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Special Focus Issue: Emergency Management—Turning the Tide

NOAA’s National Weather Service and IAEM: The Importance of Coming Together

By Ken Graham, Director, NOAA’s National Weather Service

The author will be speaking as part of the IAEM 71st Annual Conference on Nov. 6 at 9:00 a.m. and 9:45 a.m.

Every year, I am energized by attending the IAEM Annual Conference—an unmatched forum to engage directly with IAEM members. This experience solidifies the foundation and bond between the National Weather

Service and our core partners across the entire emergency management community.

I am struck by the similar and complementary missions of the NWS and IAEM. For IAEM, members

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Turning the Tide to Inclusive Evacuation Planning

By L. Vance Taylor, Chief, Office of Access and Functional Needs, California Governor’s Office of Emergency Services (Cal OES)

The author will be speaking as part of the IAEM 71st Annual Conference on Nov. 7 at 10:15 a.m.

Natural and human-caused disasters have become more frequent, far-reaching, and widespread. As a result, preserving the lives, security, and prosperity of all members of society has become increasingly complex.

To turn the tide of emergency management towards a safer, more

resilient whole community, jurisdictions must plan for, and respond to, these complexities using inclusive, integrated processes that build community resilience. Doing so requires cooperation from all members of the community. It is also critical that individuals proactively plan and take

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From the IAEM-USA President

A Strong Future for IAEM

By Cathy Clark, MA, IAEM-USA President

Greetings! As I reflect on our activities over the past year, I cannot believe how fast the time has gone. I am very grateful and appreciative to have served as president of IAEM-USA. I started this journey with a vision and commitment to strengthen the empowerment of each of you, our individual members. As president, I intended to work with our leadership team, including regional presidents, committee and caucus leaders, and ASMI staff to grow new and expanded pathways for members who want to fully engage in career aspirations, nurture strong professional relationships, and collectively advance the professionalism of our discipline. Admittedly, there have been a few hiccups along the way; yet, we all persevered and embraced our lessons learned. For me, the forward progress and challenging conversations over the past year mirror the theme of our upcoming 71st Annual Conference and EMEX—Emergency Management: Turning the Tide. Our IAEM Conference Committee has put together another great slate of speakers, presentations, and networking opportunities. I look forward to seeing everyone next month in Long Beach!

Looking ahead, we need strong and collaborative leadership across all groups in our association to guide and move our emergency management profession forward. Thanks to you, our dedicated and innovative members, IAEM's committees, caucuses, working groups, and allied partners are engaged in many activities and initiatives, which are making changes for the better, thus, turning the tide. As we all know,

change doesn't happen overnight. Meaningful and lasting change takes time, commitment, and follow-up. I challenge each of you to stay engaged, support each other, and leverage your collaborative partnerships as we continue to turn the tide. We must remain focused on positive, solution-oriented approaches to mitigate and address the critical topics facing our emergency management profession today. The same is true as we navigate the ongoing changes and complexities in disaster response, resiliency, and recovery, especially aimed at our most vulnerable populations and underserved communities, across the country.

It has been an honor to serve as your president this past year and work alongside passionate colleagues who are willing to speak up and engage in spirited and lively discussions to help shape our future as an emergency management profession. Each IAEM member is a unique indi-

"IAEM is stronger when members work together in collaboration."



*Cathy Clark, MA
IAEM-USA President*

vidual who brings forward wide-ranging perspectives and depth based on skills, knowledge, lived experiences, and culture. As I started my term I stated I intended to find ways for our members to engage in conversations to address long-standing issues and perceptions. I am still adamant today that all members' viewpoints and voices are welcome in these conversations and are vital to establishing meaningful change. Admittedly at times, some of the interactions over the past year have been challenging; however, I am encouraged by the shifts in mindsets as we collectively cultivate new ideas, approaches, and changes to long-standing practices and historical perspectives. IAEM is stronger when members work together in collaboration. Strong collaboration is vital as we strive to achieve collective impact, which is

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Being Connected

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foundational to the success of our work as emergency managers.

Further, IAEM's Board of Directors continues to play a critical role in creating and organizationally supporting an association that prioritizes, supports, and invests in diversity, inclusion, and equity. At our annual Board Retreat earlier this year, Board members approved a three-year strategic plan to guide the future of the association.

Personally, other highlights for me this year included the opportunity to fully engage as a participant in the third cohort of FEMA's Vanguard Fellowship Program—an executive professional development program developed by FEMA, Emergency Management Institute (EMI), RAND Corporation, the McChrystal Group, and Harvard University. I also enjoyed multiple opportunities to participate in panel discussions with colleagues on the topic of crisis communication and the importance of sharing accurate and timely public information before, during, and after disaster. These engagement opportunities have helped fuel one of my passion areas, which is to share first-hand experiences that convey the importance of how community leaders—by serving as trusted community members—can effectively communicate in emergency situations.

I cannot emphasize enough that the ongoing success of our discipline and the continuous improvement of IAEM-USA as an association requires strong volunteer leadership. We have been testing our new approaches and encouraging committees and caucuses to focus on developing their own key results areas and objectives aligned with IAEM-USA's strategic plan. The great news is we are seeing forward progress as we embrace change and look past the status quo. I consider those efforts, while it's

Invite your friends!

