



2023
FEMA
ANNUAL REVIEW



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Dear Readers,

The Arizona Association of Emergency Managers (AzEM) is proud to participate in the 2023 FEMA Annual Review.

The Arizona Association of Emergency Managers is an organization dedicated to supporting our emergency services professionals across all disciplines, levels of government, tribal communities, and the private sector. We provide professional development and networking opportunities for our members that are committed towards keeping communities and citizens safe. Our organization seeks to serve as the connector to foster collaboration across geographically spread out and wide ranging focus areas and needs of our emergency management students, volunteers, and professionals.

Our membership is composed of diverse representation from emergency management, public health, healthcare, fire, law enforcement, safety officials, Homeland Security personnel, emergency medical services personnel, business leaders, non-profit organizations, and many more.

This 2023 FEMA Annual Review publication provides our readers with up-to-date, interesting, important stories about what FEMA continues to do to ensure safety in our communities and entire country. Please enjoy reading and learning more about what FEMA has to offer.

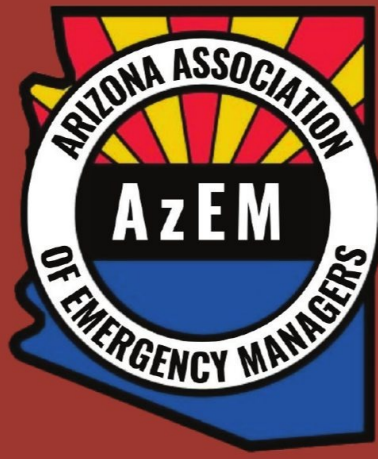
Sincerely,

Eliza Coll, MHA, CEM, MEP

2022-2024 President

Arizona Association of Emergency Managers

<https://azaesa.org/>



Arizona Association of Emergency Managers

The Arizona Association of Emergency Managers (AzEM) is Arizona's professional association that coordinates activities for and promotes collaboration among emergency management and emergency services professionals across the state.

Our members represent local, county, state, and tribal jurisdictions, and disciplines ranging from emergency management, public health, healthcare, education, law enforcement, fire and emergency medical services, non-profits and community-based organizations, and private industry.

Member benefits include networking, mentoring and mentorship opportunities, Certified Emergency Manager professional contribution opportunities, discounts, and more.

azaesa.org

"The past three years in a response posture have challenged our profession while reinforcing our purpose. Our Association is working to re-engage membership as we look ahead towards opportunities for connection, professional development, and innovation. Our field of Emergency Management is more relevant than ever, and we welcome all to join us as we grow. If you are an emergency management student or professional in Arizona, we invite you to become a new member today.

Please feel free to contact with any questions.

We welcome all to attend our upcoming annual conference in Scottsdale, Arizona with the theme of "Rebuilding our EM Bench." Join us as an attendee or vendor in March 2023. More details will be available soon on our website."

- Eliza Gregory Coll, AzEM President



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Dear Readers,

The Emergency Management Association of Texas (EMAT) is proud to endorse the 2023 FEMA Annual Review.

The Emergency Management Association of Texas was created in San Antonio in 1987. Since then, EMAT is dedicated to continue to advance the field of emergency management statewide and nationally. EMAT engages in an array of efforts to advance a statewide emergency management agenda and promote the professional growth of the emergency management practitioner.

The FEMA Annual Review contains up-to-date and fascinating information about important projects, federal grants, and a variety of ways FEMA continues to help the nation in the face of disasters.

We hope that this publication acts as your guide to navigating the importance of FEMA as it continues to expand operations and influence the local economy and community. Enjoy reading.

Sincerely,

Jamie Galloway

CEM, TEM President



The **EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATION OF TEXAS** is dedicated to the advancement of the field of emergency management statewide and nationally.

EMAT engages in an array of efforts to advance a statewide emergency management agenda and promote the professional growth of the emergency management practitioner.

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Member benefits in **EMAT** include the Texas Emergency Management Certification, industry and professional contribution opportunities with TDEM (Texas Division of Emergency Management), involvement in the Emergency Management Legislative Day at the Capitol, networking, mentoring and mentorship opportunities.

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Dear Readers,

The International Association of Emergency Managers (IAEM) is proud to support and be a part of the inaugural edition of the 2023 FEMA Annual Review.

IAEM is a worldwide, non-profit educational organization dedicated to promoting the principles of emergency management. We represent professionals whose goals are saving lives, property, and the environment during emergencies and natural disasters.

The FEMA Annual Review contains fascinating information about projects, federal grants, and a variety of ways FEMA continues to help the nation in the face of disasters. This publication will serve as your guide to navigating and learning more about the importance of FEMA.

Let's continue to work together to keep the United States and the world a safer place.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth B. Armstrong, MAM, CAE

CEO

International Association of Emergency Managers

Join the #IAEMstrong Movement for Emergency Managers

Emergency concerns cross borders—whether you are down the street or across the world. Today, being connected is more important than ever. Membership in IAEM connects you to emergency managers and disaster response professionals from all levels of government, as well as military, private sector, and volunteer organizations around the world.



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IAEMconnect — IAEM's online EM community to help practitioners find their specific network within our broad profession!



Visit our website to see why membership in IAEM is the right choice for Emergency Management professionals

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Dear Readers,

The Virginia Emergency Management Association (VEMA) is proud to support the 2023 FEMA Annual Review.

The Virginia Emergency Management Association is a statewide organization that promotes the goals of saving lives and protecting property during times of emergencies and disasters in the state of Virginia. Our mission is “to promote, support and advocate for Emergency Management in the Commonwealth of Virginia.” We continue to work tirelessly to make this happen.

Within this publication, you will find a variety of articles exploring the latest FEMA developments, projects, and events, and the ways in which FEMA continues to positively impact and assist our nation.

We would like to thank all of those who work with FEMA to help keep our country running smoothly in the wake of disasters. FEMA assists millions of Americans who rely on their services every day. We hope this publication helps you navigate FEMA’s many projects, partnerships, grants, and services.

Sincerely,

Jessica Robison

VEMA President

MISSION

To promote, support and advocate for Emergency Management in the Commonwealth of Virginia.

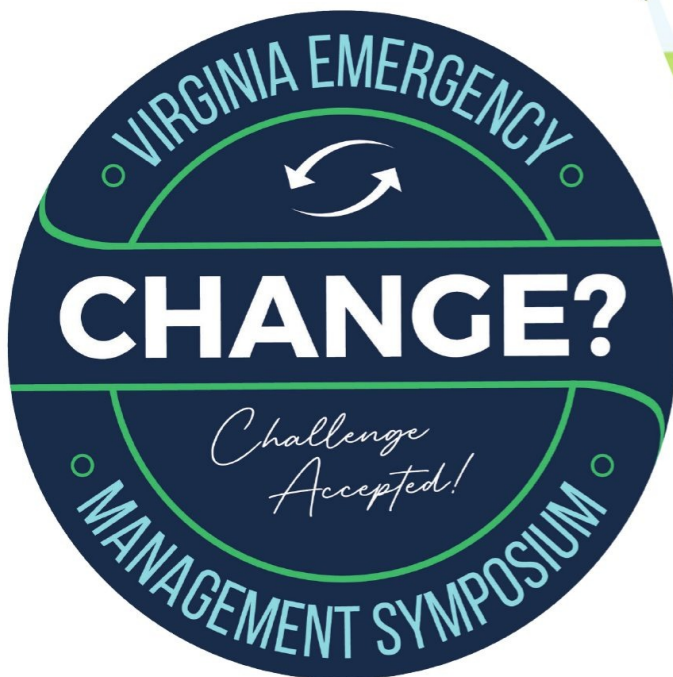
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FEMA TURNS 44 IN 2023, LOOKS BACK AT PROGRESS

On April 1, 2023, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) celebrated 44 years since it was first signed into effect by President Jimmy Carter in 1979. Since then, FEMA has been helping communities find strength in the face of unpredictable and devastating disasters as part of its role in helping to manage emergencies and civil defense.

FEMA has undergone multiple changes and upgrades since it was created, with huge natural disasters calling for the addition of new acts. In 1988, the Disaster Relief Act of 1974 was amended to The Stafford Act, named after Robert T. Stafford, and included a clear framework for emergency management and disaster response and recovery.

After the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, emergency management saw major changes and policies made. These changes included President Bush signing the Homeland Security Act, which led to the creation of the U.S. Department of Homeland

Security (DHS) in 2003. FEMA, the DHS and 21 other organizations united to ensure the safety of U.S. citizens moving forward.

In August 2005, Hurricane Katrina made landfall in the southern states, causing devastating loss. After this impact, Congress passed the Post-Katrina Emergency Reform Act of 2006. This Act defined FEMA's primary mission, and designated the FEMA Administration as the principal advisor to the president, the Homeland Security Council, and the Secretary of Homeland Security for matters relating to emergency management throughout the United States.

When Hurricane Sandy devastated the entire East Coast in 2012, some states were hit worse than others. Congress passed the Sandy Recovery Improvement Act of 2013. This Act streamlined the recovery of public infrastructure and allowed federally recognized tribes to request a presidential declaration.

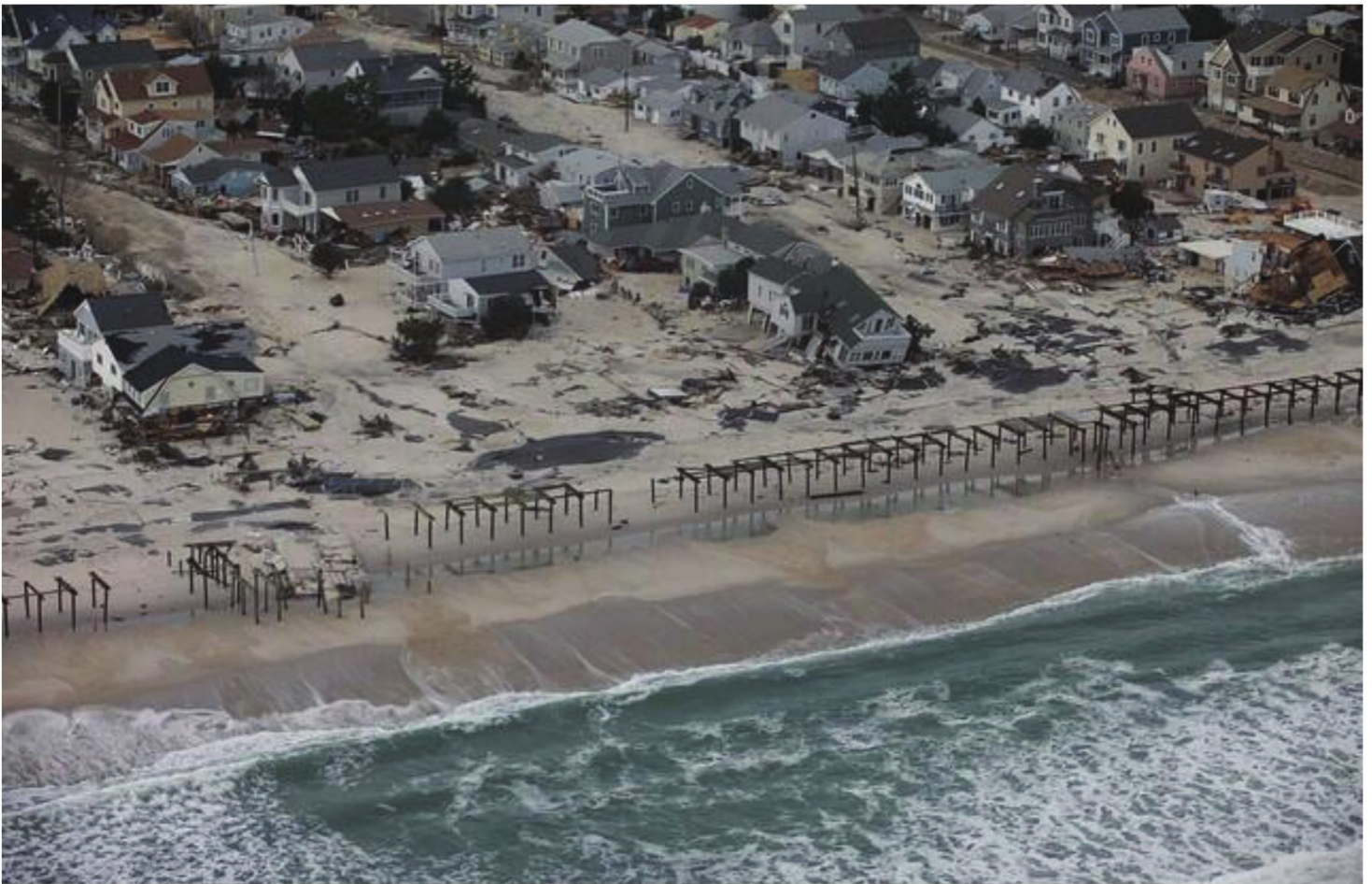


Image courtesy of Fema.gov

The U.S. faced an extreme hurricane and wildfire season in 2017. These unprecedented disasters transformed emergency management to focus more on efforts to build preparedness, and to ready the citizens of the nation for catastrophic disasters. Congress passed the Disaster Recovery Reform Act of 2018, which highlighted the federal government's commitment to increasing investments in mitigation efforts, preparing the nation, reducing FEMA's complexity and building the capabilities of state, local, tribal and territorial partners.

