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Norcross-Mayfield warning system sold

By MARTIN MERZER

An emergency warning system being developed by South Florida's two most prominent hurricane forecasters -- former hurricane center director Max Mayfield and broadcaster Bryan Norcross -- has been acquired by a small, publicly traded company.

The system, called America's Emergency Network, is being built to give the media, local residents and others direct access to information released by state and local emergency operations centers.

Norcross, who also serves as WFOR-CBS 4's hurricane specialist, announced Tuesday that AEN had been acquired by Brampton Crest International, a Miami Beach company that specializes in making loans to real estate firms and other entities.

He and Mayfield, who retired last year from the hurricane center and now works for WPLG-ABC 10 as a hurricane expert, have been developing AEN for about a year.

They say it will serve as an Internet- and satellite-based clearinghouse for preparedness and post-disaster advisories issued by government emergency managers to South Floridians and residents of other areas.

Those messages include prestorm tips and evacuation orders, post-storm updates about rescue operations and relief distribution sites, and crucial information about other emergencies.

"This deal gives us an advantage because there is so much interest in the emergency community," Norcross said. "After talking to a lot of people in the financial world, we thought that moving into the public [corporate] arena was the way to go."

The arrangement calls for Brampton to issue 100 million common shares and follows a \$1 million private placement of shares that will be used to finance AEN, according to a company statement.

Brampton will be renamed The AEN Group. Norcross has been appointed as its president and chief executive officer and Mayfield is now senior executive vice president of government relations.

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