



SOUTH FLORIDA LOCAL EMERGENCY PLANNING COMMITTEE

MEETING MINUTES

WEDNESDAY, May 20, 2026 @ 10:00 AM

South Florida Regional Planning Council (SFRPC)
One Oakwood Blvd, Suite 250, Hollywood, FL 33020
www.soflalepc.org

This meeting was conducted in-person and virtually via Zoom.

1. Welcome and Pledge of Allegiance

The LEPC Chair, James Russo, opened the meeting and welcomed the members at **10:01 AM**. Chair Russo led the Pledge of Allegiance.

2. Meeting Instructions

3. Roll Call (Coordinator Hailey Lazzaroni Hunt)

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Russell Accardi, L2 Defense, Inc. (virtual)
Gabriela Afanasiev, Allied Universal Corporation
Tiphane Brown-Francis (Alt.), Florida Atlantic University (virtual)
Joseph DeLuna, FDEP
Orianna Gonzalez, Cliff Berry, Inc. (virtual)
Peter Hamlin, FDOT District 4 (virtual)
Aimee Hernandez, Broward County Emergency Management (virtual)
Eduardo Koenig, Broward County Resilient Environment Department (virtual)
Jesus Olivo, Brenntag Mid-South, Inc. (virtual)
Clay Pacheco (Alt.), Broward County Emergency Management
Keila Puello, Miami-Dade County WASD (virtual)
Deran Ramkissoon, Gordon Food Service (virtual)
James Russo, LEPC Chair, Interested Citizen
Dan Scarborough, Miami-Dade County Emergency Management
Chad-Anthony Smart (Alt.), Baptist Health South Florida (virtual)
Marie Sullin, Aon Risk Services, Inc. (virtual)
Katelyn Swathwood, (Alt.) UHealth Emergency Management
Julio Tejeda, SFWMD



Jonathan Urtecho (Alt.), Baptist Health South Florida (virtual)
Keith Westin, Miami-Dade County Office of Safety (virtual)
Ali Younes, Broward County Resilient Environment Department (virtual)
Gabriel Zahora, LEPC Emergency Management Liaison, Fort Lauderdale Fire Rescue (virtual)

STAKEHOLDERS PRESENT: Tania Romero (Miami-Dade County Emergency Management), Chris King (Boca Raton Fire Rescue), Emilio Mercado (USCG Southeast District), Jason Starking (USCG), Christine Webb (American Red Cross)(virtual), Rudy Albert (American Airlines)(virtual), Benjamin Bellucci (Broward County Emergency Management)(virtual), Reshena Clark (Broward County Health Coalition)(virtual), Jason Espinosa (Lineage Logistics)(virtual), Laura Wyness (USCG Sector Miami)(virtual), Dulce Suarez (Florida International University AIDP)(virtual), Garrett Guzoski (FDEP), Gabriel Escobar (FDOT Safety)(virtual), Meghan Grimsley (Hollywood Fire Rescue and Beach Safety)(virtual), Purnima Arora (FDEM) (virtual), Jeff Galloway (Tetra Tech) (virtual), Isabel Cosio Carballo (SFRPC), Christina Miskis (SFRPC), Joshua Baer (Monroe County EM)(virtual), Katia Foust (American Red Cross) (virtual), Elizabeth Moss (Miami-Dade County WASD)(virtual), Marvin Ebanks (Miami-Dade County WASD) (virtual), Kathleen Ward (American Red Cross)(virtual).

4. Approval of Minutes from the February 18th, 2026, SoFlaLEPC Meeting

Motion to Approve Meeting Minutes for the February 18th, 2026, meeting. Motion to Approve Minutes (Dan Scarborough), seconded (Peter Schecter).

5. Filling Vacancies and Enhancing Participation

- **Membership Changes (Chair Russo)**

Tamara Turk (Member), Jonathan Urtecho (Alternate), Baptist Health
Christopher Davis-Partridge (Member), Gabriel Zahora (Alternate), City of Fort Lauderdale Fire Rescue
Gabriel Zahora (Member), Christopher Davis-Partridge (Alternate), LEPC Emergency Management Liaison

- **Innovative Ideas for the Upcoming Year**

The group briefly discussed that as information of ideas and events are shared, the South Florida LEPC will remain involved and further collaborate with partners.

6. Presentation by Clay Pacheco (Broward County Office of Emergency Management) on Emergency Management and the T2 Labs Jacksonville 2007 Incident.

