

Emergency Management

Definition, Vision, Mission, Principles

Definition

Emergency management is the managerial function charged with creating the framework within which communities reduce vulnerability to hazards and cope with disasters.

Vision

Emergency management seeks to promote safer, less vulnerable communities with the capacity to cope with hazards and disasters.

Mission

Emergency Management protects communities by coordinating and integrating all activities necessary to build, sustain, and improve the capability to mitigate against, prepare for, respond to, and recover from threatened or actual natural disasters, acts of terrorism, or other man-made disasters.

Principles

Emergency Management must be:

1. **Comprehensive** — emergency managers consider and take into account all hazards, all phases, all stakeholders and all impacts relevant to disasters.
2. **Progressive** — emergency managers anticipate future disasters and take preventive and preparatory measures to build disaster-resistant and disaster-resilient communities.
3. **Risk-Driven** — emergency managers use sound risk management principles (hazard identification, risk analysis, and impact analysis) in assigning priorities and resources.
4. **Integrated** — emergency managers ensure unity of effort among all levels of government and all elements of a community.
5. **Collaborative** — emergency managers create and sustain broad and sincere relationships among individuals and organizations to encourage trust, advocate a team atmosphere, build consensus, and facilitate communication.
6. **Coordinated** — emergency managers synchronize the activities of all relevant stakeholders to achieve a common purpose.
7. **Flexible** — emergency managers use creative and innovative approaches in solving disaster challenges.
8. **Professional** — emergency managers value a science and knowledge-based approach based on education, training, experience, ethical practice, public stewardship and continuous improvement.



FEMA



Division Succession and Recall Procedure

Identify line of succession (by position) from Division Manager to vocational skill.	
Recall of personnel – what is current procedure? List essential personnel positions.	

Timing of Continuity Efforts – What functions must be up and running and/or decisions made within...

Within 4 Hours	
Within 12 Hours	
Within 24 Hours	
Within 48 Hours	
Within 1 Week	
Within 2 Weeks	
Within 1 Month	

Personnel Contact Information – Please note essential personnel with *

Name	Number (cell 1 st if possible)	Alternate Number (optional)	Email	Text? (Y/N)

Outside Resources Needed - Contact Information

Name	Number (cell 1 st if possible)	Alternate Number (optional)	Email	Text? (Y/N)



*Principles of Emergency
Management
Supplement*

September 11, 2007

Table of Contents

Foreword	3
Definition, Vision, Mission, Principles	4
Definition	4
Vision.....	4
Mission.....	4
Principles.....	4
Principles of Emergency Management	5
1. Comprehensive	5
2. Progressive.....	5
3. Risk-driven.....	6
4. Integrated	6
5. Collaborative.....	7
6. Coordinated.....	8
7. Flexible	8
8. Professional.....	9

Foreword

In March of 2007, Dr. Wayne Blanchard of FEMA's Emergency Management Higher Education Project, at the direction of Dr. Cortez Lawrence, Superintendent of FEMA's Emergency Management Institute, convened a working group of emergency management practitioners and academics to consider principles of emergency management. This project was prompted by the realization that while numerous books, articles and papers referred to "principles of emergency management", nowhere in the vast array of literature on the subject was there an agreed upon definition of what these principles were.

The group agreed on eight principles that will be used to guide the development of a doctrine of emergency management. This monograph lists these eight principles and provides a brief description of each.

Members of the working group are:

Dr. B. Wayne Blanchard, CEM
Higher Education Project Manager
FEMA Emergency Management Institute

Lucien G. Canton, CEM, CBCP, CPP
Emergency Management Consultant
Director of Emergency Services (retired)
City and County of San Francisco, CA

Carol L. Cwiak, JD
Instructor, Emergency Management Program
North Dakota State University

Kay C. Goss, CEM
President
Foundation of Higher Education Accreditation

Dr. David A McEntire
Associate Professor
Emergency Administration and Planning Program
University of North Texas

Lee Newsome, CEM
Emergency Response Educators and Consultants, Inc.
Representative
NFPA 1600 Technical Advisory Committee

Michael D. Selves, CEM, CPM
Emergency Management and Homeland
Security Director
Johnson County, Kansas
President
International Association of Emergency Managers

Eric A. Sorchik
Adjunct Professor, School of Administrative Science
Fairleigh-Dickinson University
State Emergency Management Training Officer
New Jersey State Police (retired)

Kim Stenson
Chief, Preparedness and Recovery
South Carolina Emergency Management Division
Representative
National Emergency Managers Association

James E. Turner III
Director
Delaware Emergency Management Agency
Representative
National Emergency Managers Association

Dr. William L Waugh, Jr.
Professor, Public Administration and
Urban Studies /Political Science
Georgia State University
Representative
Emergency Management Accreditation Program

Dewayne West, CEM, CCFI
Director of Emergency Services (retired)
Johnston County, North Carolina
Past President
International Association of Emergency Managers

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

DEFINITION, VISION, MISSION, PRINCIPLES

Definition

Emergency management is the managerial function charged with creating the framework within which communities reduce vulnerability to hazards and cope with disasters.

