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NEWS RELEASE

MARK SLOAN APPOINTED TO HEAD REVAMPED OFFICE OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

*County Judge Ed Emmett Reorganizes Emergency Office
To Streamline Responsibilities and Response Times*

Harris County Judge Ed Emmett announced today that he had appointed Mark Sloan, a veteran county emergency response planner, to take over a newly reorganized Harris County Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Management. Sloan will take over as the county's emergency management coordinator on Aug. 1, replacing Stephen Kastensmidt.

Emmett also tapped Bill Wheeler, the former head of emergency preparedness at the Texas Medical Center in Houston, as the office's deputy director of emergency management.

"I knew right away that the best candidate for this job was only a few offices away," said Emmett. "Mark has already been nationally recognized for his efforts in organizing 60,000 volunteers during the Hurricane Katrina response and for building up the county's all-volunteer Citizen Corps. Pairing him with Bill Wheeler gives county residents two experienced and innovative leaders who start their new jobs with a deep working knowledge of state, regional and county emergency preparedness issues."

Sloan replaces Stephen Kastensmidt, who has resigned effective July 31.

Emmett and Sloan recently completed a restructuring of the Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Management designed to free the agency's top officials from paperwork and administrative duties so they can instead focus on coordinating the county's response to natural and man-made disasters with other jurisdictions.

Sloan, 46, joined the county in 2002 as director of homeland security and special projects for former Harris County Judge Robert Eckels. He received a President's Call to Service Award in September recognizing the accomplishments of the Harris County Citizen Corps and for coordinating the volunteer response during the Katrina relief effort.