



## **Experts Available to Discuss the Use of Geographic Information Systems (GIS) Technology by Florida Citizens and Public Safety Officials to Prepare for and Recover from the Effects of Hurricane Frances**

September 3, 2004

SAN RAFAEL, Calif., Sept. 3 /PRNewswire-FirstCall/ --

Who: Jon Hansen, retired assistant fire chief of Oklahoma City, chair of the Governor's Committee on Homeland Security for the State of Oklahoma, and nationally renowned expert on disaster readiness

Jim Howard, Program Manager, Emergency Response, for Autodesk, Inc.

What: GIS software from Autodesk combines detailed maps of communities with the location of utilities and other infrastructure and precision data on the interiors and exteriors of buildings. The combined "supermap" allows emergency personnel to plan evacuation routes, place rescue and aid centers, dispatch first responders efficiently to stricken areas, and help speed the location and repair of damaged power lines, water mains, and other services.

The state uses the technology to provide maps on its Web site of evacuation routes, flood and storm surge areas, and the location and status of shelters. Any citizen can view that information in real time on the Internet to determine when, how, and where to evacuate. Such technology didn't exist when Hurricane Andrew caused 26 deaths and did some \$25 billion in damage in 1992.

Autodesk GIS software is used by numerous agencies in the areas where Frances is expected to strike, including the city of West Palm Beach, several cities in Broward and Palm Beach counties, and Florida's Department of Emergency Management.

Why: Howard and Hansen both have extensive knowledge and first-hand experience with disasters including the Oklahoma City bombing and the F-5 tornadoes that hit Oklahoma in 1999. They can explain how GIS technology works and why it leaves communities uniquely prepared to save lives and protect property from the effects of a monster storm like Frances.

**Contact:**

Rory O'Connor, Fleishman-Hillard, 415-318-4144; 415-385-4266 (mobile)

Tim O'Keefe, Fleishman-Hillard, 415-318-4166; 925-858-5399 (mobile)

SOURCE Autodesk, Inc.

09/03/2004

CONTACT: Rory O'Connor, +1-415-318-4144, or mobile, +1-415-385-4266, or Tim O'Keefe, +1-415-318-4166, or mobile, +1-925-858-5399, both of Fleishman-Hillard, for Autodesk, Inc.

Web site: <http://www.autodesk.com>