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Membership benefits include:

- **Access to the monthly *IAEM Bulletin* and weekly eDispatch.**
- **Discounted rates on CEM certifications and training.**
- **Representation in government working groups addressing vital issues**
- **Access to the IAEM Jobs Board.**
- **And many more!**

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<https://www.iaem.org/join/intro>

been challenging at times, strong and steady steps forward and measurable progress. Looking ahead, I wish Justin, our incoming IAEM-USA president, all the best and my sincere appreciation for his ongoing support and leadership. I know each member will work to make his year successful and productive.

In closing, I feel we truly lived up to IAEM's vision of being recognized globally as the premier organization for emergency management. We continue to advance our profession by promoting the principles of emergency management and serving members by providing information, networking, and development opportunities. Thank you for all you do! Please continue to take care and remain **#IAEMStrong!** ♦

Bulletin Editor: [John Osborne](#)

Communications Director:
[Dawn Shiley](#), MA, CAE

Chief Executive Officer:
[Elizabeth B. Armstrong](#), MAM, CAE

The *IAEM Bulletin* is published monthly by IAEM to keep members abreast of association news, government actions affecting emergency management, research, and information sources.

The publication also is intended to serve as a way for emergency managers to exchange information on programs and ideas. Past issues are available in the members-only [IAEM Bulletin Archives](#).

Publishing an article in the *IAEM Bulletin* may help you to meet IAEM's certification requirements. Check out the [author's guidelines](#).

Articles should be submitted to Bulletin Editor John Osborne via email at john@iaem.com.

DISCLAIMER

The views and opinions expressed by author(s) of articles appearing in the *IAEM Bulletin* are solely those of the author(s) in his/her/their private capacity and do not necessarily represent the views of the International Association of Emergency Managers, Inc. (IAEM), its officers, directors or volunteers or IAEM's management company (ASMI), or any of ASMI's employees and contractors. Responsibility for the information and views expressed in an article lies entirely with the author(s).

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IAEM Announces IAEM2Go Mobile App For Annual Conference and EMEX

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Use the above QR code to download the IAEM2Go app

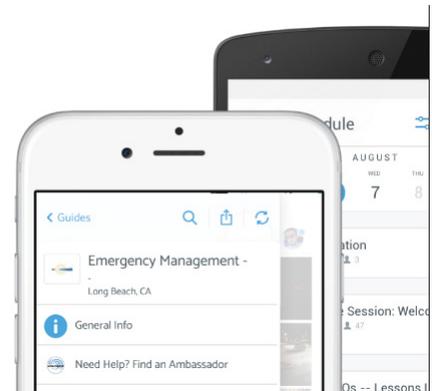
Need Help with the App?

We will have people on hand at the registration area, who will be happy to assist you in downloading the app.

Features of IAEM2Go

- Complete program schedule and exhibit guide.
- Interactive site maps.
- Social media links, including Twitter #iaem23, Facebook, and LinkedIn.
- Ability to customize your schedule, take notes, find contact information, and search.
- Easily located conference and session surveys.
- Up-to-the-minute conference updates.
- Sections highlighting special events and Long Beach.

- Exciting QR Code Hunt game – have fun and explore EMEX.
- Speaker bios and presentations. Sponsor and Media Partners information.
- Transportation information.
- Links to the IAEM Scholarship Program events.
- Quick link to the IAEM Scholarship Program Online Auction and information on onsite events.
- Links to IAEM association information, including leadership, membership, conference planning, committee members, and more. ◆



Cool Stuff at IAEM

- Subject Matter experts convened on Sept. 28-29 to review the new version of the AEM®/CEM® exam set to launch in Jan. 2024. The meeting included international representation from Canada, Greece, New Zealand, and the Caribbean as well as across the United States.
- [IAEM2Go](#), the IAEM Annual Conference app is now live and available to the whole IAEM community.
- [IAEMconnect](#), the IAEM online community, now has several active channels and new conversations occur daily on a wide range of topics.
- [IAEM Jobs Board](#) currently features 198 job postings, and 1266 resumes available from professionals seeking positions. IAEM HQ liberally offers discount posting coupons for employers who belong to the association, and job seekers post their resumes for free!