Clay Pacheco, Broward County Office of Emergency Management Director, presented the topic of the T2 Laboratories incident in 2007 where a runaway chemical reaction caused an explosion and fire in Jacksonville, Florida. Director Pacheco shared lesson learned from his first-hand experience in 2007



but also discussed 2026 Broward County Office of Emergency Management planning and training updates.

7. Chair's Report (Chair Russo)

Training Task Force: The HazMat Emergency Response Team Assessments were comprehensive and well received by the local municipalities, which helps in the identification of needs, especially throughout the budgeting process. The Lithium-Ion Battery Working Group was reassessed at the state level to reform the group of stakeholders and new priorities were identified. A couple members of the SERC attended the international Lithium-Ion Conference and learned some new information that reemphasized how little discussions there are about implications. The Lithium-Ion Symposium hosted by the state will be held in September 2026.

Electric Vehicle & Battery Energy Storage Systems (BESS) Incident Response: Chair Russo, along with Margate Chief Oscar Rodriguez and Seminole Tribe of Florida retired Chief Doug LeValley will be hosting a class on EV Battery storage systems, lithium-Ion incidents, and state requirements for first responders.

Operation Waterworld: The UHealth Emergency Management team conducted a tabletop into full-scale exercise of a low-notice flooding incident in North Miami. The Hospital Incident Command System (HICS) team and a flood response team were activated, ran paper patients with EVAC 1, 2, and 3, and organized a family reunification area. Many lessons were learned by the teams involved and the exercise was overall a great success.

8. Planning & Training Working Group Report (Chair Russo)

Planning: The South Florida LEPC is currently in the process of purchasing a 1000-gallon Training Center prop that will teach the HazMat teams how to use a liquid-injection method to mitigate a propane incident.

Training: The following emergency management-related training opportunities were recently made available: LSU National Center for Biomedical Research and Training (NCBRT): Emergency Response to Domestic Biological Incidents (PER-220) – June 1-2, 2026; Texas A&M Engineering Extension Service (TEEX): Pediatric Disaster Response and Emergency Preparedness (MGT-439) – August 11-12, 2026; Miami-Dade Emergency Management (EM): Intermediate Incident Command System for Expanding Incidents (G-300) – October 6-8, 2026; Miami-Dade Emergency Management (EM): Advanced ICS Command & General Staff: Complex Incidents (G-400) – October 19-20, 2026.

Exercise: The South Florida LEPC will be hosting its annual full-scale exercise based on the FIFA World Cup where there will be a Hazardous Materials release, and emergency responders will conduct on-site decontamination and coordinated emergency operations. The exercise will be held on May 27th from 9:00am to 1:00pm at the Chase Stadium in Fort Lauderdale.



9. SoFlaLEPC Coordinator Report (Hailey Lazzaroni Hunt)

The SF LEPC Coordinator shared statistics provided by the Florida State Watch Office for hazardous materials incident reports, which amounted to 120 between March 1st and mid-May 2026. Incident report topics largely involved lithium-ion battery fire and releases of ammonia, petroleum, jet fuel, natural gas, and wastewater. In an effort to share information with partners about the activities of the LEPC between quarterly meetings, the coordinator shared the several events that the LEPC participated in during the quarter. Activities that the LEPC was involved in included but were not limited to: April 2026 – Miami-Dade County Emergency Management’s Turkey Point Emergency Worker Decontamination Drill; April 2026 – Broward Emergency Management’s Emergency Coordinating Council General Meeting; May 2026 – FIU Academy for International Disaster Preparedness’ Disaster Field Operations Course; Monthly Fire Chief’s Association of Broward County’s Special Operations Subcommittee.

10. Member Comments

Dan Scarborough (Miami-Dade EM) introduced Tania Romero, the Department’s new CBRN planner, to the group.

Peter Schecter (Interested Citizen) shared with the group an opportunity to use geospatial scanning, such as LIDAR, to capture the environment of a particular space. He was interested in the group’s perspective on the benefits that the technology would have in pre-planning for emergency management situations.

11. Public Comments

No public comments were shared.

12. Resources & Information Exchange

Referred members to the Agenda Package to access documents and hyperlinks to materials discussed.

13. Upcoming Meetings

The next in-person/hybrid SoFlaLEPC Meeting is scheduled for August 2026.

14. Adjourn

Meeting Adjourned at 11:19 AM.