

News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Contact: Dan Aug

Phone: 631. 853.4018

Cell: 631. 885.0631

Levy Unveils Plan to Minimize Business Losses in Event of Large-Scale Emergency

Corporate Emergency Access System will Grant Employees Speedier Access to Closed Areas in Suffolk Following a Crisis

Hauppauge, NY – Seeking to save livelihoods along with lives, Suffolk County Executive Steve Levy has unveiled a program to protect businesses in the aftermath of an emergency.

For more than a year, Suffolk has worked with the not-for-profit Business Network Emergency Resources (BNET) organization to develop a continuity plan for the county's business community. Known as the Corporate Emergency Access System (CEAS), this joint public- and private-sector program establishes a process enabling key employees at area businesses to more readily re-enter cordoned-off areas—with approval from local law enforcement officials—following an emergency.

Many times, in the event of a large-scale fire or other incident, police and fire officials close off surrounding vicinities as a precaution, even if these areas are not in imminent danger. The CEAS program will allow those persons whose businesses aren't directly impacted by the incident to return to their places of business more quickly than in the past.

Levy said the CEAS program will help minimize down time and ensure the quickest possible restoration of business operations at these firms. At the same time, the program will have built-in security mechanisms to safeguard against building access by unauthorized persons. "Hopefully, we will never have to use this continuity mechanism, but if a disaster occurs we will have the system in place," said Levy. "In many cases, disaster recovery at large and small businesses can make the difference between survival and falling victim permanently."

The county executive was joined at a May 11 press conference at the Bank of Smithtown building in Hauppauge by a host of law enforcement and emergency services officials, as well as BNET President Dr. Robert H. Leviton and area business leaders including First Empire Asset Management President Joseph Oricoli.

Suffolk Police Department Homeland Security Chief Mark White said the program will bring "certainty to the uncertainty" that would result from a natural or man-made disaster, leading to "a better and more efficient recovery."

As part of the plan, business owners will work with local law enforcement officials to register key staff members for the program. These individuals will be given identification cards that will allow for post-disaster building access. Personal identification cards cost \$50 each and are good for a two-year period. Area business owners who are interested in participating may contact BNET officials at 888-353-BNET (2638) or by e-mail at support@ceas.com. Additional details about the program are available at www.ceas.com.



ACCESS CARD ADVOCATES—Suffolk County Executive Steve Levy (second from left) has unveiled a program that will feature personalized ID cards that key personnel at area businesses will use to gain swift re-entry into buildings following a man-made or natural disaster. The county executive was joined at a May 11 press conference in Hauppauge by Business Network Emergency Resources (BNET) President Dr. Robert H. Leviton (far left), whose non-profit firm is working with the county to administer the program; Suffolk Police Department Homeland Security Chief Mark White (second from right), and Suffolk Fire, Rescue and Emergency Services Deputy Commissioner John Searing. ([Attention editors: Photo is attached.](#))

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Dan Aug
Director of Communications
Office of Suffolk County Executive Steve Levy
631-853-4018
631-885-0631(m)