Vision

Emergency management seeks to promote safer, less vulnerable communities with the capacity to cope with hazards and disasters.

Mission

Emergency management protects communities by coordinating and integrating all activities necessary to build, sustain, and improve the capability to mitigate against, prepare for, respond to, and recover from threatened or actual natural disasters, acts of terrorism, or other man-made disasters.

Principles

Emergency management must be:

1. **Comprehensive** – emergency managers consider and take into account all hazards, all phases, all stakeholders and all impacts relevant to disasters.
2. **Progressive** – emergency managers anticipate future disasters and take preventive and preparatory measures to build disaster-resistant and disaster-resilient communities.
3. **Risk-driven** – emergency managers use sound risk management principles (hazard identification, risk analysis, and impact analysis) in assigning priorities and resources.
4. **Integrated** – emergency managers ensure unity of effort among all levels of government and all elements of a community.
5. **Collaborative** – emergency managers create and sustain broad and sincere relationships among individuals and organizations to encourage trust, advocate a team atmosphere, build consensus, and facilitate communication.
6. **Coordinated** – emergency managers synchronize the activities of all relevant stakeholders to achieve a common purpose.
7. **Flexible** – emergency managers use creative and innovative approaches in solving disaster challenges.
8. **Professional** – emergency managers value a science and knowledge-based approach based on education, training, experience, ethical practice, public stewardship and continuous improvement.

PRINCIPLES OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

1. Comprehensive

Emergency managers consider and take into account all hazards, all phases, all impacts, and all stakeholders relevant to disasters.

Comprehensive emergency management can be defined as the preparation for and the carrying out of all emergency functions necessary to mitigate, prepare for, respond to, and recover from emergencies and disasters caused by all hazards, whether natural, technological, or human caused. Comprehensive emergency management consists of four related components: all hazards, all phases, all impacts, and all stakeholders.

All Hazards: All hazards within a jurisdiction must be considered as part of a thorough risk assessment and prioritized on the basis of impact and likelihood of occurrence. Treating all hazards the same in terms of planning resource allocation ultimately leads to failure. There are similarities in how one reacts to all disasters. These event-specific actions form the basis for most emergency plans. However, there are also distinct differences between disaster agents that must be addressed in agent or hazard-specific plans and these can only be identified through the risk assessment process.

All Phases: The Comprehensive Emergency Management Model¹ on which modern emergency management is based defines four phases of emergency management: mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery. *Mitigation* consists of those activities designed to prevent or reduce losses from disaster. It is usually considered the initial phase of emergency management, although it may be a component of other phases. *Preparedness* is focused on the development of plans and capabilities for effective disaster response. *Response* is the immediate reaction to a disaster. It may occur as the disaster is anticipated, as well as soon after it begins. *Recovery* consists of those ac-

tivities that continue beyond the emergency period to restore critical community functions and manage reconstruction.² Detailed planning and execution is required for each phase. Further, phases often overlap as there is often no clearly defined boundary where one phase ends and another begins. Successful emergency management coordinates activities in all four phases.

All Impacts: Emergencies and disasters cut across a broad spectrum in terms of impact on infrastructure, human services, and the economy. Just as all hazards need to be considered in developing plans and protocols, all impacts or predictable consequences relating to those hazards must also be analyzed and addressed.

All Stakeholders: This component is closely related to the emergency management principles of coordination and collaboration. Effective emergency management requires close working relationships among all levels of government, the private sector, and the general public.

2. Progressive

Emergency managers anticipate future disasters and take preventive and preparatory measures to build disaster-resistant and disaster-resilient communities.

