



## COUNTY OF SANTA BARBARA COUNTY EXECUTIVE OFFICE

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## P R E S S   R E L E A S E

### SANTA BARBARA COUNTY OFFICE OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT WELCOMES HOME STAFF FROM 21-DAY MUTUAL AID DEPLOYMENT IN SUPPORT OF NEW MEXICO FLOODING

**SANTA BARBARA, CA December 18, 2013** - The Santa Barbara County Office of Emergency Management today welcomed home two of its senior emergency managers who were recently deployed to New Mexico in support of the State's flood recovery effort. Richard Abrams and Joe Guzzardi were deployed for 21 days to various parts of New Mexico which experienced severe flooding and fires in recent months which elicited several Presidential Declarations of Disaster.

Richard Abrams and Joe Guzzardi have extensive experience both in presidentially declared disasters as emergency managers working in emergency operations centers and in post disaster public assistance which was particularly sought by New Mexico and FEMA for mutual aid assistance. Their assistance directly contributed to the recovery and aid to local governments who experienced damages from the flooding that occurred September 9<sup>th</sup> through the 22<sup>nd</sup>.

Mutual aid is a tremendous benefit to all parties involved and the Santa Barbara County Office of Emergency Management will continue to look for opportunities to deploy personnel in support of state and national disaster events through the Emergency Management Assistance Compact. Facilitated through the California Governor's Office of Emergency Services, OEM Director Ryan Rockabrand said he "was grateful that the State provided us the opportunity to support this mission as it allows our staff to remain in line with today's national



OEM Director Ryan Rockabrand presents Certifications of Deployment to Richard Abrams and Joe Guzzardi, Certified Emergency Managers with the Office of Emergency Management who recently returned from a 21-day mutual aid deployment in support of New Mexico flooding.

Facilitated through the California Governor's Office of Emergency Services, OEM Director Ryan Rockabrand said he "was grateful that the State provided us the opportunity to support this mission as it allows our staff to remain in line with today's national

standards and provides us an unprecedented opportunity to bring back invaluable lessons learned and best practices we can in turn share with our local communities.”

The returning Emergency Managers had this to say about their respective experiences: Richard Abrams – “This was a great professional opportunity as an emergency manager and I really enjoyed working with the phenomenal FEMA assistance personnel.” Joe Guzzardi – “I enjoyed working with the cities, counties, and Native American Pueblos throughout northern New Mexico. It was very rewarding.”

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