Over these past four decades FEMA has seen many changes. Throughout all of these changes, however, FEMA has not changed their passion and determination, continuing to improve the way things are done, helping to build more resilient communities. As part of the recognizing the agency's 44th anniversary, FEMA honored a few special employees who have helped shape the agency over the decades. These employees include Thomas Reinecke, Josie Arcurio, Clarence White and Jason A. Nelson.

Thomas Reinecke has been working with FEMA since 1979, the year it was created. Reinecke, a telecommunications specialist, began working for FEMA when he was offered a job to transfer from the

Defense Civil Preparedness Agency in Santa Rosa, California to the new organization.

"Since joining FEMA, I've witnessed a tremendous number of technological advances," said Reinecke in a March 2023 release. "While today, communications are sent nearly instantaneously, it wasn't always that easy. FEMA has always risen to the task at hand. It's been a heck of a ride, and I'm still having fun doing it."

Reinecke recalls working major events such as the 1983 California earthquake and Hurricane Iniki in 1992. His hard work helped pave the way for the creation of the National Radio Network System. This system changed the way FEMA communicates to the public during disasters.

Josie Arcurio, a Supervisory Emergency Management Specialist in the Office of Response and Recovery, Field Operations Division, has also been with FEMA since 1979. Arcurio began working for FEMA, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, after her hometown, Johnstown, Pennsylvania flooded in 1977.

"Over the years, FEMA transitioned from paper applications to computerized applications and today mobile apps," stated Arcurio. "Change has

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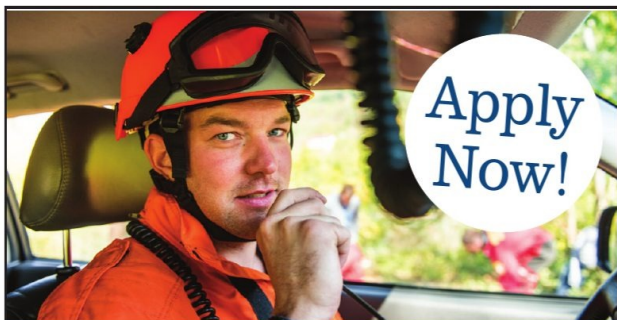


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been constant, but one thing remains the same. It's the dedication of FEMA's workforce that makes the difference in disaster operations. I have had the privilege of working for some of FEMA's best leaders where their vision quickly became reality, and their drive and passion always made me work hard."

Clarence White began his career with the U.S. Fire Administration National First Academy in 1979 and is the only remaining original National Fire Academy employee. White began his work a month after FEMA began, May 1979, and has since seen the curriculum expand to meet the ever-evolving needs of the fire and emergency management communities.

"Being in on the ground floor at the beginning and watching the programs and campus grow was exciting and interesting. You get the opportunity to understand and appreciate where we started, how we got there, and where we are today."

"THAT'S THE MOST REWARDING [PART], KNOWING THAT THE INFORMATION YOU'RE PROVIDING IS ACTUALLY GOING TO HELP A DISASTER SURVIVOR OR HELP THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT TO BETTER UNDERSTAND FEMA'S PROGRAMS."

- CHIEF OF THE DISASTER RESPONSE AND RECOVERY BRANCH JASON A. NELSON

In 1991, Jason A. Nelson began his career at FEMA. Nelson was originally responsible for communicating to Congress, and now works as the Chief of the Disaster Response and Recovery Branch in the Congressional Affairs Division of the Office of External Affairs.

"The thing that I love the most about working at FEMA is I am empowered and have the opportunity to help Members of Congress and their staff help their constituents each and every day. That's the most rewarding, knowing that the information you're providing is actually going to help a disaster survivor or help the local government to better understand FEMA's programs," stated Nelson.

Nelson continues to adapt to the changes FEMA makes when it comes to improving and enhancing FEMA's capabilities to appropriately support state, local, tribal and territorial governments.



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INTEGRATED PUBLIC ALERT AND WARNING SYSTEM TURNS 10 YEARS OLD

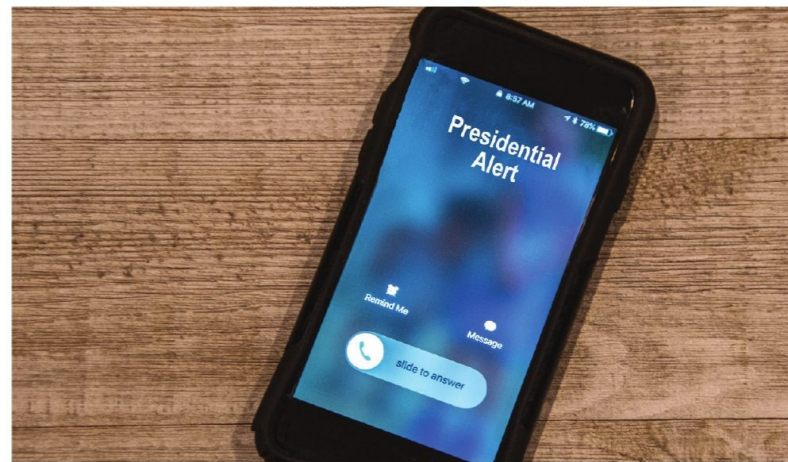
FEMA's national system for local alerting, the Integrated Public Alert and Warning System (IPAWS), celebrates 10 years of providing emergency and life-saving information to the public. FEMA alerts the public by using mobile phones, texts, radio, and television through the emergency alert system Wireless Emergency Alerts (WEA).

Wireless Emergency Alerts are sent by authorized federal, state, local, tribal, and territorial government agencies. These alerts, via text message, are accompanied by a unique text tone and cellphone vibration.

"In the past 10 years, FEMA has carried more than 70,000 messages from public safety authorities alerting people of threats posed by nearby extreme weather events, law enforcement incidents and many other hazards," stated Deanne Criswell, FEMA Administrator, in a June 2022 press release. "In partnership with the Federal Communications Commissions and your local public safety authorities, we are working to keep you safe and informed when seconds count."

The Integrated Public Alert and Warning System (IPAWS) Program recently released its 2022-2026 Strategic Plan. This plan provides the public with a roadmap of FEMA's goals and objectives toward enhancing the alert and warning system. This system benefits the responsiveness to emergency management and public safety and provides the public with an increased amount of trust, equity, and confidence in their local governments, public safety officials, and FEMA in general. The 2022-2026 IPAWS Strategic Plan is focusing on making wireless alerting available to more people and a broader demographic, improving the effectiveness of alerts, improving the quality and sustainability of the national alerting ecosystem, and optimizing service delivery and long-term safety development.

FEMA originally began developing this public alert and warning system in 2007. However, the technology wasn't fully developed and put to use until June 2012. FEMA sent their first Wireless Emergency Alerts to alert the public of a flash flood warning in Santa Fe, New Mexico. Today, this system supports more than 1,700 federal, state, local, tribal, and territorial users.



"Since the launch of Wireless Emergency Alerts a decade ago, the system has become an indispensable tool for public safety officials to warn and inform their communities," stated Jessica Rosenworcel, Federal Communications Commission Chairwoman. "The FCC is now working to expand the use of this lifesaving service and increase confidence in its effectiveness through new measurements of WEA's speed, accuracy and reliability, and first-ever WEA geotargeting testing in partnership with FEMA and state and local agencies."

The Integrated Public Alert and Warning System allows alerting authorities, such as federal, state, tribal, territorial, and local officials, to write their own mass message. This message is then sent out and delivered using IPAWS. Once the message is created and sent out, it will reach as many people as possible. This ensures the possibility of saving lives and protecting property. Although this warning system is most commonly used via text message, other ways of communicating with the public are via AM, FM, and satellite radio, broadcast, cable and satellite television, emails, through the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration via weather radio, and in some cases, voice sirens and digital road signs.

The Integrated Public Alert and Warning System's vision is to provide trusted timely alerts and warnings to people affected by threats to public safety in the preservation of life and property.



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FEMA REFLECTS BACK ON RESPONSE EFFORTS FIVE YEARS LATER

In 2017, three hurricanes swept through six southern states and two U.S. territories: Hurricane Harvey, Hurricane Irma, and Hurricane Maria. FEMA tirelessly responded to calls, provided aid and assistance to residents, and helped communities rebuild after major devastation and destruction.

In August 2017, Category 4 Hurricane Harvey swept through Texas, specifically south of Houston, and caused major damage. Hurricane Harvey set rainfall records in Texas, and then just a few weeks later, Irma and Maria hit the south once more. Hurricane Irma and Marie hit many southern states, including Florida, Georgia, Tennessee, Alabama, North and South Carolina, as well as the U.S. Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico. Hurricane Maria brought such an intense level of destruction to Puerto Rico that it resulted in the longest air mission of food and water delivery in FEMA history. Altogether, these storms caused over \$265 billion in damage across these areas, with FEMA response efforts covering 270,000 square miles.

Since those three major storms, FEMA quickly changed their strategy to develop estimates for Public Assistance applications in a more effective way. FEMA shifted their focus to restore power, get clean water to those in need, and educate different sectors. FEMA also made policy changes to increase equity in how they deliver assistance to households and individual residents. These changes include expanding the types of assistance provided to those in need of help. FEMA's changes didn't stop there, as they have hired over 1,000



employees and continue to hire more, making sure assistance can reach everyone.

In addition to the major hurricanes in 2017, FEMA continued to assist the U.S. recovery throughout the year. In total, \$6.4 billion was given to individuals and household grants, \$36.6 billion for public assistance grants, \$7.1 billion to small businesses, \$9.7 billion for flood insurance payments to policyholders, \$35 billion for housing and urban development, and \$89 million for disaster unemployment assistance. FEMA continues to work closely with local and federal governments, the private sector, voluntary organizations, and the community to help disaster-impacted communities, residents, and survivors.



WILDLAND FIRE MITIGATION AND MANAGEMENT COMMISSION SHARES NEW STRATEGY

FEMA remains committed to making communities stronger and more resilient. As part of this commitment, they have added additional measures to help homeowners affected by wildfires. FEMA has also announced a new strategy to meet firefighting equipment needs.