Research and data from natural and social scientists indicates that disasters are becoming more frequent, intense, dynamic, and complex. The number of federally declared disasters has risen dramatically over recent decades. Monetary losses are rising at exponential rates because more property is being put at risk. The location of communities and the construction of buildings and infrastructure have not considered potential hazards. Environmental mismanagement and a failure to develop and enforce sound building codes are producing more disasters. There is an increased risk of terrorist attacks using weapons of mass destruction

¹ National Governors' Association. *1978 Emergency Preparedness Project: Final Report*. Washington, DC:NGA, 1978.

² William L. Waugh, Jr. *Living with Hazards, Dealing with Disasters: An Introduction to Emergency Management*. Armonk, New York: M.E. Sharpe, 2000.

Emergency management must give greater attention to prevention and mitigation activities. Traditionally, emergency managers have confined their activities to developing emergency response plans and coordinating the initial response to disasters. Given the escalating risks facing communities, however, emergency managers must become more progressive and strategic in their thinking. The role of the emergency manager can no longer be that of a technician but must evolve to that of a manager and senior policy advisor who oversees a community-wide program to address all hazards and all phases of the emergency management cycle.

Emergency managers must understand how to assess hazards and reduce vulnerability, seek the support of public officials and support the passage of laws and the enforcement of ordinances that reduce vulnerability. Collaborative efforts between experts and organizations in the public, private and non-profit sectors are needed to promote disaster prevention and preparedness. Efforts such as land-use planning, environmental management, building code enforcement, planning, training, and exercises are required and must emphasize vulnerability reduction and capacity building, not just compliance. Emergency management is progressive and not just reactive in orientation.

3. Risk-driven

Emergency managers use sound risk management principles (hazard identification, risk analysis, and impact analysis) in assigning priorities and resources.

Emergency managers are responsible for using available resources effectively and efficiently to manage risk. That means that the setting of policy and programmatic priorities should be based upon measured levels of risk to lives, property, and the environment. NFPA 1600 states that emergency management programs “shall identify hazards, monitor those hazards, the likelihood of their occurrence, and the vulnerability of people, property, the environment, and the entity [program] itself to those hazards”³ The Emergency Management Accreditation Program (EMAP) Standard echoes this requirement for public sector emergency management programs.

³ *NFPA 1600 Standard on Disaster/Emergency Management and Business Continuity Programs, 2007 Edition*, National Fire Protection Association, Quincy, MA. Section 5.3

Effective risk management is based upon (1) the identification of the natural and man-made hazards that may have significant effect on the community or organization; (2) the analysis of those hazards based on the vulnerability of the community to determine the nature of the risks they pose; and (3) an impact analysis to determine the potential affect they may have on specific communities, organizations, and other entities. Mitigation strategies, emergency operations plans, continuity of operations plans, and pre- and post-disaster recovery plans should be based upon the specific risks identified and resources should be allocated appropriately to address those risks.

Communities across the United States have very different risks. It is the responsibility of emergency managers to address the risks specific to their communities. Budgets, human resource management decisions, plans, public education programs, training and exercising, and other efforts necessarily should focus on the hazards that pose the greatest risks first. An all-hazards focus ensures that plans are adaptable to a variety of disaster types and that, by addressing the hazards that pose the greatest risk, the community will be better prepared for lesser risks as well.

4. Integrated

Emergency managers ensure unity of effort among all levels of government and all elements of a community.

In the early 1980's, emergency managers adopted the Integrated Emergency Management System (IEMS), an all-hazards approach to the direction, control and coordination of disasters regardless of their location, size and complexity. IEMS integrates *partnerships* that include all stakeholders in the community's decision-making processes. IEMS is intended to create an organizational culture that is critical to achieving unity of effort between government, key community partners, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and the private sector.

Unity of effort is dependent on both vertical and horizontal integration. This means that at the local level, emergency programs must be integrated with other activities of government. For example, department emergency plans must be synchronized with and support the overall emergency operations plan for the community. In addition, plans at all levels of local government must ultimately be integrated with and

support the community's vision and be consistent with its values.

Similarly, private sector continuity plans should take into account the community's emergency operations plan. Businesses are demanding greater interface with government to understand how to react to events that threaten business survival. Additionally, businesses can provide significant resources during disasters and thus may be a critical component of the community's emergency operations plan. In addition, given the high percentage of critical infrastructure owned by the private sector, failure to include businesses in emergency programs could have grave consequences for the community.

The local emergency management program must also be synchronized with higher-level plans and programs. This is most noticeable in the dependence of local government on county, state and federal resources during a disaster. If plans have not been synchronized and integrated, resources may be delayed.

