

News Release

National American Indian Housing Council
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT: Kim Hayes, (202) 454-0931 or khayes@naihc.net
Jane DeMarines, (202) 454-0911 or jdemarines@naihc.net

Disaster Preparedness Training for Tribes and Tribal Housing Offered at NAIHC Annual Convention in Hawaii

WASHINGTON—April 12, 2006—With hurricane season soon upon us and the memories of Katrina and Rita firmly in the minds of tribal leaders, the **National American Indian Housing Council (NAIHC)** is offering disaster preparedness training for tribal housing authorities at its upcoming convention. **NAIHC's 32nd Anniversary Convention and Trade Show** is being held **May 22-25** at the Hilton Hawaiian Village Beach Resort & Spa in **Honolulu, Hawaii**.

NAIHC represents American Indians and Alaskan Natives in reaching their self-determined goals of providing quality affordable housing for their communities. The convention draws attendees from tribes across the nation and various government agencies, and is the largest annual gathering of Indian housing professionals.

NAIHC is offering several new training courses, including **Disaster Preparedness for Tribes and Tribal Housing; 2006 and Beyond Shaping Up to Be Years for Natural Disasters – Wind and Fire;** and **Tribal Protection Strategies**. This training will identify potential disasters that could affect tribes and tribal housing programs. In addition to natural disasters, these courses will look at terrorism and other disaster situations.

“Tribes in the Gulf region were deeply impacted by the hurricanes last year, and many more could be hit in the years ahead. In addition, tribes that border Canada and Mexico deal with homeland security in terms of border crossing,” said **Chester Carl, NAIHC Chairman**. “Now more than ever it is important for tribes and tribal housing authorities to be aware and be prepared.”

NAIHC, AMERIND Provide Training Sessions

Sessions will be conducted by both **NAIHC Training and Technical Assistance Specialist George Gaasvig** and **AMERIND Risk Management**. Brief descriptions on how to address the areas and topics associated with each potential disaster will be provided and discussed.

“Disaster preparation can save lives, homes and property,” said **NAIHC Executive Director Gary L. Gordon**. “Through **NAIHC's** training, Indian housing authorities can gather valuable knowledge on how to plan for, prevent and avoid potential disaster situations.”

A disaster assistance organization and a disaster preparedness plan should be established to: prepare for, minimize, and control the effects of disasters, according to experts. This training will provide the basic concepts of disaster plan development and is intended to introduce tribes and TDHEs to the components that should be considered in the development of a disaster preparedness plan.

“Natural and man-made disasters seem to be occurring more frequently, can be of numerous types and can occur at any time,” said **Gaasvig**. “The saying in the field is ‘when’ a disaster occurs, not ‘if.’ Therefore, it is crucial that

'Disaster Planning' be undertaken at all levels to minimize the potential for a disaster to occur and to deal as efficiently as possible with the impact of a disaster when one does."

"The 2006 and Beyond training will be a good introduction for tribes that have not [yet] been impacted by a large scale disaster like Rita," said **Derek Valdo, Director of Safety Services for AMERIND**. He will give the presentation along with **AMERIND's Director of Claims Response, Alan Romero**. "We have first hand experience working with three tribes impacted by hurricanes, and the response wasn't that good in all areas. We will share those experiences with attendees so that they will be prepared."

During **AMERIND's** session, Valdo plans to provide attendees with sample emergency management plans and information on how to adhere to Homeland Security compliance. They will also instruct attendees to get involved in local and national emergency management plans. "During the disaster is not the time to be networking," Valdo said.

Meth Prevention and Detection Panel Sessions Offered

NAIHC, which has been running methamphetamine prevention and detection training for over a year, is also bringing to the convention expanded sessions on how to deal with this growing problem in Indian country. These panels include: **Fighting Meth: Coalition Building for Tribal Housing Entities; HAZWOPER (Meth cleanup); and Dealing with Methamphetamines.**

Other New and Popular Trainings Offered

For the first time, convention participants can participate in a "Workshop on Wheels" that will tour Native Hawaiian Homelands affordable housing developments and show participants how to leverage financial and community resources to create affordable housing. The tour is sponsored by **Washington Mutual**.

Other sessions include: **Access to Homeownership; Partnerships to Increase Tribal Homeownership; Predatory Lending;** and **Designing Individual Development Accounts**. Other training opportunities include three asset-building panels, **Records & Info Management** and **Board of Commissioners** training, as well as **HOME, Grant Writing, Self-Monitoring** and **How to Access Low Income Housing Tax Credits**.

New Chairman to be Elected; NAHASDA Reauthorization Discussed

NAIHC will also conduct a Business Meeting of members where a new Chairman will be elected. In addition during a Legislative Committee meeting **NAIHC** membership will discuss their position on the issues related to the 2007 reauthorization of the Native American Housing Assistance and Self Determination Act (NAHASDA).

For further information on the Business Meeting, resolutions and the Chairman election-nomination & qualification procedures, please visit **NAIHC's** Web site: www.naihc.net or contact Lena Duncan, (800) 284-9165 or lduncan@naihc.net.

Registration & Hotel Information:

To register for the Convention, go to **NAIHC's website:** www.naihc.net and click on the advertisement for the Convention. The Hilton has sold out, but you can make overflow reservations at the Renaissance Ilikai Waikiki Hotel 808-949-3811 or 800-245-4524. The rate is \$169 for single/double.

Media are welcome to attend the Convention. For media registration, contact: Kim Hayes, (202) 454-0931 or khayes@naihc.net.

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The National American Indian Housing Council assists tribes and tribal housing entities in reaching their self-determined goals of providing culturally relevant, decent, safe, sanitary, and quality affordable housing for Native people in Indian communities and Alaska Native villages.

(www.naihc.net)