In February 2023, the Biden-Harris Administration's Wildland Fire Mitigation and Management Commission outlined a new strategy to provide necessary firefighter equipment through 2030. This effort is in response to continued climate change that brings more intense wildfires, meaning firefighters need more advanced equipment.

"Wildfires are growing larger and more complex and business as usual is not an option in protecting communities and landscapes," said Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack in the February press release. "The Wildland Fire Mitigation and Management Commission has brought together diverse voices to address problems and find solutions to these challenges. This report represents the next step in the Commission's critical work and explores how aviation resources can be best brought to bear on the nation's wildfire crisis."

The Commission, chaired by Secretaries of the Interior and Agriculture and FEMA Administrators, discussed a variety of recommendations. These recommendations included providing new strategies and equipment improvements to be made to appropriations, contracting, staffing, greater coordination with partners, putting limitations on the military surplus process and equipment, and providing aviation resources.

"Climate change has increased the duration and intensity of wildfire seasons and, with it, added pressures on wildland firefighters who are on the frontlines. The Biden-Harris Administration is committed to providing the necessary equipment and resources to support their work and keep them safe," said Secretary of the Interior Deb Haaland





in the press release. "Through President Biden's Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, the Administration is providing coordinated investments in wildland fire management and support for our firefighting workforce."

The Commission also discussed developing an overarching, forward-looking aviation strategy. This strategy would drive procurement, invest in technology and people to build a larger aviation fleet that meets growing demand, take an inclusive approach to the range of functions aerial resources can serve and further develop the national aviation strategy. Pay increases for federal wildland firefighters is also being adjusted. An increase in pay will help bring in more state and local counterparts to aid in recruitment and retention while also fighting wildland fires across the nation.

"Climate change and associated extreme weather events are being felt by communities across the country. We are seeing a surge in devastating floods, more energized hurricanes and wildfire season that's now a year-long threat. Wildfires in particular are becoming a near-constant risk, destroying lives and property nationwide," stated FEMA Administrator Deanne Criswell, in the press release. "To respond to these increasing threats, we must use every tool at our disposal while reexamining existing approaches to better protect people."

Another part of FEMA's ongoing commitment to make communities more resilient is providing mitigation assistance to homeowners in need.

"Communities across the nation are experiencing an increasing number of larger and more destructive wildfires in urban, suburban, and rural areas adjacent to or intermixed with the wildland," U.S. Fire Administrator Dr. Lori Moore-Merrell said in the release. "It is imperative that we rebuild after a fire, but do so in a way that promotes strong building codes, helps prevent fires from starting in the first place and shorter recovery when future fires do occur."

FEMA has added new fire mitigation measures which will now be covered for those affected by wildfires. These measures include covering attic vents, crawlspace vents and vents in enclosures below decks with metal screens to prevent embers from spreading inside of homes, and installing non-combustible leaf guards over gutters to avoid future fire damage. These new measures will help make homes more resilient to future fires and severe weather damage.

While FEMA knows disasters and fires happen unexpectedly, providing the steps to repair, rebuild, strengthen, and further prevent these disasters will help build community resilience.



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Q&A



ARIZONA ASSOCIATION OF EMERGENCY MANAGERS PRESIDENT ELIZA COLL

Strategic Value Publishing had the chance to speak with Arizona Association of Emergency Managers President Eliza Coll about AzEM's important role in the local Arizona community. This interview was conducted via email. Responses were edited for clarity.

HOW LONG HAS AZEM BEEN HELPING THE LOCAL COMMUNITY?

Arizona Association of Emergency Managers (formerly Arizona Emergency Services Association) was established in 1964. Over the past 60 years, the Association has supported networking, professional development, and career advancement for emergency services and emergency management professionals statewide.

HOW DOES ONE BECOME A PART OF AZEM?

Our association has multiple membership options including a student rate as well as group discounts that many of our county and state-level Emergency Management agencies utilize. Please visit our website for more information: <https://azaesa.org/>

DID COVID-19 CHANGE HOW THINGS OPERATED? DID IT HAVE ANY LASTING CHANGES? IF SO, WHAT ARE THEY?

COVID-19 certainly impacted both our organization and our members. Our members represent a range

of disciplines across the Emergency Management profession, many of whom were activated in response to the pandemic and/or the many concurrent events that occurred over the past 3 years. For much of the pandemic, our Association's in-person conferences and events were cancelled. As an organization run by a volunteer board who have also had professional and Covid response duties, we have been overtaxed as well. We have tried to identify opportunities to support our memberships needs while also acknowledging the limited time to participate.

WHAT IS A PROJECT AZEM IS MOST PROUD TO BE A PART OF IN THE LAST YEAR?

In April 2022, AzEM hosted a virtual event on Lessons Learned Using Emergency Operations Centers (EOCs) during Covid-19. Many of our members were planning or beginning projects to renovate or improve EOCs as a result of Covid-19, and we included a presentation on one county's current renovation and lessons learned through the process. Members engaged in discussion and had opportunity to connect around a topic on many minds. This was AzEM's first virtual

event. We had been mindful of the “Zoom fatigue” but at the time felt it was our best option for health and safety. The event was well received by participants.

WHAT GOALS DO YOU HAVE FOR THE UPCOMING YEAR? HOW DOES AZEM PLAN TO ACHIEVE THESE GOALS?

We are continually assessing how AzEM can best serve our members. Our driving mission is to be of benefit to and support the Emergency Management profession and our colleagues across the State. Our Executive Board maintains a Strategic Plan that outlines short- and longer-term goals. Honestly, for the last few years we felt like we were in survival mode. But this pandemic has only reinforced the importance of Emergency Management and highlighted the need for innovation and evolution in our practices. We are ready to re-engage our membership and really think outside the box on how the Association can provide member benefits and advance our profession.

IS THERE AN UPCOMING EVENT AZEM IS LOOKING FORWARD TO HOSTING OR BEING A PART OF?

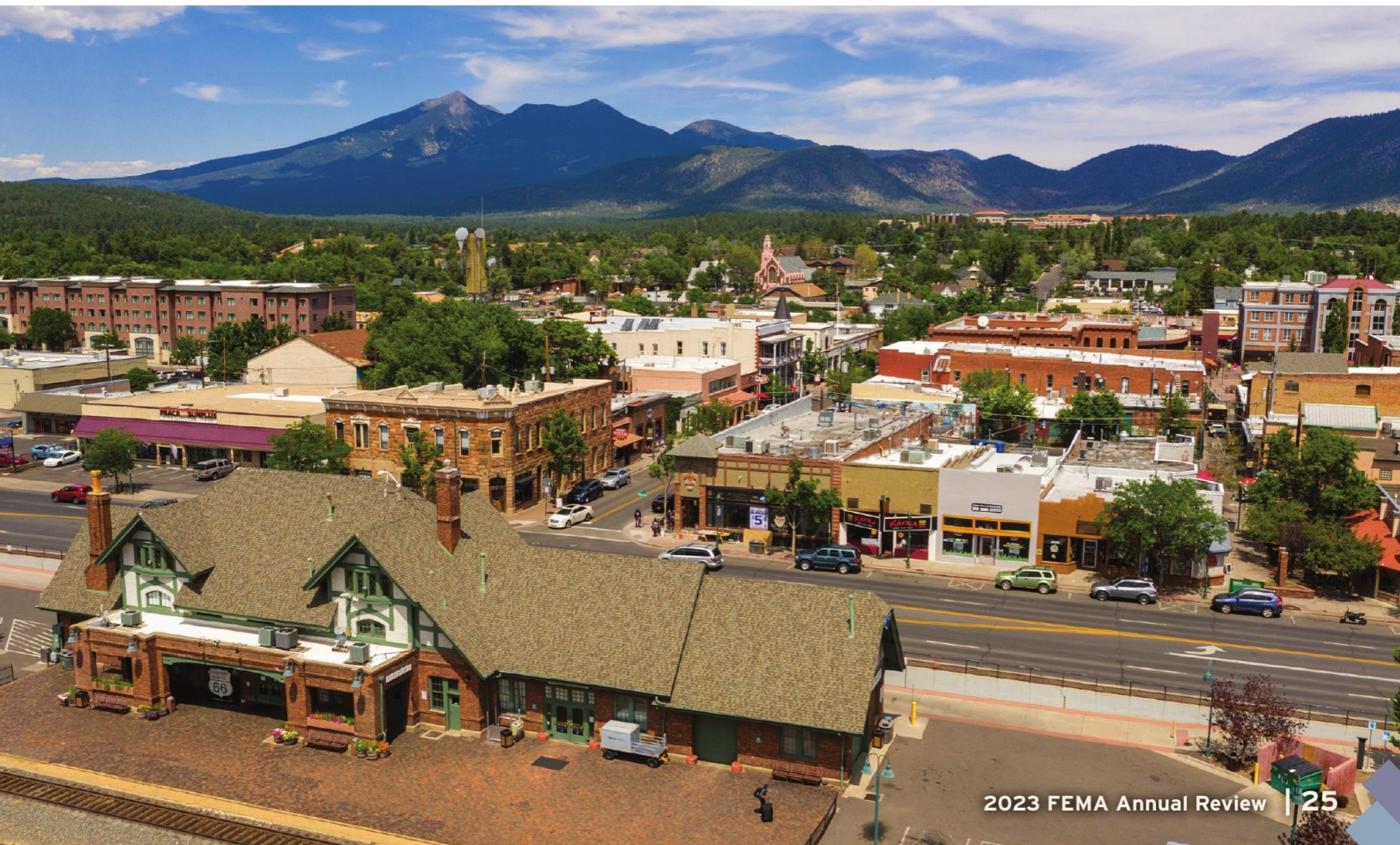
Absolutely - we are excited to finally reconvene in person for our Annual Conference in March 2023. We plan on focusing on member appreciation and

features to honor and thank our Emergency Managers after an exhausting last three years. The conference theme is “Rebuilding our EM Bench” and will include sessions on professional development, mentoring, and skill building. We also want to highlight ideas for what is next in our industry: what does the future of EM look like and how do we prepare ourselves and our successors?

We offer a discounted rate for members, but anyone is welcome to attend. We also have great opportunities for vendors.

IS THERE ANYTHING ELSE YOU WOULD LIKE TO SHARE ABOUT AZEM?

I want to thank our members for your participation and our volunteer Executive Board for your dedication. It’s been my honor to serve our Executive Board in multiple roles since 2016 and now as the Association President. I’m proud of the work our profession does on a daily basis, and the work many of our Emergency Managers are doing to innovate, improve, and stay ready for the next curveball. We are always looking for member engagement in working groups or on the Board, and welcome feedback on how we can continue growing together. Get involved, share your experience, and help advance our profession together.