Emergency management must be integrated into daily decisions, not just during times of disasters. While protecting the population is a primary responsibility of government, it cannot be accomplished without building partnerships among disciplines and across all sectors, including the private sector and the media.

5. Collaborative

Emergency managers create and sustain broad and sincere relationships among individuals and organizations to encourage trust, advocate a team atmosphere, build consensus, and facilitate communication.

There is a difference between the terms "collaboration" and "coordination" and current usage often makes it difficult to distinguish between these words. Coordination refers to a process designed to ensure that functions, roles and responsibilities are identified and tasks accomplished; collaboration must be viewed as an attitude or an organizational culture that characterizes the degree of unity and cooperation that exists within a community. In essence, collaboration creates the environment in which coordination can function effectively.

In disaster situations, the one factor that is consistently credited with improving the performance of a community is the degree to which there is an open and cooperative relationship among those individuals and agencies involved. Shortly after Hurricane Katrina, *Governing* magazine correspondent, Jonathan Walters wrote: "Most important to the strength of the inter-governmental chain are solid relationships among those who might be called upon to work together in times of high stress. 'You don't want to meet someone for the first time while you're standing around in the rubble,' says Jarrod Bernstein, a spokesman for the New York Office of Emergency Management."⁴ It is this kind of culture and relationship that collaboration is intended to establish.

A commitment to collaboration makes other essential roles and functions possible. Comfort and Cahill acknowledge the essential nature of collaboration within the emergency management function: "In environments of high uncertainty, this quality of interpersonal trust is essential for collective action. Building that trust in a multi-organizational operating environment is a complex process, perhaps the most difficult task involved in creating an integrated emergency management system."⁵ Thomas Drabek⁶ suggests that collaboration involves three elements:

1. We must commit to ensuring that we have done everything possible to identify all potential players in a disaster event and work to involve them in every aspect of planning and preparedness for a disaster event.
2. Having achieved this broad involvement, we must constantly work to maintain and sustain the real, human, contact necessary to make the system work in a disaster event.
3. Finally, our involvement of all of our "partners" must be based on a sincere desire to listen to and incorporate their concerns and ideas into our planning and preparedness efforts. This element

⁴ Jonathan Walters. GOVEXEC.com, December 1, 2005

⁵ Louise K. Comfort and Anthony G. Cahill. *Managing Disaster, Strategies and Policy Perspectives*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1988

⁶ Thomas E. Drabek. *Strategies for Coordinating Disaster Responses*. Boulder, CO: Program on Environment and Behavior, Monograph 61, University of Colorado, 2003.

is probably the most critical because it is this sincere interest that engenders trust, cooperation and understanding and allows us to truly have a “team” approach to protecting our communities in times of disaster.

This principle can perhaps best be encapsulated by remembering: “If we shake hands before a disaster, we won’t have to point fingers afterwards.”⁷

6. Coordinated

Emergency managers synchronize the activities of all relevant stakeholders to achieve a common purpose.

Emergency managers are seldom in a position to direct the activities of the many agencies and organizations involved in the emergency management program. In most cases, the people in charge of these organizations are senior to the emergency manager, have direct line authority from the senior official, or are autonomous. Each stakeholder brings to the planning process their own authorities, legal mandates, culture and operating missions. The principle of coordination requires that the emergency manager gain agreement among these disparate agencies as to a common purpose and then ensure that their independent activities help to achieve this common purpose.

In essence, the principle of coordination requires that the emergency manager think strategically, that he or she see the “big picture” and how each stakeholder fits into that mosaic. This type of thinking is the basis for the strategic program plan required under the National Preparedness Standard (NFPA 1600) and the Emergency Management Accreditation Program. In developing the strategic plan, the emergency manager facilitates the identification of agreed-upon goals and then persuades stakeholders to accept responsibility for specific performance objectives. The strategic plan then becomes a mechanism for assessing program progress and accomplishments.

This same process can be used on a smaller scale to develop a specific plan, such as a community recovery plan; it is also an inherent component of tacti-

cal and operational response. The principle of coordination is applicable to all four phases of the Comprehensive Emergency Management cycle and is essential for successful planning and operational activities related to the emergency management program. Application of the principle of coordination provides the emergency manager with the management tools that produce the results necessary to achieve a common purpose.

7. Flexible

Emergency managers use creative and innovative approaches in solving disaster challenges.

Due to their diverse and varied responsibilities, emergency managers constitute one of the most flexible organizational elements of government. Laws, policies and operating procedures that allow little flexibility in the performance of duties drive more traditional branches of government. Emergency managers are instead encouraged to develop creative solutions to solve problems and achieve goals.