IAEM Conference News

Last Chance to Be a Part of the Emergency Management Event of the Year

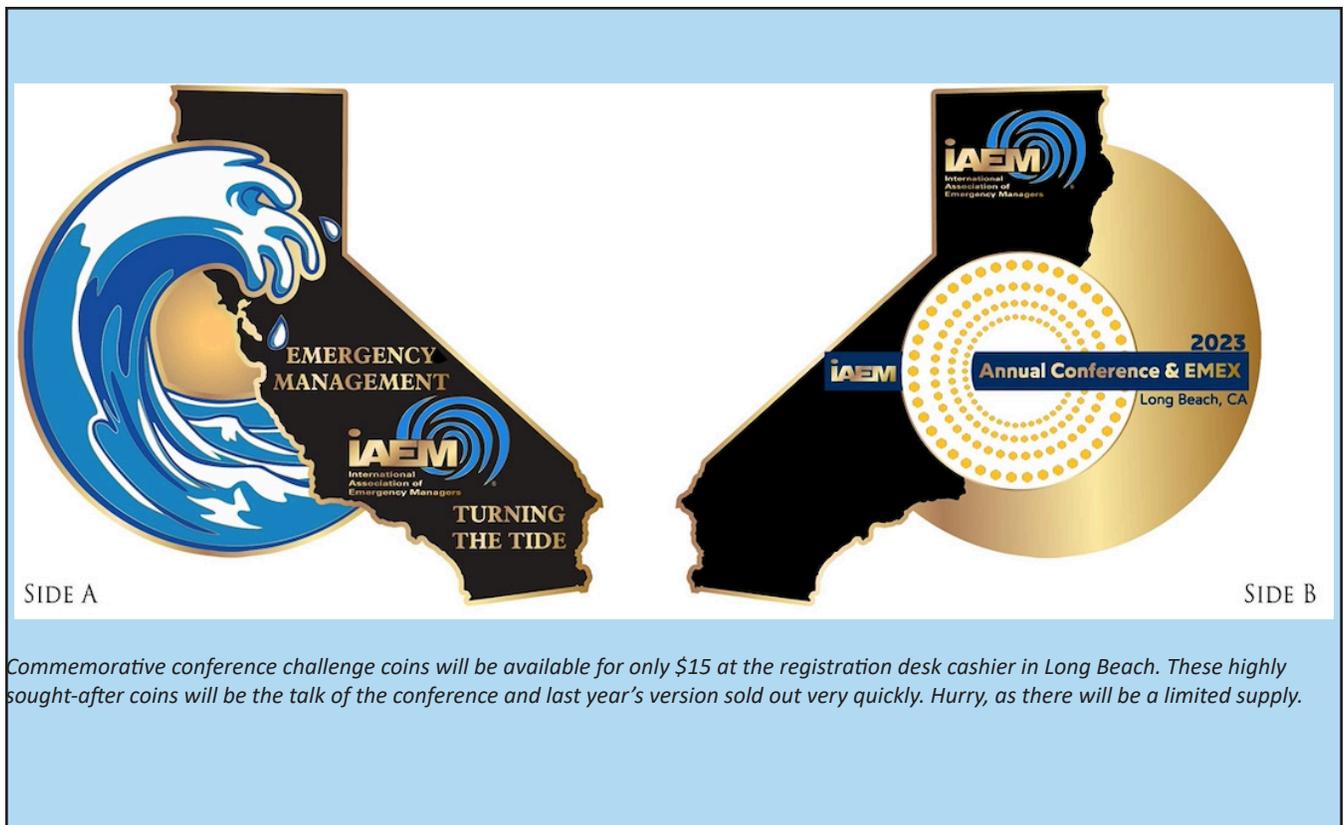
The IAEM 71st Annual Conference & EMEX begins on Friday, Nov. 3. You can still [register](#) and join over 2000 other emergency managers in what is the largest networking and information-sharing event of the year. IAEM has a phenomenal [program](#) planned with over 150 [speakers](#), and numerous [training sessions](#) both pre- and post-conference that range in length from one hour to three days, allowing you to tailor your schedule based on your availability, plus an endless amount of networking and [special events](#) planned. ♦

Learn How to Get the Most out of the IAEM Annual Conference

On Wednesday, Oct. 18 at 12:00 p.m. ET, the Conference Committee will be hosting a webinar on “Expanding Your Conference Experience: Getting the Most out of the IAEM Annual Conference.” This is your opportunity to hear from the planners and make sure you are aware of all the events and sessions of importance to you. Don’t come to Long Beach unprepared and miss out on an amazing session, training, or event. Come prepared with the knowledge of all the conference has to offer and make the most out of your time away from the office. Register today for the [webinar](#). ♦

Add Pre-/Post-Conference Training to Your Plans

Are you coming in for the weekend before the conference begins? Make the most of your time in Long Beach and add a training course to your registration. There are only a few seats remaining in many of our courses. All FEMA/DHS courses are FREE for conference registrants at the full, speaker, or student registration rates. Plus, there are IAEM Certification program offerings and other training courses and symposiums available. Check out our [website](#) for the complete listing and [register today](#). ♦



Commemorative conference challenge coins will be available for only \$15 at the registration desk cashier in Long Beach. These highly sought-after coins will be the talk of the conference and last year’s version sold out very quickly. Hurry, as there will be a limited supply.

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IAEM Conference News Continued

Featured IAEM Plenary Speakers



David Brand



Marcus T. Coleman, Jr



Deanne Criswell, MPA, MA



Ken Graham



Michelle Lockett



Casey Taylor



L. Vance Taylor, MA



Nancy Ward



Beth Wyatt

Conference Promotion Winners

IAEM ran two social media campaigns with speakers and attendees to promote attendance at the IAEM Annual Conference in Long Beach, California. Participants were given graphics to post on their social media channels promoting the Annual Conference and were allowed to post once a day. Each post increased their chance to win. Winners were selected at random.

Congratulations to the winners of the IAEM Speaker Announcement Week:

- Mallory Buys, CEM, presenting "We Can't Tell Each Other What to Do! - Building Partnerships between Local and Quasi-Governmental Organizations" on Nov. 8 at 1:30 p.m.
- Ruth Brown, presenting "Resilience Management Emergency Protocol: The Integration of Mental Health in Trauma and Disaster" on Nov. 6 at 2:15 p.m.
- Suzanne Boccia, CEM, presenting "Mitigation Mess To Masterpiece: Making Your Program SOAR" on Nov. 8 at 11:00 a.m.

Congratulations to the winners of the IAEM Attendee Promo Week:

- Justin Woodruff, CEM, Texas Department of State Health Services, Houston, Texas.
- Jorge Rodriguez, CEM, County of Sonoma Department of Emergency Management, Santa Rosa, California.
- Kaitlyn Jdrzejczyk, Michigan State Police Emergency Management Homeland Security Division, Essexville, Michigan.



