Resiliency: Ability to rebound and recover

Cape May planning for sea level rise, increasing number of major storms

By JACK FICTHER
Cape Play Star and Wave

CAPE MAY — A term likely to be heard more often as an increasing number of coastal storms are resiliency, the ability to rebound and the capacity to recover.

According to Planning Board Chairman Greg Harries, communities not only need to recover from disasters but place themselves in a stronger position than previously to withstand additional hazards and ensure community safety and quality of life for potential residents. He said after Superstorm Sandy in 2012 and other disasters, it’s been noticed they are occurring at increasing frequency.

The county and Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) have compiled a list of all the areas which are flooding due to future storms, hurricanes and blizzards — Dec. 12-13, 2009; January 2010; Winter storm and blizzards with snow plow operation over a 72-hour period; Police and fire EMS responded to calls over the same period of the storm — Dec. 30, 2010; Seven winter storms and snowstorms with snow removal operation for more than 48-hour period; EMS assisted with transport to local hospital — Aug. 28-29, 2011; Hurricane Irene; severe thunderstorms with flash flood rains causing severe beach erosion of 144,475 cubic yards; Police and fire EMS responded to calls over the same period of the storm — Oct. 28, 2012; Hurricane Sandy; severe beach erosion, street flooding, road closures, total power outage and loss of 14,000 linear feet of boardwalk; severe thunderstorms with flash flood rains causing severe beach erosion.

He said after Superstorm Sandy, the U.S. Department of Homeland Security and FEMA have recommended a multi-billion dollar investment in resiliency in regions with a history of flooding, storms and coastal storms.

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