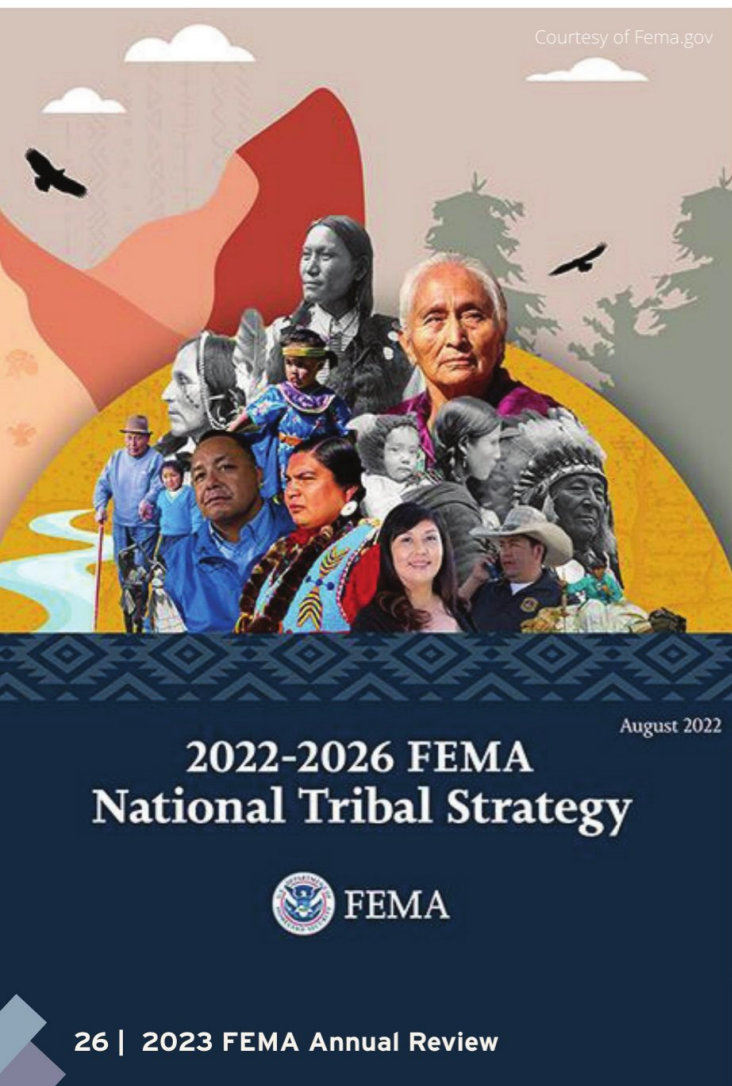
FIRST-EVER NATIONAL TRIBAL STRATEGY ANNOUNCED

In August 2022, FEMA announced the release of a national tribal strategy. This is FEMA's first-ever tribal strategy, to ensure its responsibilities to federally recognized tribal nations when responding to a natural disaster affecting tribal land.

The 2022-2026 FEMA National Tribal Strategy will follow the same structure as the 2022-2026 FEMA Strategic Plan, but will better address the needs of tribal governments. This new strategy will initiate a national study on tribal emergency management capacity and capabilities, develop a comprehensive guide of programs and assistance that FEMA offers and create a new FEMA Tribal Affairs Work Group. This group will serve as an internal body tasked with ensuring the agency's approach to serving tribal nations, review and revise FEMA training opportunities

for tribal nations, and develop and update resources to address the specific tribal training needs identified by nations.

"On his first day in office, President Biden called on all federal agencies to advance racial equity and support underserved communities nationwide. The FEMA workforce remains committed to this critical mission by instilling equity as the foundation of emergency management and always putting people first," stated Deanne Criswell, FEMA Administrator, in an August 2022 press release. "FEMA's first-ever National Tribal Strategy will be key to achieving this ambitious goal, which represents a significant milestone for the agency and reflects our deep commitment to better partner with and serve all 574 federally recognized tribal nations."



FEMA National Tribal Affairs Advisor Denise “Bambi” Kraus has been working with FEMA to help refine major strategic goals and objectives and ways to achieve these goals. Some of these issues include tribal-specific technical assistance, requests from tribal nation members, and resources tailored to each tribe to support emergency management programs.

The 2022-2026 National Tribal Strategy will focus on improved engagement, partnership, and service between FEMA and the 574 federally recognized tribal nations across the United States.

In October 2022, FEMA appointed the first National Tribal Affairs Advocate, Kelbie Kennedy, a citizen of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma. She will advise the agency on tribal affairs and ensure FEMA lives up to the new National Tribal Strategy.

“Tribal Nations and communities deserve to have their voices heard, especially when it comes to preparing for, responding to, and recovering from disasters,” Criswell said in an October 2022 press release. “I am confident that Ms. Kennedy will be a key advocate for Indian Country given her extensive experience representing their interests and priorities, as well as

her lived experience as a citizen of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma.”

Kennedy has worked with the National Congress of American Indians for more than four years. In that time, she has been involved with numerous tribal safety initiatives such as national policy issues surrounding tribal emergency management and resilience, tribal homeland security, tribal border issues, violence against American Indian and Alaska Native women, public safety, missing indigenous women, international indigenous rights, and the Violence Against Women Act.

“I am honored to be the first tribal political appointee in FEMA history and will work hard to ensure that Tribal Nations and tribal sovereignty are at the forefront of our efforts,” stated Kennedy in the October release. “Growing up on my Tribal Nation’s reservation in Southeastern Oklahoma, I learned firsthand that Tribal Nations are the first, and many times the only, line of defense when disaster strikes Indian Country. When Tribal Nations have the necessary resources and support they need, the entire community is better prepared and able to respond to disasters.”



TRIBES AND ALL U.S. TERRITORIES NOW ELIGIBLE FOR SAFEGUARDING TOMORROW REVOLVING LOAN FUND GRANT PROGRAM



Courtesy of Fema.gov

In January 2023, FEMA announced it is expanding eligibility for a new grant program to all tribes and U.S. territories, including the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, American Samoa, Guam, the Northern Mariana Islands, and the U.S. Virgin Islands. This new grant program will provide revolving loans for resilience-related activities and projects.

Originally, only 20 federally recognized Tribal Nations were eligible to apply for the fund. However, these changes were put into effect once President Biden signed a bill to include all 574 federally recognized Tribal Nations. The bill provides \$50 million in grants to all eligible tribes.

“FEMA remains committed to finding innovative approaches to help communities build resilience in the face of intensifying weather events driven by climate

change,” stated FEMA Administrator Deanne Criswell in a January 2023 press release. “The low-interest loans provided by the STORM program will help eligible states and tribes, as well as Puerto Rico and the District of Columbia, finance disaster mitigation projects that will enhance their climate resiliency before disaster strikes.”

The \$50 million available will focus mainly on increasing public understanding of this new program and how it works, as well as increasing the nation’s resilience to natural hazards, fire mitigation, and climate change. These loans are also available to assist local governments if they meet the non-federal cost share requirements. FEMA began accepting applications for these loans on February 1, 2023 and will close submissions on April 28, 2023.

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2022-26 STRATEGIC PLAN FOCUSES ON EQUITY AND RESILIENCE

In February 2023, the Strategic Plan for 2022-2026 was announced with three new pillars of strategic goals. These goals include instilling equity as a foundation of emergency management, leading the whole community in climate resilience, and promoting FEMA's Ready Program and sustaining a prepared nation.

"We are proud of the progress we've made in becoming the FEMA our nation needs and deserves and look forward to building on this foundation for years to come," stated FEMA Administrator Deanne Criswell in a February 2023 press release. "In coordination with our partners, we are finding ways to better support the diverse communities that we serve and prepare for the increasing complexity of disasters."

The Strategic Plan also includes developing stakeholder-informed, actionable plans to build foundations and identify and execute actions that need to be taken to bring FEMA as a whole closer to achieving these goals.

STRATEGIC GOAL 1

The first strategic goal is to instill equity as a foundation of emergency management. FEMA will implement this by simplifying its Individual Assistance application process. By doing so, they are allowing over 100,000 disaster survivors to receive assistance who otherwise might have been neglected or looked over in the past. FEMA is giving over \$600 million in additional aid for those survivors who might have missed out on assistance in the past and are currently recovering.

FEMA will be giving 40 percent of benefits and grant programs to underserved communities, and has also changed its policy to better serve Tribal Nations. FEMA made a crucial step forward by appointing the first tribal political appointee in FEMA history, ensuring that the Tribal Nations will be heard and assisted, and that FEMA will live up to its responsibilities.

STRATEGIC GOAL 2

The second strategic goal is to lead the whole community in climate resilience. Working with the new

Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, FEMA will provide over \$6 billion in community-wide mitigation to help reduce future damage caused by intense climate change.

As part of this strategic goal, FEMA is beginning to organize and prioritize agency activities as part of the Building Codes Strategy. This new strategy will enforce hazard-resistant building codes and safety standards. Working alongside the White House's Relocation Subcommittee, FEMA and federal agencies are exploring strategies to continue to move away from high-risk regions. This subcommittee is also granting \$17.7 million to three Tribal Nations to cover relocation and hazard mitigation expenses.

STRATEGIC GOAL 3

The third and final strategic goal is promoting FEMA's Ready Program and sustaining a prepared nation. Ready FEMA will serve to improve agency readiness, and define, measure, and build capabilities to meet requirements across all mission areas.

FEMA is also working on improving readiness posture, the efforts of the nation, states, territories, local governments, U.S. Territories, and Tribal Nations. FEMA is also working hand-in-hand with the Recovery and Resilience Resource Library webpage, Roadmaps to Federal Resources for Disaster Recovery, and the Community Recovery Management Toolkit to build public resources. "FEMA continues to improve our nation's ability to face ongoing and emergent disasters, taking immediate actions over the past year to make our programs more accessible, strengthen our workforce and develop tools that allow communities to identify threats and prepare for disasters," added Criswell. "Through thoughtful and coordinated efforts with our partners across the emergency management enterprise, we have laid the foundation to make further, lasting change in the execution of these ambitious goals and we will continue to learn, grow and share our progress along the way."

FEMA's goals moving forward will further improve togetherness, readiness, and federal assistance to all states, individuals, U.S. Territories, and Tribal Nations.



FEMA



2022–2026

FEMA Strategic Plan

Building the FEMA our
nation needs and deserves.



Courtesy of VEMA

Q&A



VIRGINIA EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATION PRESIDENT JESSICA ROBISON

Strategic Value Publishing had the chance to speak with VEMA's President Jessica Robison, who also serves as the Emergency Management Coordinator at Chesterfield County Fire & EMS, about VEMA's relationship with FEMA, ways in which VEMA helps the local community, and how you can get involved. This interview was conducted over email. Responses were edited for clarity.

DO YOU HAVE A WORKING RELATIONSHIP WITH FEMA? IF SO, WHEN DID THIS BEGIN?

For as long as I have been a part of VEMA, FEMA has been very visible within our association. We have FEMA members within our association. They, along with MaryAnn Tierney, attend our annual symposium every year and we always look forward to having MaryAnn present at one of the General Sessions. The ability to network and have discussions between FEMA and partners of all levels through VEMA enhances partnerships throughout Virginia.

VEMA'S MISSION IS "TO PROMOTE, SUPPORT AND ADVOCATE FOR EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT IN THE COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA." HOW DO YOU MAKE THIS POSSIBLE?

VEMA strives to connect and support all professionals in the Commonwealth who have a responsibility to prepare for, mitigate against, respond to, and recover from disasters. We do so through our committees that drive projects yearly to increase the knowledge of emergency management principles across all industries, support the development of professionals, and advocate to elected leadership.

Our legislative committee works to develop advocacy strategies within our General Assembly and once a year travels to the state capitol and meets with delegates and senators from all over the Commonwealth to have conversations on how elected officials can support emergency management. Over the past couple of years, we have advocated for a dedicated funding stream to support localities in hiring a dedicated emergency management professional



to help offset the growing number of emergency management tasks the locals face. In 2022, thanks to the hard work and advocacy of this committee, the General Assembly designated the third week of March as Emergency Management Professionals week.

To elevate the professionalism in Virginia, the certification program, jointly administered by the Virginia Emergency Management Association and the Virginia Department of Emergency Management is intended to recognize the knowledge, skills, and abilities of applicants and their achievements as an Emergency Management professional. Obtaining certification proves that one can effectively accomplish the goals and objectives of a certain level within emergency management in the Commonwealth of Virginia. A certification indicates an individual's experience, hard work, continuing education, and dedication to the field of emergency management.

Additionally, VEMA hosts a yearly symposium which provides an opportunity for networking, relationship building, and education. Our symposium committee does an amazing job at scheduling a rich and diverse selection of sessions that are relevant and engaging. During symposium, we present awards highlighting the achievements and dedication of our membership as well as scholarships for academic programs, certifications, and symposium attendance. All award and scholarship winners are selected based on a set of nomination criteria.

