

PRESS RELEASE - FDE supports travelers to Haiti

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Florida Disaster Engineers, Inc., of Cape Canaveral, Brevard County, Florida has posted newly made standardized grid maps for **Haiti** to its website for use by any responders & relief organizations headed to or already in **Haiti**. These maps were made this week for the ongoing search & rescue operations there. The maps are designed for easy use in atlas form; they are 8.5" x 11" GeoPDF files and combine topographic and aerial views which can be paper-printed or used electronically with standard software or free on-line viewers. The maps employ **Military Grid Reference System (MGRS)** which has been used by the US Military and NATO since 1947 and which is conveniently found in practically all hand-held GPS receivers.

In the United States, all fire-rescue, medical, law enforcement and emergency management personnel should be familiar with **United States National Grid** which is practically identical to and fully interoperable with MGRS. The need for a standardize means of geospatial reference has been identified in Florida as far back as Hurricane Andrew. Street addresses are of no value when streets or signs are missing, flooded, burned over, obscured by smoke, etc. The State of Florida Fire Marshall took steps to adopt USNG in 2006.

Florida Disaster Engineers, Inc. representatives have been working closely since 2007 with the USNG National Implementation Center at Delta State University(DSU) in Mississippi. DSU made the Haiti maps this week and authorized their distribution. Additional USNG training files are also available on FDE web site.

Florida Disaster Engineers' mission, per its President Byron Evetts, is "to support Urban Search & Rescue operations in Florida or anywhere to whatever extent we can". FDE is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization.

Note-1: FDE personnel are all members of Florida's Urban Search & Rescue Teams and/or local fire departments.

Note-2: FDE personnel will be in Daytona this week attending the [Fire Rescue East](#) convention.

Haiti Map Link: http://www.floridadisasterengineers.org/library.html#Haiti_Maps

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