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IAEM in Action



On Sept. 18, representatives from IAEM, NEMA, and Big Cities Emergency Managers met with FEMA Administrator Deanne Criswell and her senior leadership team at FEMA Headquarters. IAEM-USA President Cathy Clark, MA, was joined by IAEM-USA 1st Vice President Justin Kates, CEM; AEM-USA 2nd Vice President Carrie Speranza, CEM; and IAEM-USA Government Affairs Chair Brad Gilbert, OCEM.



FEMA Superintendent Tony Russell poses for a photo with IAEM Chief Executive Officer Beth Armstrong, CAE, and IAEM-USA Past Presidents and EMAP Representatives Robie Robinson, CEM, and Nick Crossley, CEM, on Sept. 28, during the 2023 EMAP Commission Meeting in Kansas City, Missouri.



Valerie Lucus-McEwen, CEM, CBCP, president of IAEM-USA Region 8, and Katherine Fox, deputy regional administrator, FEMA Region 8 pose at the North Dakota Emergency Management Association Annual Meeting on Sept. 13.

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IAEM in Action continued

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Past President of SDEMA Dustin Willett, CEM; Regan Smith; and 2024 President of SDEMA Robert Hill, CEM, pose at the South Dakota Emergency Management Association Annual Conference in Deadwood, South Dakota, on Sept. 13.



Robert Hill, CEM, EM Director, Brookings County, North Dakota, receives the Emergency Manager of the Year award at the South Dakota Emergency Management Association Annual Conference on Sept. 14. He was also elected the 2023-2024 President of SDEMA. Harold Timmerman, the current SDEMA president, presented the award.



IAEM-USA Government Affairs Vice Chair Nick Crossley, CEM; IAEM-USA Second Vice President Carrie Speranza, CEM; and IAEM Executive Director Beth Armstrong, CAE, at the NEMA Resilience Committee meeting in Memphis on Oct 3.



NEMA Executive Director Trina Sheets was honored on Oct. 3 at the NEMA Annual Meeting in Memphis for her 30 years of service. IAEM Executive Director Beth Armstrong, CAE, congratulated her during the social at the Graceland Museum.

IAEM Certification News

New Version of IAEM CEM/AEM Exam

A new version of the IAEM CEM/AEM exam will be live in January 2024. IAEM will publish a new reference list for candidates taking the exam in the new year. The updated list will be posted on the [IAEM website](http://www.iaem.org). The country specific questions for New Zealand, Australia, and Canada have not changed so country-specific resources for these councils have not changed. All applicants taking the exam in the new year should reference the new study guide to see the updated resource list for the core questions. The U.S.-specific resources have also been updated. ♦



AEM/CEM Certification Credential Review

The last AEM/CEM certification credential review will occur in November. Certification candidates must submit their applications by Oct. 31 at 11:59 p.m. EDT to have their applications reviewed in 2023. Notifications will be available by mid-December. ♦

Learn about the IAEM Certification Program at www.iaem.org/CEM.

Lifetime CEM

IAEM has a **Lifetime CEM** designation for current CEMs who are retiring from the field of emergency management. In order to qualify, a candidate must be a current CEM and have recertified at least once. After earning Lifetime CEM status, individuals will hold the designation for life without the need to recertify. Application details can be found on the [IAEM website](http://www.iaem.org).

Recertification Reminder

Candidates due to recertify as a AEM or CEM this year are reminded to submit the recertification application through the online portal documenting continuing education/training and professional contributions. The submission deadline is Dec. 31, 2023, at 11:59 p.m EST. Specific requirements based on the recertification year as well as current recertification fees can be found on the IAEM website. Keep in mind that the recertification fee must be applied to the applicant's account before submitting the application. Payments made online are processed the next business day so plan accordingly. ♦



IAEM, BCEM, and NEMA record PSA Messages at FEMA HQ

On Sept. 18, the presidents of IAEM, NEMA, and BCEM met with FEMA Administrator Criswell, Deputy Administrator Erik Hooks, and the senior leadership team at FEMA headquarters in Washington, D.C. IAEM-USA President Cathy Clark was joined by First Vice President Justin Kates, IAEM-USA Government Affairs Chair Brad Gilbert, Second Vice President Carrie Speranza, and Government Affairs Director Thad Huguley.

Administrator Criswell meets quarterly with the Big Three, but this was the first face-to-face meeting since before COVID-19. The meetings provide an opportunity for an open dialogue between FEMA and the state and local partners about shared interests. At the face-to-face meeting, Administrator Criswell focused on preparedness grants, mitigation programs, and homeland-security-related issues.

The meeting also provided a rare opportunity for the leaders of the Big Three to meet, talk, and get to know one another better. After meeting with the Administrator, FEMA personnel gave the group a tour of the EOC at FEMA headquarters, an incredibly impressive state-of-the-art facility that is crucial to FEMA's response and recovery efforts after a disaster. Adjacent to the EOC is a recording studio that is used by FEMA personnel while deployed during a disaster. While there, IAEM President Cathy Clark, along with the NEMA President Patrick Sheehan, and BCEM President Mark Sloan, recorded a public service announcement in support of National Preparedness Month to be used as part of FEMA's effort to raise awareness about the importance of pre-disaster preparedness.

IAEM appreciates the accessibility of FEMA's senior leadership and values the relationship we have at all levels of the agency. ◆



On Sept. 18, IAEM-USA President Cathy Clark, MA, records a PSA at FEMA HQ in Washington, D.C.