HOW DOES VEMA EDUCATE VIRGINIA RESIDENTS ABOUT WHAT TO DO IN THE FACE OF NATURAL DISASTERS AND EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS?

VEMA does not directly do public outreach to the residents of Virginia. However, we strive to ensure we are assisting localities in doing so. We prefer that our residents have information from their locality versus a large group so that they are making connections with the emergency managers who will be helping them during a crisis. While general preparedness messaging fits nearly everyone, the “keep it as local as possible” mentality is also important because Virginia is very different in the various regions. As a small example, we have Northern Virginia which is very densely populated, close to Washington D.C., Southwest Virginia, which is very rural, and of course the coast. Each of these areas have different hazards and resources. Our partners at VDEM have a very robust messaging strategy with tons of resources. VEMA, should we hear of a need for additional public messaging support would assist in working with VDEM to find strategies in filling that gap.

WHAT IS AN EVENT COMING UP THIS YEAR THAT YOU'RE LOOKING FORWARD TO?

I always look forward to our annual symposium in March. For me, it really is like a family reunion. Really, though, I am looking forward to the overall growth of our association and our projects. We are still adjusting to this post-Covid work environment where new doors have been opened in the way we can operate and connect. So, as an association, we are working to continue leveraging the new ways of connecting so that we can create more value for our membership. We have new board members who are very motivated, and I can't wait to see what ideas they have for us!

WHAT IS THE SCHOLARSHIP PROCESS LIKE FOR STUDENTS? CAN ANYONE BE ELIGIBLE?

Every year, we open nominations for scholarship awards. Our scholarships are named after emergency management professionals who made monumental impacts and advancements in emergency management throughout Virginia. Using their qualities, level of commitment to the Commonwealth and to emergency management, we award three scholarships to those who emulate the same qualities.

The Addison E. Slayton, Jr. Scholarship, named after a former state coordinator who made significant contributions to emergency management in Virginia, is awarded to a student who is a resident of or works in Virginia, or attends a Virginia university, or is a VEMA member. This student must be enrolled in an accredited university and have a declared major or minor in Emergency Management, Disaster/Fire Science, or Homeland Security. There are grade standards that must be met, and the student must demonstrate active participation in the emergency management community.

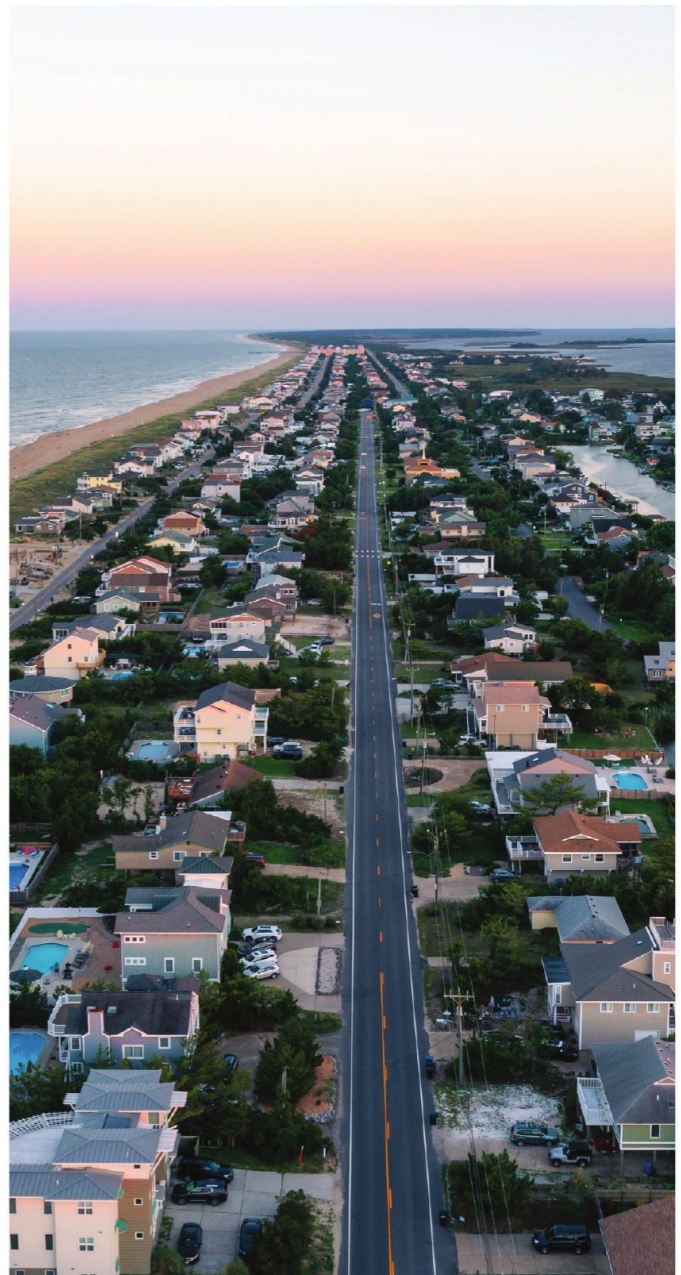
VEMA also offers the Grace Tressler VEMA Symposium Award, named after Grace Tressler, an emergency services coordinator from King and Queen County, which is a smaller locality in Virginia. Grace was very active in VEMA and in her role as emergency services coordinator, she was responsible for managing fire and EMS, the dive team, and emergency communications. She made significant contributions in her efforts to have the first P25 compliant radio communications system installed in the region. This scholarship awards an emergency manager from a smaller locality in Virginia who demonstrates a level of high commitment to their community, profession, and emergency management with an all-expenses paid trip to the annual symposium and a one-year association membership.

The Gordon Barwell Professional Emergency Manager (PEM) Scholarship recognizes the efforts of individuals committed to professional development

who are seeking to obtain the VEMA PEM certification. This scholarship is named after Gordon Barwell, the first Local Support Services Division director of VDEM who improved the delivery of support from the state to the localities.

IS THERE ANYTHING ELSE YOU WOULD LIKE OUR READERS TO KNOW?

VEMA is always open to partnering with other associations or similarly focused groups. Emergency Management is a team sport! If we can assist one another to enhance the value for our membership through development and learning opportunities, or by sharing best practices, we are happy to sit and develop a game plan! To learn more about VEMA or to connect with us, please visit vemaweb.org.





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DISCOVERING EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT CAREERS WITH FEMA

FEMA offers many careers for those who want to help others, and believe in its mission to always assist and help people before, after, and during natural disasters.

FEMA takes pride in the work they do and has a list of important core values. These values include showing compassion, fairness, integrity, and respect to others. Since FEMA is a government agency under the Department of Homeland Security, they are able to provide many types of career opportunities, in both full time and part time capacities. Some permanent full-time positions include budget analyst, national flood insurance program senior advisor, and electronic technician.

One can also be a part of the on-call response team and recovery employee. These types of jobs, such as writer or public affairs analyst, are referred to as CORE Jobs and usually last from two to four years. FEMA also employs reservists —two-year appointed positions that involve working in field offices and disaster recovery centers.

Not only does FEMA provide an amazing benefit package, equipped with health insurance, life

insurance, retirement, paid holidays, vacation time, and training and career development opportunities, the organization also provides different workspaces so everyone can find what they're looking for. FEMA provides independent and collaborative work, flexible schedules, mobile work via telework, and deployment work. There are many opportunities for positions with FEMA via student internships, and local residents can also help assist with recovery.

HIGHER EDUCATION PROGRAM

FEMA's Higher Education Program (HiEd) provides college students the ability to foster a higher level of commitment to emergency management. Currently, FEMA works with 269 institutions to provide 684 different programs in emergency management, homeland security, and other related fields. These programs are offered at the undergraduate, graduate, and certificate levels.





Images courtesy of Fema.gov

The Higher Education Program also provides students with Special Interest Groups. These are self-organized and taught by members of the community to exchange knowledge of specific topics.

Currently, these Special Interest Groups include Case Teaching and Learning, Collaboration, Connection, and Commitment to 2-Year Programs, Ethics, Information Exchange and Symposium Planning, International Programs, Jobs and Internships, New Program Resources, Race, Ethnicity, and Economic Impacts, Scholarship of Teaching and Learning, Science and Technology Integration, Service-Learning and Leadership, Student Perspectives and Academic Learning, Theory and Research, Unity and Effort, and Wildland Urban Interface Governance.

These groups meet quarterly and discuss the work, challenges, and opportunities that arise within these groups. FEMA's Higher Education Program provides National Training to those students who are interested in learning more about emergency management.

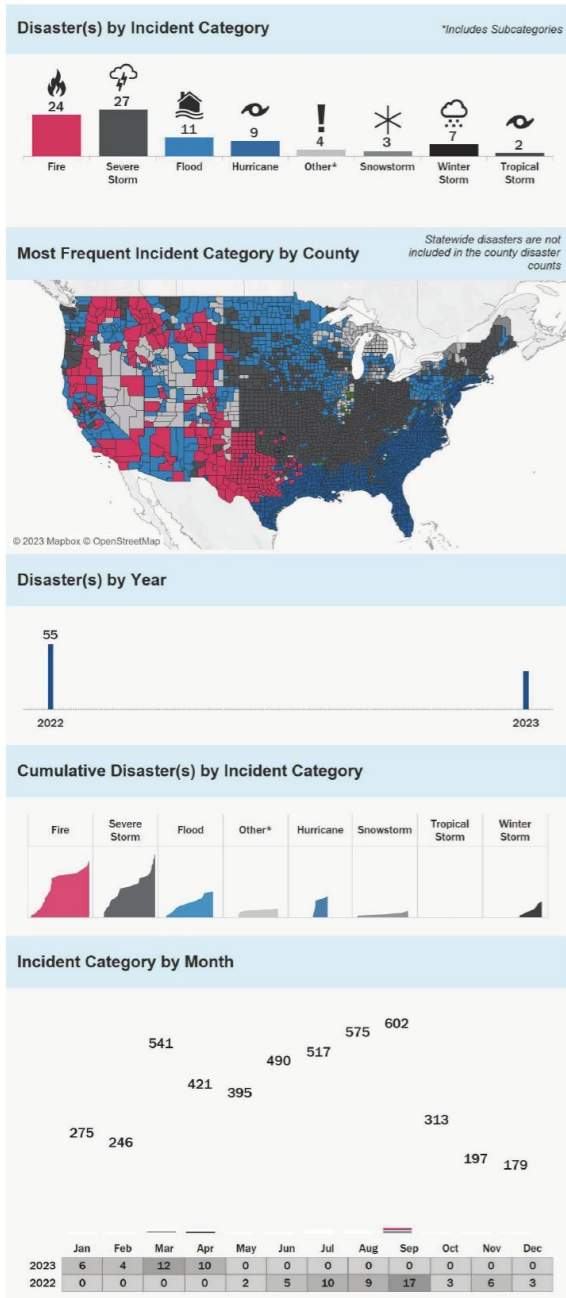
DON'T MISS THIS UPCOMING EVENT

On June 5th through 7th 2023, the 25th Annual Emergency Management Higher Education Symposium will be held on the NETC Campus. This annual event will connect the past with the future while celebrating over 25 years of community impact. This year's theme will be celebrating the founding voices of emergency management higher education.

This event will showcase and acknowledge the incredible hard work and dedication of the academic community. Those involved have called for immense growth in research, programs, and students. These students and academic leaders continue to make calls to change future practice of emergency management to keep up with the everchanging climate, threats to the landscape, and natural disasters.

Academic Awards will be presented during the symposium. These awards include the Dr. B. Wayne Blanchard Award for Academic Excellence in Emergency Management Higher Education, the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL) Award, and the Kay C. Goss Innovation and Technology Award.