A principal role of the emergency manager is the assessment of vulnerability and risk and the development of corresponding strategies that could be used to reduce or eliminate risk. However, there can more than one potential mitigation strategy for any given risk. The emergency manager must have the flexibility to choose not only the most efficient course of action but the one that would have the most chance of being implemented.

In the preparedness phase, the emergency manager uses many resources to create and maintain a well-organized community response structure. One such resource is the development of a risk-based community emergency operations plan. While most policies and procedures in government are specific and designed to offer little room for interpretation, the emergency operations plan is designed to be flexible and applicable to all community emergency operations. It is based on the consequences of the event, not the promulgating action.

The most dramatic phase of emergency management is response. In this phase the emergency manager coordinates activities to ensure overall objectives are being met. The emergency manager must be flexible enough to suggest variations in tactics or proce-

⁷ Michael D. Selves. Oral testimony before the United States House Subcommittee on Emergency Management of the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, April 26, 2007.

dures and adapt quickly to a rapidly changing and frequently unclear situation. The emphasis is on creative problem solving based on the event and not on rigid adherence to pre-existing plans.

As part of the community team that will determine recovery priorities the emergency manager must be capable of dealing with the political, economic and social pressures in making these decisions. It is natural to focus on short-term efforts in disaster recovery. However, the emergency manager cannot lose sight of the long-term needs of the community and it is this aspect of recovery that often must be driven by the emergency manager.

Flexibility is a key trait of emergency management and success in the emergency management field is dependent upon it. Being able to provide alternate solutions to stakeholders and then having the flexibility to implement these solutions is a formula for success in emergency management.

8. Professional

Emergency managers value a science and knowledge-based approach based on education, training, experience, ethical practice, public stewardship and continuous improvement.

Professionalism in the context of the principles of emergency management pertains not to the personal attributes of the emergency manager but to a commitment to emergency management as a profession. A profession, as opposed to a discipline or a vocation, has certain characteristics, among which are:

Code of ethics – while no single code of ethics has yet been agreed upon for the profession, the Code of Ethics of the International Association of Emergency Managers, with its emphasis on respect, commitment and professionalism, is generally accepted as the standard for emergency managers.

Professional associations – emergency managers seeking to advance the profession of emergency management are members of professional organizations such as the National Emergency Manager's Association (NEMA) and the International Association of Emergency Managers (IAEM). They also participate in appropriate state, local and professional associations.

Board certification – emergency managers seek to earn professional certification through such programs as the Certified Emergency Manager program of IAEM. Professional certification demonstrates the achievement of a minimum level of expertise and encourages continued professional development through periodic recertification.

Specialized body of knowledge – the knowledge base for emergency managers consists of three principal areas. The first is the study of historical disasters, particularly as it pertains to the community for which the emergency manager is responsible. Secondly, the emergency manager must have a working familiarity with social science literature pertaining to disaster issues. Third, the emergency manager must be well versed in emergency management practices, standards and guidelines.

Standards and best practices – the principal standards used in emergency management are NFPA 1600 and the Emergency Management Accreditation Program (EMAP) Standard. These two standards provide the overarching context for the use of other standards and best practices.

The Chief Executive Officer, whether Mayor, County/City Commissioner, Chair of the Village Board or other title, bears the direct and ultimate responsibility for how well the jurisdiction prevents, prepares for, survives and recovers from an emergency or disaster. The Emergency Manager provides assistance and advises the Chief Executive Officer to ensure that proper emergency actions are taken in a timely manner to provide the care and support for those citizens affected.

ROLE OF ELECTED OFFICIALS BEFORE A DISASTER OCCURS

The primary role of an elected official before a disaster is that of preparedness. Whether you are a Commissioner or a Councilmember, you have the ability to guide your City towards effective emergency management planning strategies. Many give in to the notion that emergency preparedness is too daunting, so why try. But it is the citizen's expectation of you to always keep emergency management in your list of priorities when you serve, especially during budget preparation. The following is a list of suggestions to follow to help you be as prepared as you can possibly be.

