



Atlanta's Hospitality Industry is not Gone with the Wind

ATLANTA (March 19, 2008) – Atlanta is open for business. The Georgia World Congress Center (GWCC) authorities announced Wednesday that two conventions planned for later this month in Atlanta will continue as scheduled. International Window Coverings Expo, scheduled for March 26-29, and National Propane Gas Association, March 29-31, will be held at the GWCC in Building C. The two shows will bring a combined economic impact of nearly \$14 million in direct spending to Atlanta's economy.

This announcement reflects the tremendous progress that has been made throughout Atlanta over the past five days since a series of severe storms struck the city on Friday evening. All of the city's attractions are open for business, most of the streets in Downtown have been cleared and less than 700 of the city's 92,000 hotel rooms are in need of repair.

Staff at the GWCC have been working around the clock to repair damage to the nation's fourth largest convention center. The opening of the International Window Coverings Expo will mean that no conventions have moved from Atlanta and that the GWCC is ready to accommodate meetings and conventions.

The city's hospitality officials were able to relocate the Big South Qualifier volleyball tournament, scheduled to begin on Friday, March 21, to venues throughout the city such as the Georgia International Convention Center (GICC), Cobb Galleria Centre and the old convention center that the GICC replaced. Keeping this business in Atlanta will bring 38,000 attendees to town, bringing more than \$18 million in direct spending.

“The collaboration of the hospitality community has saved economic impact that would have been lost, said Spurgeon Richardson, president and CEO of Atlanta Convention & Visitors Bureau. Had it not been for the GWCC, the hotels and so many other stakeholders in Atlanta, we would have seen business go to other cities. Instead, we are ready to roll out the welcome mat for our visitors.”

Established in 1913, Atlanta Convention & Visitors Bureau is a private, nonprofit organization created to favorably impact the Atlanta economy through conventions and tourism. www.atlanta.net

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