On Sept. 18, IAEM-USA president Cathy Clark, MA, and IAEM-USA Government Affairs Chair Brad Gilbert enjoy a tour of FEMA HQ in Washington, D.C.

Disaster Zone

Emergency Management Will be Stressed by Climate Change

By Eric E. Holdeman, Senior Fellow, Emergency Management Magazine

blog: www.disaster-zone.com | podcast: [Disaster Zone](#)

For this month's commentary, I would like to focus on the challenges our profession is having because of climate change and how I think we will be challenged to meet all the requests and requirements that will be thrust upon us.

First, let's talk about our role as emergency managers when it comes to responding to climate change. We are not the profession arguing for reducing the amount of carbon being generated by a multitude of 21st-century machines powered by carbon-based fuels. Actually, in climate terms, reducing carbon is called mitigation.

We can put aside the issue of why temperatures are rising if you want. Some argue that we are just experiencing the normal "climate variability" that has brought on warm eras and ice ages. Whatever your personal beliefs are about a warming earth—there is little argument that temperatures are going up. July was expected to be the warmest month on record for Earth since records have been kept. This is not about just the United States, the earth is experiencing what we are seeing around the world.

If we can't change what is happening, then we must adapt to the changes. This then is our role in climate adaptation. Basically—we have to play the hand we are dealt.

We are seeing natural disasters careen off the scale. Larger disasters include wildfires, floods, snowstorms, droughts, and especially dangerous heat waves. All of these have swept over our land. 2023 has already been a year of disasters. Larger, more frequent, and importantly also—longer

duration disasters.

One huge impact on emergency management is what I call the "ops tempo." We are no longer having an occasional disaster that we respond to with an "all hands on deck." These are happening one after the other with little time for staff to recover from the surge of being in a response mode. This can be especially true of wildfires that can go on for months at a time.

We are going to need more people in our profession. Emergency management agencies are going to need to be bigger with more staff and increased capability. Our ability to loan resources to other jurisdictions will be reduced because of our own needs at home. That means

mutual aid and the Emergency Management Assistance Compact (EMAC) will not be as effective as it has in the past for state-to-state mutual aid.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and its ten regions have been pushed up significantly. This puts more demands on states and local governments as there are more feds to "help us" but they need people to work with.

Lacking the needed staff at the local level will mean that the separation between emergency management agencies will become wider as we have the "haves and have-nots" based on the size of jurisdictions and the number of emergency management staff. Sure, all disasters are local, but if there is no one there to channel resources through, how can you help them?

Climate impacts are going to challenge our critical infrastructures of all types. Our infrastructure was not built for the climate era we are entering. Mega disasters will become more frequent and that means that we will have infrastructures that fail, be they electrical grids, dams or levees, roads, and bridges.

We are also entering a period of intense electrification of industry and our automotive fleet. There will not be enough power generation, transmission, and distribution resources to meet all these needs that are about to burgeon in every community. Resource constraints will require the prioritization of services. Who will coordinate that effort? Emergency management is a natural place to help with that process.

BE A WRITER!
Submit Articles to the IAEM Bulletin



IAEM Bulletin

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Special Focus Issue:
"Honor the Past, The People We Remember"
A Letter to Doc
 By Carrie Speranza, CEM, IAEM-USA Secretary, and
 IAEM-Global Communications Director

www.iaem.org/bulletin

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Disaster Zone

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Besides the challenges of climate change, many governments have discovered just how good we can be at coordinating the efforts of a diverse set of interests. Don't be surprised when the boss calls and says I need you to "help coordinate" X, Y, or Z. It could be a parade, pandemic logistics, or emergency housing due to a heat emergency. The list can be endless.

With an increased focus on responding to disasters we will be challenged to keep up with all the other aspects of a fully functioning emergency management program. We will have more experience in disaster response, but less planning will get done and I fear that mitigation, that can help reduce the need

for our response operations, will end up on the back shelf. We may become a response and recovery-focused discipline, to the detriment of our communities and their long-term disaster resilience.

The coming crisis that will make our recovery efforts even harder will be the inability of people to get property insurance. Hurricanes, earthquakes, and now fire insurance will either become unaffordable or unavailable. This is taking hold already and will become a full-blown national emergency in the coming months and years. If you cannot get insurance, you cannot get a mortgage. It is possible that insurance companies will be helping people mitigate disasters by requiring certain building or construction conditions to exist. Perhaps there will be annual inspections by insurance companies to ensure compliance

with their standards. Let's see what develops on that front.

Everywhere we look there are going to be challenges. Think about your circumstances and talk with your neighboring jurisdictions. With the coming storms, it can get better if we all look to cooperate more and coordinate with our regional partners.

Lastly, let's start recruiting for our replacement emergency managers. Just this past Sunday while playing golf, I passed my business card along to a middle school teacher and offered to come to their "career day" event at her school. Getting emergency management on the radar screen of students today can help seed our profession for the future. This is a time to think long-term for the betterment of our profession. ♦



The advertisement features a background image of two women in a meeting. The IAEM logo is in the top left corner. A large blue banner with white text reads "NOW HIRING". Below it, white text says "Find your new job today!". At the bottom, white text says "Visit the IAEM Job Board" and "JOBS.IAEM.ORG" is highlighted in a blue box.

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NOW HIRING

Find your new job today!

Visit the IAEM Job Board
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Special Focus Articles Part 1: Due to the volume of submissions on this special focus topic, it is necessary to present the content in two parts. Part 2 will be available in the [Nov. edition of the IAEM Bulletin](#).