2022-2023 FEMA-ASSISTED DISASTERS BY STATE



ALABAMA

On January 12, 2023, FEMA provided \$7.6 million in assistance to individual and household programs due to severe storms, straight-line winds, and tornadoes.

ALASKA

Alaska dealt with a severe landslide on May 7, 2022. FEMA provided \$947,000 in total public assistance grants to those in need. Shortly after the landslide, flooding caused damages. FEMA provided \$83,000 to public assistance grants.

In September 2022, FEMA aided 865 individuals, costing a total of \$6.6 million due to severe storms, flooding, and landslides.

ARIZONA

FEMA assisted the state of Arizona five times over the last year. These incidents included three fires, a severe storm, and flooding through tribal land.

ARKANSAS

Arkansas dealt with a severe winter storm in February 2023 and severe tornadoes in April, 2023. Federal assistance from FEMA for the April tornadoes is still available to eligible individuals and families. Currently, FEMA has assisted 1,234 individuals, totaling \$2.4 million in federal assistance.

CALIFORNIA

In 2022, California received assistance for five different fires. So far in 2023, California has received assistance for earthquakes, winter storms, flooding, straight-line winds, landslides, and mudslides.

Currently, FEMA has approved over \$1 million in federal assistance for 130 households and individuals.

FLORIDA

In September 2022, Florida was hit with Hurricane Ian. FEMA's funding obligations consisted of \$1.8 million for individual assistance, \$801.9 million for public assistance, and \$1.9 million for hazard mitigation assistance.

Between April 2022 and April 2023, FEMA provided grant money to those eligible in 21 states across the nation. Coastal storms, dam/levee breaks, earthquakes, fire, flood, hurricanes, mud/landslides, severe ice storms, severe snow storms, tornadoes, tropical storms, typhoons, and winter storms are some of the disasters that make grant funding necessary.

Florida was hit once more in December 2022 when Hurricane Nicole hit land. FEMA's funding obligations consisted of \$5.9 million for individual and household assistance, \$2.6 million in total public assistance grants, and \$1.2 million for hazard mitigation assistance.

GEORGIA

In January 2023, Georgia experienced severe storms, straight-line winds, and tornadoes. FEMA provided 834 Georgia residents with \$4.3 million in assistance and \$1.3 million for total public assistance grants.

ILLINOIS

In July 2022, Illinois required assistance due to severe storms and flooding. FEMA aided 6,074 individuals, totaling \$26 million in program dollars approved.

KENTUCKY

In late July 2022 to early August 2022, Kentucky was hit with severe storms. These storms led to severe flooding, landslides, and mudslides.

FEMA assisted 8,717 individuals, totaling \$104.3 million in individual and household program dollars approved. FEMA also provided \$16 million in total for public assistance grants, and \$20 million for hazard mitigation grant programs.

MINNESOTA

In late April 2022, Minnesota experienced severe storms, straight-line winds, and flooding. Minnesota received a total of \$14.9 million in public assistance grants dollars.

In late May, Minnesota was hit once again with severe storms, straight-line winds, tornadoes, and flooding. The state of Minnesota received \$5.8 million in total in public assistance grants.

MISSISSIPPI

In late August 2022, Mississippi experienced a water crisis that required \$2.7 million in public assistance grants.

More recently, in late March 2023, severe storms, straight-line winds, and tornadoes touched down in Mississippi. FEMA approved 1,501 individual assistance applications and a total of \$5 million approved for individual and household programs.

MISSOURI

At the end of July 2022, Missouri was hit with severe storms and flooding. Missouri received a total of \$49.7 million for individuals and households program dollars, \$11.4 million in public assistance, and \$331,000 in hazard mitigation assistance.

MONTANA

In the beginning of July 2022, Montana experienced severe storms and flooding. Over 330 individual assistance applications were approved, totaling in \$3.6 million. Public assistance totaled to \$15.6 million and Hazard Mitigation Grant Program totaled to \$442,000.

NEBRASKA

In early May 2022, Nebraska received \$1.6 million in public assistance after being hit with severe storms and straight-line winds. Most recently, a fire over Waconda-Beaver Lake Complex broke out. Financial assistance applications are currently ongoing.

NEW MEXICO

Wildfires, flooding, mudflows, and straight-line winds hit New Mexico in April through July 2022. Exactly 1,377 individuals were approved for assistance, totaling \$7.2 million. Total public assistance grants totaled \$13.6 million.

NORTH CAROLINA

In late September 2022, many southern states were hit with Hurricane Ian. North Carolina received \$1.9 million in public assistance grants.

OKLAHOMA

In late March 2023, Oklahoma experienced road fires. Financial assistance is still being approved.

SOUTH CAROLINA

South Carolina was affected by Hurricane Ian in September 2022. South Carolina received \$3.8 million in total public assistance grants.

TENNESSEE

On March 31st 2023, Tennessee experienced severe storms, straight-line winds, and tornadoes. Exactly 149 individuals will receive assistance, totaling \$1.1 million.

VIRGINIA

In July 2022, Virginia received \$1.7 million in total public assistance grants for flooding and mudslides.

WASHINGTON

In November 2022, the state of Washington received a total of \$954,600 in public assistance grants for severe winter storms, straight-line winds, flooding, landslides, and mudslides.

Q&A



EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATION OF TEXAS PRESIDENT JAMIE GALLOWAY

EMAT President Jamie Galloway has been a member of the association since 2004. Strategic Value Publishing had the pleasure of speaking with him about EMAT's history and role in the community. This interview was conducted over email. Responses were edited for clarity.

EMAT'S VISION IS TO BE RECOGNIZED AS THE STATEWIDE EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATION OF TEXAS. HOW DO YOU MAKE THIS POSSIBLE?

EMAT engages in an array of efforts to advance a statewide emergency management agenda and to promote the professional growth of the emergency management practitioner.

WHAT ARE SOME GOALS EMAT HAS FOR THIS UPCOMING YEAR?

Continue to explore improvements to the emergency management profession. Work with our committees to continue pursuing the goals. Monitor state and federal legislation for impacts to emergency management.

DOES EMAT HAVE A WORKING RELATIONSHIP WITH FEMA? IF SO, WHEN DID THIS BEGIN?

EMAT has been working with FEMA from the start. EMAT engages with FEMA R6 and those reps in other regions as well as nationally.

CAN YOU DISCUSS THE HISTORY OF EMAT? WHEN DID IT BEGIN? HOW DID EMAT COME ABOUT?

In the spring of 1987, the Emergency Management Association of Texas (EMAT) was created in San Antonio, Texas. Emergency management contemporaries of the time believed local government offices of emergency preparedness in Texas were not appropriately represented in Austin – or enjoying the same political clout as our other public safety partners.

While some associations existed to promote emergency management efforts at local levels – most notably the Texas Gulf Coast Emergency Management Association (TCGEMA) – a coordinated statewide association did not exist. It was decided that a new effort should be focused on garnering support and appropriately recognize this emerging profession.

In the early years, fewer than 50 emergency management coordinators existed statewide. It was difficult to rally support from some of our partners as efforts at the local governmental level were sometimes contrary to the efforts of other agencies. Initial pioneers credited with the formation of EMAT include - Walt Kelly of Amarillo, John Pickett of Dallas, George Grant of Arlington, Joe Candelario of San Antonio, Billy Zwerschke of Calhoun County and Steve Vaughn of Pampa - many who are still active in emergency management within Texas today.

In 2007, the Texas Gulf Coast Emergency Management Agency was formally incorporated into the membership of EMAT. This effort brought the two largest statewide emergency management associations together under one umbrella association. With a combined membership base - and a committee dedicated to meeting the specific needs of coastal jurisdictions - EMAT is now able to leverage even more assistance for furthering our mission statewide.

HOW DOES EMAT CONTINUE TO BUILD PROFESSIONAL AND INTERACTIVE RELATIONSHIPS THROUGHOUT THE STATE?

Yes we do, not only with TDEM but regional associations and agencies at the local, state and federal levels.

WHY IS EMAT SO IMPORTANT TO THE TEXAS COMMUNITY?

It is important to listen to the EM community and to create the response and preparation activities for response to, mitigation of and recovery from disasters.

HOW DOES ONE BECOME A MEMBER?

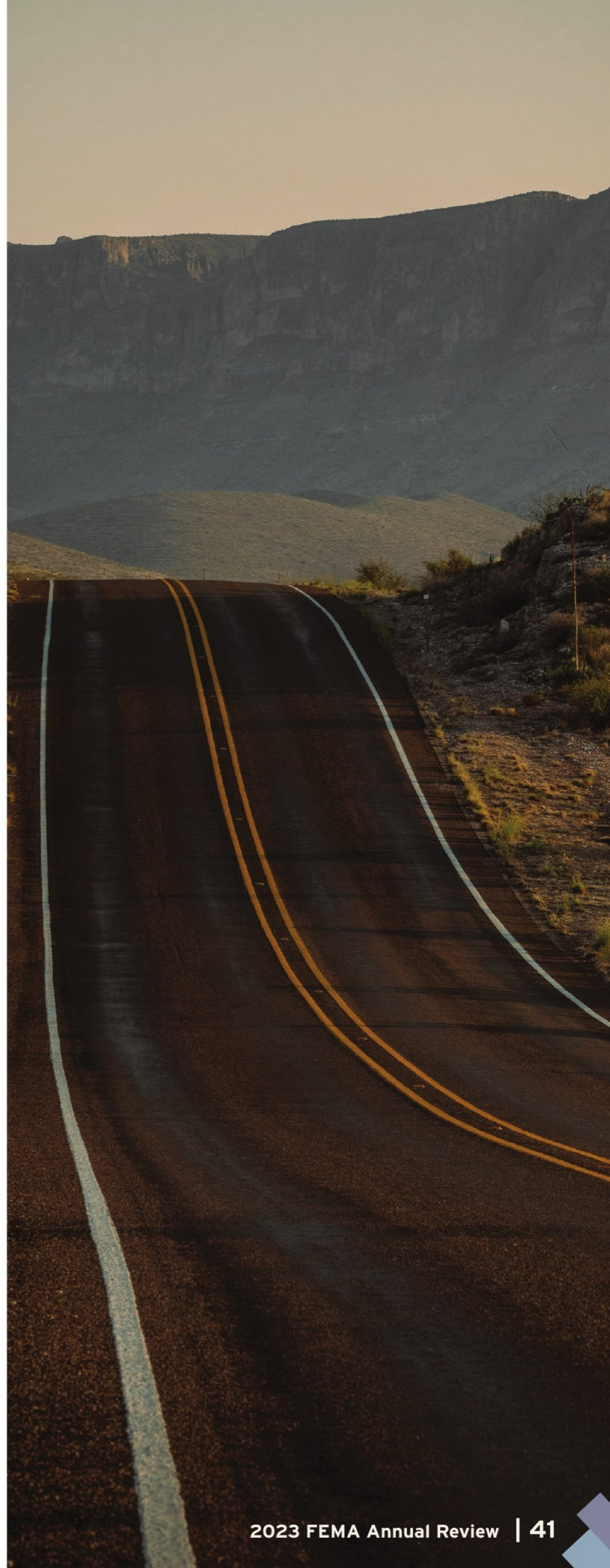
Those seeking membership can go to:
<https://emat-tx.org/join-emat>

IS THERE AN EVENT OR PROJECT YOU'RE MOST EXCITED ABOUT THIS YEAR?

Our annual Symposium that is held in the first quarter of the year.

IS THERE ANYTHING ELSE YOU WOULD LIKE OUR READERS TO KNOW?