- Make planning for emergencies and disasters a priority at all levels of your organization.
- Meet with your Local Emergency Management Agency to learn about the hazards that threaten your jurisdiction and what is being done to address those hazards.
- Learn about emergency management and disaster assistance programs both at the state and federal levels, (These Resources can be attained by contacting your emergency manager).
- Provide policy direction for prevention/protection-related, response, recovery, and mitigation-related activities,
- Encourage all government agencies and business leaders to coordinate and collaborate with your jurisdiction's Emergency Management Agency.
- Ensure your Continuity of Operations (COOP) and Continuity of Government (COG) plans are up to date.
- Provide policy direction for emergency management-related activities, when needed.
- Familiarize yourself with your jurisdiction's Emergency Operations Center (EOC).
- Encourage individuals, families, and businesses in your community to develop an emergency plan and be self-sufficient in the immediate aftermath of a disaster.
- Obtain the necessary training to become a leader to your constituents during an emergency.
- Participate in emergency and disaster drills and exercises.
- Learn the damage assessment process and how it impacts the possibility of obtaining federal assistance.
- Learn your legal authorities and responsibilities.

ROLE OF ELECTED OFFICIALS DURING A DISASTER

The primary role of an elected official during a disaster is that of support. As the disaster is occurring and the immediate response is underway, you will best serve your citizens by empowering and allowing your first responders and the EOC staff the freedom to manage the incident as they have been trained to do. Allow them time to stabilize the situation before attempting to step in as a decision maker. Your role as decision maker will come, but the primary goal of addressing a disaster as it is happening is to stabilize the situation quickly and efficiently – your staff will do that for you. To help in this goal, your role consists of:

- Support and work with your emergency management officials, as needed. This may include facilitating communication with and obtaining assistance from other agencies, declaring a local state of emergency, and issuing emergency orders.
- Communicate quickly, clearly, and effectively to your constituents and work with your partners to ensure a coordinated message.
- Get accurate information out early and often, and ensure all messaging is accessible.
- Maintain situational awareness regarding the disaster by staying informed.
- Provide direction for response-related activities, when appropriate.
- Trust and empower your emergency management official(s) to make the right decisions.
- Serve your citizens by allowing the First Responders and the EOC staff to manage the incident as they are trained to do. The active participation of Elected Officials in planning / training before a disaster and leadership during the recovery period is where you will have the greatest impact and be of most value.
- Use an EOC Liaison to help you stay informed during the incident.

ROLE OF ELECTED OFFICIALS FOLLOWING A DISASTER

The primary role of an elected official after a disaster is that of leadership. Once the first responders and EOC staff have stabilized the situation, your role as an elected official becomes crucial to the recovery process. A community is built on law and order, and this stems from City Code, Zoning Regulations, Building Code, Police Enforcement, and much more. Just because a disaster occurs does not mean these regulations are null and void. On the contrary, they are crucial to make sure your community is built back right. For a City to truly recover, diligent and firm adherence to the City's Codes and Regulations must be adhered to. To help in accomplishing this goal, the following is a list of roles for you to fill.

- Understand the disaster assistance programs available and application process for State of Wyoming and the Federal Disaster Declarations.
- Support your community throughout the recovery – it can be a long process and may take multiple years.

Recovery in terms of short – (days to weeks), intermediate – (weeks to months), and long-term recovery (months to years).

- Ask questions – the recovery process and programs can be complex.
- Ensure all Codes and Regulations are enforced during the recovery process.

NIMS and ICS The National Incident Management System (NIMS) is applicable to state, tribal and local governments, private sector organizations, critical infrastructure owners and operators, nongovernmental organizations and other organizations with an active role in emergency management and incident response. State and Local Governments must comply with the use of NIMS and ICS to remain eligible to receive federal Homeland Security or Federal Emergency Management Agency grant funding – this is often referred to as being NIMS Compliant. Local First Responders use NIMS and the Incident Command System (ICS) on every call. Elected and appointed officials, who are responsible for jurisdictional policy decisions, must also have a clear understanding of Incident Command and NIMS, and their roles and responsibilities in the ICS process. The basic NIMS/ICS on-line classes listed below are vital for local government workers and Elected Officials. A basic premise of NIMS is that all incidents begin and end locally. NIMS does not take command away from state and local authorities. NIMS simply provides the framework to enhance the ability of responders, including the private sector and NGOs, to work together more effectively. ICS is a widely applicable management system designed to enable effective, efficient incident management by integrating a combination of facilities, equipment, personnel, procedures and communications operating within a common organizational structure. The minimum training requirements for NIMS is the completion of the Basic Incident Command System (IS-100) and NIMS an Introduction (IS-700). These are free on-line courses available on the FEMA Website. See the resource links page for a link to the FEMA Emergency Management Institute for access to the NIMS/ICS Independent Study (IS) courses or contact your emergency manager.