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The primary focus of the IAEM Bulletin is local. We are looking for articles that provide information and insights useful to other practitioners, in government and private sectors, who are educated and trained professionals. Appropriate topics include: new research results, unique applications, successful programs, real experiences with disasters and/or exercises, reviews of new publications, and viewpoints on important issues facing emergency management. The IAEM Editorial Committee is currently accepting submissions for future editions of the *IAEM Bulletin*. Refer to the [Author Guidelines](#) for tips and techniques for successfully submitting your article for publication.

- **Article Format:** Word or text format (not PDF).
- **Word length:** 750 to 1,500 words.
- **Photos/graphics:** Image format (png, jpg).
- **Email article, photos, and graphics to:** [John Osborne](#).

Thank you to the IAEM Editorial Committee

IAEM extends a warm thank you to the IAEM Editorial Committee for their assistance in compiling, editing, and publishing the monthly *IAEM Bulletin*. Current Editorial Committee leadership includes:
 ■ Committee Chair, Daryl Lee Spiewak, CEM, TEM

Interesting in joining the IAEM Editorial Committee? Contact IAEM Bulletin Editor [John Osborne](#) and tell him how you can contribute to or learn from this committee's important work.

National Weather Service and IAEM

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are “professionals whose goals are saving lives and protecting property and the environment during emergencies and disasters.” Meanwhile, the NWS “provides weather, water and climate data, forecasts, warnings, and impact-based decision support services for the protection of life and property and enhancement of the national economy.” We are intricately connected, intertwined even, in the sense that we deeply depend on each other to achieve our respective and shared goals.

But we are facing a reality where our missions are becoming increasingly challenging to meet.

How so? Today’s weather isn’t the weather we once had, and the impacts that weather can bring today are more impactful, more dire. With an ever-increasing population, there are people, property, and businesses in weather’s way—from our hurricane-prone coastline to tornadoes, and a wildfire season that is now year-round, just to name some. With a changing climate, marked in part by a warming world and rising sea levels, our weather seems less normal as we set new records for the warmest, wettest, and driest on varying timescales.

What does this mean for us? The stakes are high. The public, first responders, elected officials, and many other groups depend on us more than ever to predict, preposition, and provide for the safety and well-being of the communities we serve.

I attend the IAEM Annual Conference to listen to the firsthand experiences of emergency managers from across the country who have worked in myriad situations because it helps me and the entire NWS better understand your perspectives

and needs—before, during, and after a disaster—which then tells us how we can better serve and how we can work better together. After all, there is a lot on the line.

To build a Weather-Ready Nation, the NWS developed and refined our Impact-Based Decision Support Services (IDSS). Many of you have welcomed our forecasters into your EOCs, and in other venues to be alongside you, for us to meet our goal of saving lives and protecting property. But as the needs of our communities evolve, your needs change, and therefore the National Weather Service must transform.

Earlier this year, I released the NWS Strategic Plan 2023-2033 with the overall goal of transforming the NWS into a more nimble, flexible, and mobile agency providing indispensable mission services eye-to-eye with decision-makers. There are notable similarities with the [Principles of Emergency Management](#). Our

Strategic Plan is a readable, reliable, and actionable document that guides the NWS through priorities and action strategies for the future (also known as Ken’s 10).

These are not lofty wishes, but transformative activities that allow us to focus and direct resources to turn them into accomplishments. One such accomplishment you are likely familiar with is NWSChat 2.0 launched in the summer. With a spotlight on the project, we got it done and now more than 21,000 users are collaborating like never before — all in the name of information sharing for the greater public good. Many other transformative initiatives remain and we will be working on the roadmap and implementation timeframes for those activities. This will build and sustain a healthy NWS workforce that is equipped with the best technology and is mobile to work alongside our partners, especially in the emergency management community.

As the saying goes, the only constant is change. And change isn't always easy or fast, but it is necessary. The NWS and emergency management community are in this together—before, during, and after the IAEM Annual Meeting, and in more close-knit and high-pressure environments such as an EOC. On behalf of the entire NWS, I thank you for your steadfast support, and I commit to you that we will always do our best to provide you with the information you need, when you need it, and how you need it to inform your critical decisions.

I look forward to being with you in Long Beach in November. ♦



Inclusive Evacuation Planning

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responsibility for enhancing their personal levels of preparedness.

When emergency managers work with community members to develop the collective capacity needed to enhance resilience during a disaster, the tide turns in everyone's favor.

The California Governor's Office of Emergency Services (Cal OES) and its Office of Access and Functional Needs (OAFN) work closely with community stakeholders to identify and integrate the needs of all Californians, including individuals with access and functional needs (AFN), within the state's emergency management systems.

The term "access and functional needs" refers to individuals with physical, intellectual, or developmental disabilities, chronic conditions, injuries, limited English proficiency or who are non-English speaking; older adults; children; people living in institutionalized settings, or those who are low-income, homeless, including, but not limited to, those who are dependent on public transportation or are pregnant.

Historically, the tide has pushed planning forward without fully integrating access and functional needs-related considerations within local Emergency Operations Plans (EOPs). In conjunction with the fact that individuals with access and functional needs are disproportionately impacted by disasters, the lack of integrated planning created gaps, which led to measurable loss of life and increased human suffering among the whole community. Significant amongst those gaps was an overall lack of specific emergency evacuation-related considerations in individuals with access and functional needs face before, during, and after disasters.

