agency for several weeks until the federal agencies could get up to speed. Dozens of LSU faculty, staff, and students spent weeks in the field after the storm gathering all types of data to help understand what happened and for use in model creation, calibration, and verification. Sample field research included: water heights for surge model calibration; water quality for health impacts and dispersion modeling; building data for study of impacts of building performance on casualty rates; interviews with evacuees to better understand how and why they left or didn't leave the city; and many other areas. This presentation will provide an overview of our real-time modeling and support operations during the storm, response activities in support of the state immediately after the storm, and transition into research activities following the storm.

Biographical Sketch

Dr. Marc Levitan has been actively engaged in wind engineering research, practice, and teaching for the past 15 years. His primary research focus is in the fields of wind loading on structures, wind damage assessment, wind damage mitigation, and hurricane sheltering and evacuation issues. Past research projects have dealt with wind loading on low-rise buildings and electrical power transmission towers. He is currently involved in areas relating to wind loading on industrial and petrochemical structures, and assessment/retrofit/design of hurricane evacuation shelters. Dr. Levitan was also the driving force behind the creation of the new LSU Hurricane Center. Its mission is to address hurricanes and other weather-related hazards and their impacts on the natural, built, and human environments. Prior to joining LSU, Dr. Levitan spent five years as the Managing Director of the Wind Engineering Research Field Laboratory at Texas Tech University.

Friday, September 29th, 2006
2:00 PM
Mechanical Laboratory, Room 251
Refreshments will be served at 1:45 PM