The Emergency Management Association of Texas is dedicated to the advancement of the field of emergency management both statewide and nationally. To that end, EMAT engages in an array of efforts to advance a statewide emergency management agenda and to promote the professional growth of the emergency management practitioner.



ENVIRONMENTAL PRESERVATION KEY TO FEMA CLIMATE STRATEGY

As the climate continues to change, FEMA continues to focus, adapt and help preserve the environment. Director of the Office of Environmental Planning and Historic Preservation, Kristen Fontenot, is one of the many people on the frontline of these preservation efforts.

“FEMA just released a plan that is guiding agency actions for the next five years. For the first time ever, climate change and equity are two of the three over-arching goals of the agency’s priorities,” stated Fontenot in an April 2022 press release. “Making sure environmental justice and injustice is part of FEMA’s program delivery is so very important. Environmental Justice means that we avoid disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effects on low-income and minority populations.”

FEMA cannot fund or implement any action that may impact the environment until the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) thoroughly reviews and assesses the environmental impact and consequences. There are three levels of National Environmental Policy Act review, the categorical exclusion, the environmental assessment, and the environmental impact statement. Once this review process is completed, FEMA can go ahead with their new environmental preservation plan.

In 2021, the Office of Environmental Planning and Historic Preservation reviewed over 20,220 public assistance projects, all ways to minimize impacts to environmental and cultural resources while recovering from disasters. “Cities and towns, located in areas likely to experience an increase in floods or other natural disasters, have important histories that are



"MAKING SURE ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE AND INJUSTICE IS PART OF FEMA'S PROGRAM DELIVERY IS SO VERY IMPORTANT. ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE MEANS THAT WE AVOID DISPROPORTIONATELY HIGH AND ADVERSE HUMAN HEALTH OR ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS ON LOW-INCOME AND MINORITY POPULATIONS."

**- KRISTEN FONTENOT,
DIRECTOR OF THE OFFICE OF ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION**

part of what makes the United States special, and those resources and artifacts are at risk," Fontenot added. "The increased complexities of these aspects of our work as we grapple with the climate crisis cannot be understated." FEMA considers the impacts of its actions to cultural and environmental resources. FEMA analyzes the environmental assessments, which NEPA uses to determine any significant environmental impacts will occur as a result of a FEMA action or funded action. All of FEMA's federally funded projects also need to undergo an environmental review, Unified Federal Reviews, a process required by all agencies.

FEMA is allowed to apply for grants, though must follow the grants guidelines before applying.

FEMA asks that the community remains involved in efforts to preserve the environment. Every individual can play an important role in the fight against climate change. "Every action helps. That means participating in your local recycling program, proactively helping curb pollution and trash, and getting involved in local organizations that are helping decrease environmental justice issues and environmental hazard issues in your neighborhood or community," added Fontenot.



REVISED GLOBAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY FOCUSES ON COLLABORATION



and disasters – both natural and man-made. FEMA's commitment to helping people before, during, and after disasters here in the United States is only strengthened by the recognition that in our increasingly interconnected world, crises don't discriminate, and they don't care about lines on a map."

Some international agreements and relationships FEMA have established over the past year include agreements with Belgium, El Salvador, New Zealand, Romania, Israel, Mexico, and the Directorate General for the European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations. These new international partners help strengthen relationships globally and further aid in cooperation and coordination in the face of global disasters.

After the worldwide COVID-19 pandemic, FEMA officials met with leaders from Australia, Canada, Finland, France, Greece, Israel, Kenya, Norway, Sweden, Vietnam, and the United Nations Office of Disaster Risk Reduction. These meetings consisted of discussions about what to do globally to help stop the spread of COVID-19. "If there is any lesson to be taken from the COVID-19 pandemic, it's that we are all in this together. The partnerships we're forging across the globe strengthen both the United States and the entire global community by increasing stability and ensuring we are all ready when disaster strikes," added Criswell. "A better prepared world means a safer United States, and the only way we can do that is by leveraging our shared resources, our shared knowledge and experiences and our shared sense of purpose."

The Covid-19 pandemic showed the world that we are better when we work together. Since then, FEMA has been working to form new, multilateral forums, and strengthening its collaboration with international partners.

In 2022, FEMA increased and changed its strategic international partnerships to better fit its Global Emergency Management Plan. This change comes after major climate change threats and extreme weather changes and disasters.

These new partnerships will help engage FEMA's role as a global leader in emergency management, as well as enhance global security, safety, and stability. This will ensure top safety in the United States, U.S. Territories, Tribal Nations, and abroad. "Although we may stand on different soils, existential threats like climate change impact all nations. That's why we must work with our international partners and allies to prepare for both future and immediate risks in order to keep people safe at home and abroad," stated FEMA Administrator Deanne Criswell in a December 2022 release.

"Across the globe, FEMA is fostering strategic partnerships with counterpart organizations, working together to build global resilience to emergencies





Q&A

INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF EMERGENCY MANAGERS

Strategic Value Publishing had a chance to speak with Robie Robinson, CEM, IAEM Global Board Chair and Cathy Clark, MA, IAEM-USA President. This interview was conducted over email. Responses were edited for clarity.

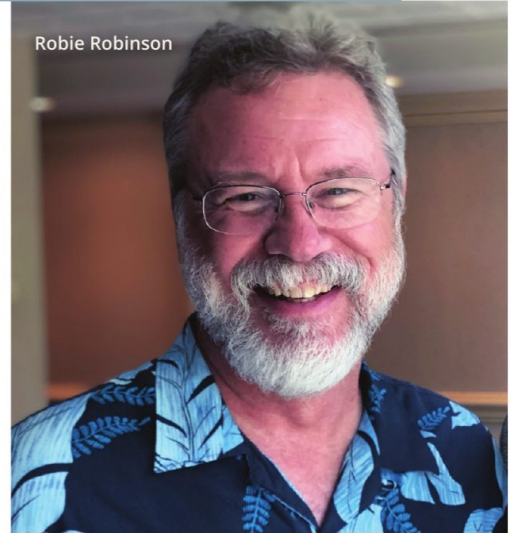
DO YOU HAVE A WORKING RELATIONSHIP WITH FEMA? IF SO, WHEN DID THIS BEGIN?

FEMA is one of IAEM's most significant and enduring relationships, starting with the inception of the federal agency on April 1, 1979, when IAEM was still known as the U.S. Civil Defense Council. Today, FEMA recognizes the importance of continual engagement with IAEM including regular "Big 3 Check-ins" with IAEM, the Big Cities Emergency Management (BCEM), and the National Emergency Management Association (NEMA).

CAN YOU DISCUSS THE HISTORY AND GLOBAL EXPANSION OF IAEM?

What would become the field of emergency management was born in 1941 when the U.S. Office of Civil Defense was created to coordinate civilian defense initiatives. IAEM began in 1952 as the U.S. Civil Defense Council to serve and represent those working

Robie Robinson



Cathy Clark



Images Courtesy of IAEM

in the profession. In 1985, the organization became the National Coordinating Council for Emergency Management or NCCEM, and then in 1997, the name was changed to the International Association of Emergency Managers.

In 1999, the organization restructured to become truly international and formed councils. The councils represent large contingents of members that are closely placed in an area of the world. Currently, there are three councils: IAEM-USA, IAEM-Canada, and IAEM-Oceania. There are members in many other areas of the world, and they also participate through IAEM-International or other smaller international groups. IAEM has around 6,300 members worldwide and more than 5,500 members in the IAEM-USA Council.

WHAT ARE SOME GOALS IAEM HAS FOR THIS YEAR? HOW WILL YOU MEET THESE GOALS?

IAEM-USA recently updated its vision and mission with a vote of the membership for approval. IAEM-USA's vision is to inspire and advance the emergency management community. The mission of IAEM-USA is to foster resilience by engaging with the diverse emergency management community through professional development, networking, information exchange, and advocacy.

Using the vision and mission as guides, a SWOT analysis, and input from committees and members, the IAEM-USA Board of Directors developed the 2023-2026 Strategic Plan for the organization, which was adopted during its March meeting. The plan addresses three strategic issues: 1) Membership and Community; 2) Advocacy and Thought Leadership; and 3) Future-casting the Emergency Management Profession. By addressing the strategic issues, the organization will:

- Provide unrivaled value and benefits to attract and retain membership by creating an inclusive, collaborative forum for the emergency management community.
- Proactively advocate for the profession and work to elevate the stature and authority of emergency management.
- Lead and build an agile association that anticipates the future of emergency management.

IAEM-USA has established several objectives to be attained within each strategic issue and is working with its committees and caucuses to incorporate the goals and objectives of the plan in their work plans and products.

WHAT ARE SOME IMPORTANT MILESTONES IAEM WAS ABLE TO REACH?

For an organization that is more than 70 years old, there are many milestones. Three things that are most important to the profession are the IAEM Certification Program, the IAEM Annual Conference & EMEX – the preeminent emergency management conference and exhibit, and the IAEM Scholarship Program.

The conference and scholarship assistance will be discussed in the questions below. IAEM's Certification Program is noted worldwide, and many jobs now request the Certified Emergency Manager (CEM®) credential for applicants. FEMA had a part in the development of this valuable program.

In 1988-1989, FEMA granted funds to IAEM to produce a report on how to create and maintain the Certified

Emergency Manager Program. A Professional Standards Advisory Council was formed of subject matter experts representing all aspects of emergency management and related fields to determine the best way to implement the standards and define the professional benchmarks. After much study and development by dedicated emergency managers, IAEM certified the first class of CEMs in 1993. In April 2023, IAEM announced the first 30-year CEM when Randy Kearns, CEM, one member of the original class, successfully completed his sixth recertification. Currently, there are more than 2,500 certified individuals.

Additional information about the Certification Program is available at www.iaem.org/certification.

HOW DOES IAEM CONTINUE TO ASSIST AND EDUCATE EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT PROFESSIONALS WORLDWIDE?

IAEM has many offerings throughout the year to educate emergency management professionals and programs that assist EMs when the needs arise.

Our Annual Conference & EMEX, held in November, brings together more than 2,500 EMs from around the world to learn from experts and share ideas. The exhibit provides access to the newest technology. A mid-year virtual event provides one day of speaker sessions and a full day of training (usually including FEMA courses). The content from the virtual conference is available to attendees and others who register post-conference for one year. Many of the training courses also are taped and available (when allowed). The video content allows attendees the opportunity to see content that was presented simultaneously with what they viewed live and for others to view the full conference. IAEM provides certificates for the content reviewed.

In addition to the two annual large events, many IAEM-USA regions and other councils produce conferences and symposiums, both live and virtual, and attendees are not limited by borders or membership status. Committees and caucuses also provide educational webinars and create resources that assist members with their jobs.

And, in 2022, IAEM launched IAEMconnect. This resource provides 24/7/365 access to the largest network of emergency managers globally. IAEM members may post questions, news, resources, and more within the different IAEMconnect groups. Through discussions, members find answers to issues and identify resources to solve problems.

IS THERE AN UPCOMING EVENT YOU ARE LOOKING FORWARD TO?

IAEM is excited to invite the emergency management community to the 71st Annual Conference & EMEX, Nov. 3-9, 2023, in Long Beach, California. The theme of this year's conference is "Emergency Management: Turning the Tide." The conference will feature a mixture of plenary speakers, breakout sessions, a Poster Showcase highlighting research, and the popular EMvision Talks. There will be plenty of opportunities to network and reconnect with colleagues and identify new friends in the field during the receptions, the closing dinner, daily meal events, and other activities. There will be time dedicated for visiting the exhibitors to see and learn about new technology and products.

Mark your calendars for future years. The 2024 conference will be November 15-21 in Colorado Springs, Colorado at the Broadmoor Hotel. The 2025 conference will be Nov. 13-20 in Louisville, Kentucky at the Kentucky International Convention Center.

