

Raising Climate Awareness for New York City Coastal Communities

New York Sea Grant (NYSG) has a successful track record of empowering communities to become aware of climate-related coastal events and to plan and prepare for future events.

Climate Forums in NYC Neighborhoods

In November 2016, NYSG and the Science and Resilience Institute at Jamaica Bay (SRIJB) launched Climate Forums in partnership with the Consortium for Climate Risk in the Urban Northeast, New York City Emergency Management, and other stakeholders. These forums are designed to enhance awareness of climate-related risks and how they link to short-term weather events and provide tools to empower communities in critically-affected sectors of New York City.

To date, four Climate Forums have drawn participation from more than 20 communities. Forums have been hosted in Brighton Beach, Canarsie, Coney Island, and Far Rockaway.

The Climate Forums bring relevant, useful information to communities versus asking them to find the experts. Scientists, city officials, and emergency managers present the science of climate hazards and risks, policies and preparedness information to inform local decisionmaking. Topics include the shift from hurricane season to Nor'easter season; flooding and flooding preparedness, extreme heat, and severe storms and hurricane preparedness. The Climate Forums' "Tools Cafe" provides attendees with the opportunity to interact with experts and officials and to learn from one another.

Forum participant surveys reveal many individuals are actively seeking new information and knowledge of climate and weather events. Most get information from The Weather Channel followed by television and radio.

Those surveyed identified various methods of severe weather event self-preparation. During a hurricane, storm, or flood, people have an emergency plan, and know evacuation routes. They prepare for heat waves by cooling their homes with air conditioning. However, there is a lack of awareness of New York City resources



Dr. Radley Horton, Columbia University, presents information related to extreme heat, Far Rockaway Climate Forum, May 2017.
Photo: Jessica Fain, SRIJB

such as where cooling centers are located, and what components to include in an emergency kit or "go-bag."

Partners:

- Science and Resilience Institute at Jamaica Bay
- Consortium for Climate Risk in the Urban Northeast
- Canarsie Community Emergency Response Team
- Federal Emergency Management Agency Region 2
- Hebrew Educational Society • National Center for Disaster Preparedness • National Weather Service Forecasting Office, Upton • Neighborhood Housing Services Brooklyn • New York Aquarium • New York City Dept. of City Planning • New York City Dept. of Health
- New York City Emergency Management • New York City Office of Resiliency and Recovery • Rockaway Waterfront Alliance • Stevens Institute of Technology

The Sea Grant Focus Area for this project is New York Resilient Communities & Economies

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