

For Immediate Release
July 18, 2005

Contact: DCA Press Office
Rob Hayes
(850) 922-1600

DCA BUILDING CODE ASSESSMENT TRIAGE TEAM
STUDIES IMPACT OF HURRICANE DENNIS

TALLAHASSEE – The Florida Department of Community Affairs (DCA) today announced a new study regarding the Florida Building Code and residential infrastructure in Panhandle communities affected by Hurricane Dennis. DCA's Building Code Assessment Triage Team surveyed homes in Northwest Florida to determine how homes built to the 2001 Building Code withstood the July 10 hurricane.

"It is critical that we continue to learn more about the impacts hurricanes have on Florida's residential infrastructure," said DCA Secretary Thaddeus Cohen. "The study our team is conducting will provide valuable information that will allow us to continue updating Florida's Building Code to better protect Floridians and their homes."

Following the landfall of Hurricane Dennis, DCA's Building Code Assessment Triage Team deployed to the Florida Panhandle. The triage team immediately began assessing storm related impacts on residential structures in the area's most severely impacted communities. Information gathered during the deployment will be used by DCA's building code experts to make future recommendations to the Florida Building Commission.

The team also gathered additional data in areas previously impacted by Hurricane Ivan to determine how buildings damaged during the previous storm and repaired to the 2001 Florida Building Code withstood the impact of Hurricane Dennis. Similar assessments conducted following the 2004 hurricanes concluded homes built under the current Code generally sustained less damage than those built to previous regulations.

The intent of the assessment is to learn what performed well, but more importantly, what may need improvement. Lessons learned from the assessment of building code performance and enforcement will be used by the Florida Building Commission to explore potential changes to the Florida Building Code. Continuing assessments of the Code's performance and enforcement help building professionals, contractors, architects, engineers, building owners and citizens to be better prepared for future hurricanes and other severe weather threats.

For more information regarding the Department of Community Affairs and the Florida Building Code, please visit www.dca.state.fl.us.

###