Hurricane Sandy Didn’t Blow Away Newport News’ Flood Plans
with the help of U.S. Communities

Five days before Hurricane Sandy was scheduled to hit the low-lying coastal city of Newport News, Virginia, Chris Perry made a phone call to Jeff Boynton to initiate their well-planned emergency equipment supply plan.

Chris, who is Fleet Administration Manager for the city, placed an order for six rental by-pass pumps along with a front end loader. Jeff, Sr. Sales Representative for Hertz Equipment Rental, was expecting the call, and had all of the equipment at the city’s equipment yard several days before the storm struck.

In addition to Newport News having the equipment needed, they received it at a pre-determined and guaranteed contract price level.

“That’s huge. You can’t get equipment after a storm hits, and if you do it comes from several states away, and you pay through the nose to transport it. Without a contract, the base rental fees can also be exorbitant because of the competition for equipment that occurs after a storm” said Chris, who has been with the city since 2003 and is familiar with their needs following a storm.

“Several years ago, U.S. Communities signed the national rental contract with Hertz. That provided the foundation for us to begin our relationship with them at the local level. U.S. Communities is a national procurement cooperative, but they still translate their programs to the local level – that’s important to me.”

On the local level, Hertz Equipment Rental is familiar with the equipment rental needs following storms. Jeff was able to tell Newport News ‘at five days out from a named storm, here’s how many calls I’ll be getting for equipment. By two or three days out I may not have any equipment.’

“So we met with Hertz and planned all of the possible equipment needs for the city based on the size of the named storm; we also gave them the specs for our requirements. For example, we have different fittings than some other cities to connect by-pass pumps to wastewater pumping stations,” explained Chris.

Discover More Ways to Save!
www.uscommunities.org
Weather forecasters had at least six different models for Hurricane Sandy as it roared up the East Coast, and no one knew in advance exactly where it would hit.

“U.S. Communities enabled Hertz and Newport News to take its relationship a step further,” continued Jeff. “The program provides for a clean and streamlined process in working with government entities which is beneficial in times of natural disasters as we’re able to provide a quicker response when customers need it most.”

Thanks to the plan created between Newport News and Hertz Equipment Rental, the city simply placed a call for equipment and received everything that was needed at the guaranteed, competitively solicited price.

“As it turned out, the storm was more of a rain than wind event for us, so during the aftermath of Sandy we put all six by-pass pumps into service, but we didn’t need the front end loader.”

“Prior to using the U.S. Communities contract with Hertz, it was always a difficult, time-consuming and high-cost process to procure equipment prior to storms. It’s crucial to have a plan for procurement of rental equipment on an as needed basis for named or significant weather events. Using a cooperative purchasing contract was the perfect solution – we were guaranteed equipment, we didn’t pay a premium and we know the rates were competitively solicited. It saved us time, money and enabled us to begin the recovery efforts as soon as the storm cleared. It is a total win for the city and its residents” Chris concluded.