To help close existing gaps, California enacted laws requiring jurisdictions to integrate access and functional needs-related considerations throughout their respective EOPs, including the evacuation section.

To turn the tide towards full inclusivity and whole community safety, Cal OES has taken a significant step in ensuring the safety and well-being of the state's residents by creating the [Integrated Evacuation Planning for Jurisdictions and Individuals with Access and Functional Needs](#) resource. Cal OES worked with the California Statewide AFN Community Advisory Committee to compile this guide and the best practices that will help individuals and communities build resilience and reduce the impact of emergencies.

Inclusivity is at the heart of this resource, which stresses the role of local AFN advisory committees in the development of evacuation plans that are comprehensive and consider the needs of the entire community. Effective communication during evacuation is recognized as a critical factor in ensuring the safety of all members of the community, including connection with accessible transportation resources and the effective dissemination of evacuation information.

The guide includes tools and strategies for collaborating with transportation providers, including a Transportation Agreement Checklist, which provides a framework for jurisdictions and transportation providers to ensure they address the needs of individuals with access and functional considerations when developing emergency transportation contracts.

The guide also turns the tide towards greater personal preparedness by providing recommendations for individuals with access and functional needs to ready themselves and their families for emergency evacuations. The guide highlights proactive preparedness steps individuals in the

community should take, including recognizing the types of emergencies in their region, receiving emergency alerts, developing a plan, and practicing their plan. By following these recommendations, individuals can ensure they are better prepared and have the support needed in the event of an emergency.

This document is intended to provide local jurisdictions with the guidance, best practices, and informational resources needed to strengthen their plans for the successful evacuation of individuals with access and functional needs in disasters.

Turning the tide towards the successful evacuation of all individuals is the result of comprehensive planning, collaboration, and the commitment of the whole community. Ongoing engagement and refinement of evacuation plans are essential to better meet evolving needs and maximize the impact of evacuation efforts. California is committed to providing a safe and inclusive environment for all its residents and this guide is an important step in fulfilling that commitment.

To learn more about inclusive practices and procedures jurisdictions and individuals should implement for integrated evacuation operations before, during, and after emergencies – be sure to attend the upcoming IAEM Conference in Long Beach, California. My keynote address at the plenary session on Nov. 7 will focus on turning the tide from the old model of evacuation planning towards an inclusive process that yields better outcomes for the entire community. ♦

Building Resilient Communities

By Chad Payeur, Planning Integration Branch Chief, National Integration Center, FEMA;
Cathy Welker, Emergency Management Specialist, Office of Resilience Strategy, FEMA

The authors will be speaking as part of the IAEM 71st Annual Conference on Nov. 6 at 11:00 a.m.

Communities today face an increasingly complex set of challenges. Disruptions from a range of acute shocks, such as natural disasters, pandemics, cyberattacks, infrastructure failure, and sudden loss of key industries, are becoming more frequent and intense. Additionally, chronic stressors such as aging infrastructure, environmental degradation, extreme temperatures, and persistent poverty negatively impact the quality of life and well-being, worsen the impacts of acute shocks, and undermine our ability to thrive. According to NOAA's "Billion-Dollar Weather and Climate Disasters 2022 Report" there have been 23 weather and climate disasters (as of Sept. 23) costing at least 1 billion dollars in 2023, ranking 2023 as the top year ahead of 2020 with 22 events and 2021 with 20 events with several more months to go¹.

Building toward resilience requires us to have a shared vision and common understanding of what we are collectively working towards. To do this, FEMA has been engaging with partners across the whole community to create National Resilience Guidance. This guidance is intended to reach beyond the emergency management community by highlighting the important relationship between community stressors and shocks, which requires engagement with non-traditional emergency management stakeholder groups. As such, the guidance is not meant to focus on FEMA programs and resources. Instead, it is meant to help promote a common understanding of resilience, address the relationship between shocks and stressors and how they affect resilience, and inspire fresh,

forward-looking, and people-centered approaches. As we continue to work toward this shared resilience vision, FEMA is requesting your input at IAEM. We want to ensure that the components of the National Resilience Guidance reflect the needs of our stakeholders.

National resilience will not be achieved if considered only when responding to a disruption or when primarily focused on infrastructure. Instead, sustained, proactive action that encompasses systems, communities, and people is needed during non-emergency periods. Resilience is advanced by assessing and addressing vulnerabilities, proactively building capacity that benefits and protects communities, and creating integrated approaches to anticipated impacts. There are key principles that we can look at when we approach resilience:

■ **All Threats and Hazards:** Identify, prepare for, resist, and respond to shocks and stressors, prioritizing through risk-based approaches those that represent the greatest risks.

■ **People-Centered:** Position the well-being of individuals, families, communities, and society at the center of resilience goals, taking into consideration the needs of all community members, including those who are most vulnerable and have been underserved.

■ **Equitable:** Increase access to services and benefits to underserved communities that often bear a disproportionate burden of impacts and costs of public and private actions.

■ **Adaptive:** Adapt innovative solutions to new conditions and knowledge, continuously growing and enhancing the capability to resist,

respond, and bounce forward from evolving threats and hazards.

■ **Collaborative:** Seek input that engages and empowers the public, private, academic, and non-profit sectors, reflects shared commitment, and utilizes transparent processes, metrics, and goals for data-driven decision-making.

■ **Sustainable:** Implement solutions that serve current and future needs by considering the entire lifecycle of solutions.

