



U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region 7, 11201 Renner Blvd., Lenexa, KS 66219
Iowa, Kansas, Missouri, Nebraska, and Nine Tribal Nations

David Williams, Response & Removal Emergency Preparedness Section Chief

June 24, 2020

“We were deployed before the hurricane made landfall just in the event that something bad were to happen. Well something bad did happen. I recall sleeping in a car for two nights. We upgraded to the New Orleans Saints practice facility; it was an indoor thing. We were sleeping on tents on AstroTurf for two nights. Then, we upgraded to a camper sleeping four burly dudes in these medium sized campers. One memory I have of that is when the levees failed, and we were asked – EPA’s mission. We got this odd mission, right out of the gate of helping with search and rescue, which is not in our wheelhouse. We do container pickup, hazmat recovery, oil response and all that as a result of these things, but we got drawn into, ‘Hey EPA, what can you do? Can you provide boats? And a person driving the boats?’ And, in most cases, an EPA person on the boat as well. And, it’s all kinds of boats going out to homes and picking up people that were stranded on the tops of their homes or inside their homes. Any kind of boat that could handle people. It was quite a sight.”

###

Connect with us on [Facebook](#) or follow us on [Twitter](#)

[Learn more](#) about EPA Region 7