



HealthCheck Reports: August 2005

HURRICANE FLOOD WATERS

8/30/2005

Another local group is getting ready to head south - and they're getting well-prepared. Soon, a truck and all of its equipment will be ready to roll toward the devastated city of New Orleans. It's one of a fleet of trucks and hummers used by **allRisk** of Somerdale, New Jersey, the largest 24-hour disaster response company in our region. They've been hired to help get two flooded out hospitals in New Orleans up and running again.

Dean Ragone/allRisk: "It's a devastating hurricane you only see once in a blue moon." Co-owner Dean Ragone says allRisk uses dozens of industrial-sized fans and dehumidifiers to dry buildings out. All of the company's workers wear full protective gear like this when heading into a flood zone. That's because flood water is outright dangerous- what's described as "category 3."

Lou Crisci/allRisk: "Category 3 water is the worst that there is- the same as raw sewage." Emergency coordinator Lou Crisci cringes when he sees video of residents wading in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina. They are exposed to water that may be contaminated with sewage, gasoline, animal remains and more. But even once the water recedes, what's left behind can harbor health dangers as well. In the humid climate of the deep South, mold growth is a major problem.

"People are inclined to try to save property when they should be taking out the walls, drying out, because you are not going to be able to salvage them."

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