Information about the IAEM Annual Conference is available at www.iaem.org/usconf.

CAN YOU TALK ABOUT THE SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM YOU OFFER STUDENTS? HOW ARE THEY ABLE TO APPLY? ARE ALL STUDENTS ELIGIBLE?

In 1999-2000, IAEM established the IAEM Scholarship Program to nurture, promote, and develop disaster preparedness and resilience by furthering the education of students studying the field of emergency management, disaster management, or a related program. The purpose of the program is to assist the profession by identifying and developing students with the intellect and technical skills that can advance the profession. Notably, the 10th Superintendent of the Emergency Management Institute at FEMA, Jeffrey Stern, Ph.D., was chosen as a 2008-2009 IAEM Scholarship awardee.

The application period for 2023 closed in April and the 2024 application period will open early next year. Full-time undergraduate and full and part-time graduate students from anywhere in the world, regardless of IAEM membership status, are encouraged to apply. Students must be working toward a degree in emergency management, disaster management, or a related field of study. The application process includes providing academic transcripts and proof of enrollment, letters of recommendation, and responding to two essay questions. The Scholarship Commission provides checklists, thorough application instructions, FAQs, and

a webinar to help students create the best applications to meet the requirements. Information about the program is available at www.iaem.org/scholarships.

ARE THERE ANY WORDS OF WISDOM YOU WOULD LIKE TO SHARE WITH STUDENTS LOOKING TO GO INTO AN EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT CAREER?

This is a question that is posted on social media almost weekly and that I and others in the profession hear frequently. First, today education is important. We believe an undergraduate degree is necessary. It can be in emergency management or another closely related degree.

While working on the degree, students should take every opportunity to get real experience. Internships are wonderful, but not always available. Many local emergency management departments would welcome volunteer help. A student should reach out to the locals where they live or where they will be on break and see if there is a project with tasks that could be completed by the student. Take any task that is offered and do it well. This could lead to larger projects and even turn into a "real" internship, including pay/stipend. Doing these types of activities will provide the student with practical experience and future references.

When it comes to job-hunting and joining the profession, it is very important to be flexible. A student or someone joining the profession at the entry level should look for a job that fits their skills and not necessarily a job that is in a specific location. As a resume is built, it will be easier to find the job in the location desired.

ANYTHING ELSE YOU WOULD LIKE OUR READERS TO KNOW?

IAEM pursues the principles of diversity, equity, and inclusion within its membership, programs, and for all who engage in IAEM activities, as well as for the profession. In furtherance of these principles, in 2023 IAEM has undertaken an important initiative to audit its diversity, create an inclusion index, assess the equity of its policies and procedures, and seek opportunities for continuous improvement. The process, with the guidance and leadership of an internationally recognized and trusted diversity, equity, and inclusion specialist and coach, IAEM is working toward a more inclusive future for the organization and the profession.

The IAEM logo consists of the letters 'IAEM' in a bold, sans-serif font, with a small dot above the 'I'.

2023
Annual Conference & EMEX

Long Beach, CA

November 3-9, 2023
Long Beach California

www.iaemconference.info

[#iaem23](https://twitter.com/iaem23)

*Join us for **TWO** great conferences in 2023!*

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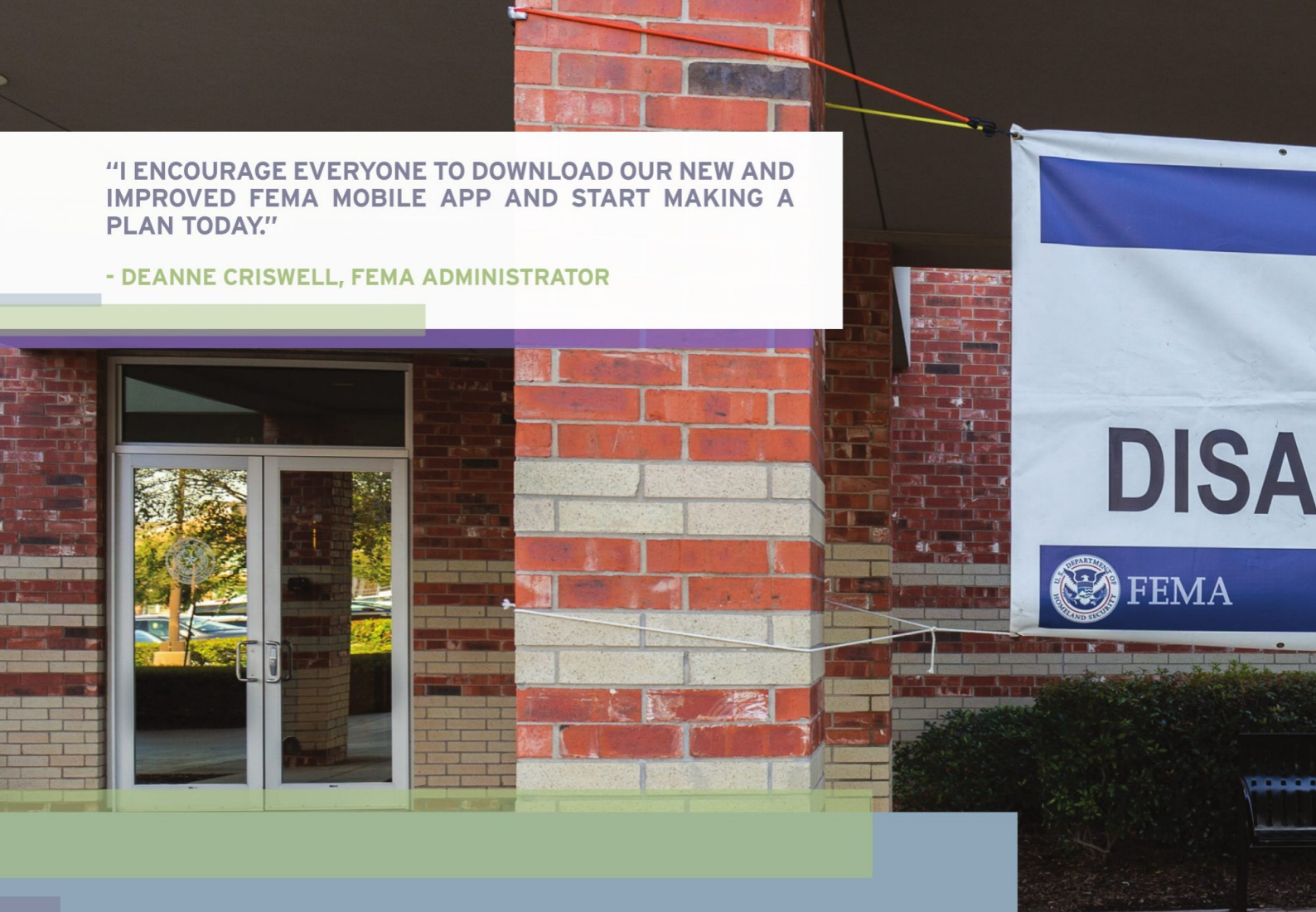
www.iaem.org/virtualconference2023

[#iaemvc23](https://twitter.com/iaemvc23)



Visit our website for more details and to register today!

www.iaem.org



"I ENCOURAGE EVERYONE TO DOWNLOAD OUR NEW AND IMPROVED FEMA MOBILE APP AND START MAKING A PLAN TODAY."

- DEANNE CRISWELL, FEMA ADMINISTRATOR

FEMA URGES RESIDENTS TO BE PREPARED FOR UPCOMING NATURAL DISASTERS

It is important to be prepared and ready for disasters in case you need to evacuate or seek help. FEMA urges residents to prepare for upcoming hurricanes or other natural disasters, insisting families should create an emergency plan, as well as stay alert during peak seasons.

"My message to the public is this: identify your risks, have a plan and act today. The best way to help yourself, your family and your community recover after a disaster is by taking steps now, before it's too late," stated Deanne Criswell, FEMA Administrator. "Remember, just because your area was not touched by a hurricane in the past few years, does not mean it

will be spared this time around. I encourage everyone to download our new and improved FEMA mobile app and start making a plan today. But most importantly, pay attention to your local officials and emergency managers for guidance on when and if to evacuate."

FEMA has shared some helpful tips, including downloading their new mobile app, to stay prepared. Building an emergency supply kit over time can be immensely helpful in times of need. These kits can include items one already has in their home, such as a flashlight, extra batteries, copies of important documents, extra water, first aid kits, and non-perishable food items. These important documents



should be stored in flood-safe places, such as a high shelf, an upper floor, or in resealable water-tight bags. FEMA encourages families to talk to other members of their household to create an evacuation plan. If the sudden need occurs, members of the house should create a set place to meet in order to remain safe and accounted for.

In addition to their new mobile app, FEMA has created a Text-to-Shelter feature which can be accessed through any mobile device. If an evacuation order is issued, one can simply text “shelter” and their zip code to 43362. This will then prompt a text of all listed shelters located nearby. With flooding being

the number-one disaster, FEMA encourages people to learn more about protecting themselves and their homes during peak flood seasons. Some of these tips include purchasing flood insurance, remembering that floods can happen anywhere, and preparing your home to remain safe. FEMA also offers a Map Service Center, where one can enter a street address to learn more about flood risks in their community, flood zones, and flood insurance information.

FEMA continues to encourage the community and the nation to educate themselves on preparedness and natural disasters in their area.

FEMA LEADERSHIP

Last updated: February 13, 2023

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Communities at Risk (CAR)
Communities of Color
Marginalized and Vulnerable Population



Membership on Land, Sea, Underwater, Air, and Space

MISSION

Provide information, networking, educational & professional development opportunities, and to advance the emergency management and homeland security profession within Black, Latino, African-Descent, disenfranchised, and vulnerable population communities.

To assist and ensure diversity and community involvement in all phases of emergency management, and climate change to include grant opportunities, training, preparedness, etc. with emphasis on the longterm recovery of communities.

VISION

Premier association of African-Descent Homeland Security & Emergency Management professional emergency managers. Be the premier African-Descent 'all-inclusive' association fulfilling our primary mission, and not exclude any individual, entity, or organization with an interest in the principles of emergency management in all communities.

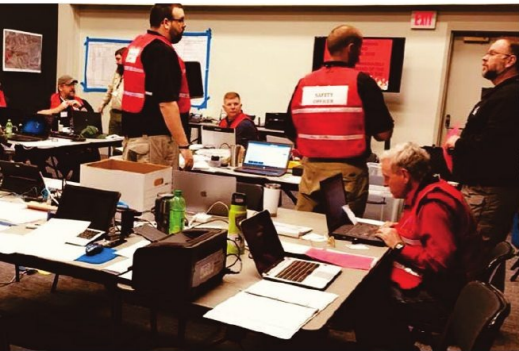
For more information and opportunities, please visit us at www.blackemergmanagersassociation.org



NCEMA

North Carolina Emergency Management Association

Providing emergency management from the mountains to the sea.



Association Opportunities

- Mentoring
- Apprenticeship Program
- Committees
- Caucuses
- Scholarships
- NC Emergency Management Academy
- NC Certification: Executive Level & Associate Level
- Spring Conference & Fall Conference
- Newsletters
- Awards
- Networking & Teamwork

Qualities of Members in our Association

- Innovative
- Collaborative
- Integrity
- Versatile
- Flexible
- Committed
- Enduring
- Leaders

Levels of Membership

- Active
- Corporate
- Student

The North Carolina Emergency Management Association is the professional organization for all emergency managers in North Carolina, including but not limited to local, state, tribal and federal jurisdictions, healthcare, education, non-profit organizations and private industry.

Each year the Association hosts a Spring Conference and a Fall Conference; where participants can gather together and learn more about what is happening in the field of emergency management and also build relationships with their peers.

www.ncema.net