■ **Interdependent:** Apply risk-based approaches that account for the complexity and interdependencies of systems, prioritizing solutions and investments that address a range of objectives and reduce risks over the long-term.

FEMA has been working on this guidance with the whole community and we have been asking our stakeholder groups to provide feedback and input. As an IAEM participant, you will have the opportunity to help us shape the guidance. During our interactive session, we will present the concepts described in the new guidance and ask participants to provide feedback on these concepts through their stories of innovative resilience work and partnerships, alignment with resilience principles, and if the guidance reflects challenges they face in their daily work and provides value to it.

Thanks for joining us on this journey. Can't wait to see you at the conference! ◆

Source:

1. NOAA National Centers for Environmental Information (NCEI) [U.S. Billion-Dollar Weather and Climate Disasters](#) (2023)

Black Swans, Grey Rhinos, & Dragon Kings: How We Might Consider The Next Great Challenges for Emergency Management

By Christopher Godley, CEM, Director of Emergency Management, Stanford University

The author will be speaking as part of the IAEM 71st Annual Conference on Nov. 6 at 2:15 p.m.

The world is clearly changing—as it always has. In recent years, emergency managers have been significantly challenged by the number, variety, and scope of disasters. As individuals, each of us has our own view or lens for how we see and think about the world—this is called a paradigm or worldview. I suggest that the way we view risk in the world shapes our actions as emergency managers and may ultimately determine just how successful we are in safeguarding that world. Emergency managers must become more adept at perceiving if we are to truly remain effective at protecting.

Introduction

In one period of 36 hours in Oct. 2019, the County of Sonoma, California was confronted with what was originally thought to be an active shooter incident, a major public safety power (electrical system) shutoff, and the ignition of a wildfire that would ultimately result in one of the largest evacuations in California history. While driving back from the wildfire Incident Command Post, I thought to myself this seems both extraordinary and at the same time, par for the course. I had to consider that my training and experience were no longer as relevant and that I was missing something critical.

One Current Paradigm

Most of us are familiar with thinking about risk as a combination of probability and potential impact

or severity—often represented as a four-quadrant chart. Pick a disaster and it falls into an area of low, medium, or high risk. An earthquake may be a low probability/high impact incident whereas a structure fire may generally be thought of as high probability/low impact. While driving back from that 2019 wildfire, this is the model or paradigm I had in my head – but it just seemed to no longer encompass the complexity of novel, dynamic, and overlapping incidents.

An Alternate Potential Paradigm for Emergency Managers

Let's look at another model or framework that may be more helpful in identifying not only which potential disasters deserve attention but also shift how we think about developing resilience for them. I suggest making use of several new concepts developed in the last twenty years predominantly in the field of economics - the "Gray Rhino", Black Swan", and "Dragon King."

Gray Rhino

A "gray rhino" is a dangerous, highly probable, and understood (but ignored) threat. Gray rhinos are not random surprises but occur after a series of warnings and visible evidence. Hurricane Katrina and the 2007 Minnesota Bridge Collapse are examples.



Black Swan



Conceptualized and made popular by the author Nassim Taleb, a "black swan" describes a significant event that surprises everyone when it occurs.

A Black Swan event has three characteristics:

1. It is an outlier – basically, outside

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Black Swans, Grey Rhinos

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the realm of regular expectations, because nothing in the past could convincingly point to its possibility. Not just rare or wild – it seems to be impossible.

2. It carries an extreme impact.
3. We can work to rationalize how this came to be – but only afterward.

Examples of black swans include 9/11, massive earthquakes, financial crises, and wars.

In science, there are two common ways to look at how frequently events occur: the Gaussian Normal Distribution – this is the famous bell curve – and the Power Law which is an extension of Mandelbrot’s Fractal Geometry.

In comparing the two, the normal distribution is a good model for values of tangible/physical things (e.g., height, weight, life span, or IQ). Whereas the Power Law gives us a better picture of earthquakes, financial crises, daily stock market returns, identity theft losses, and wars.

The key in the Power Law is the “long and fat tail” – this shows that there are a much greater number of extreme events at the far edge of occurrence than what the bell curve would predict. This means in our world of disasters, there would be far more extreme disaster events than we might expect.

Dragon King

The term “Dragon King” refers to an event that is extremely large or has an outsized impact and is statistically an outlier. A Dragon King may arise at a tipping point in an unstable system or from positive feedback like a cattle stampede.

These lie even outside the Power Law distribution an example is 1979 Three Mile Island nuclear accident.



Conclusion

A key question for emergency managers is—how do we think about the future and potential disasters? Should we look past traditional risk measures and embrace the uncertainty of a new paradigm? If so, a few suggestions on how to proceed:

- Continue to prepare for the Gray Rhinos – what we know is coming. With the intersection of an aging population, brittle infrastructure, and climate change the herd of rhinos seems to be growing.

- But we will also need to dedicate time and resources to prepare for the Black Swans i.e. expect the unexpected. We will need to lead efforts to build capacity and capabilities to meet unforeseen challenges – including those that seem improbable or even impossible.

- Emergency managers need to stop being shocked. If we expect the unexpected, our personal outlook will inform our programs and influence our communities.

In the jungle of the future, we will need to spot the rhinos before they get too close, always be ready for the black swans and all the while being on guard for the dragon kings.

Attendees at this presentation will understand and be able to explain the paradigm that defines potential disasters as highly improbable/difficult to predict, obvious but ignored, or “impossible”. They will also be able to consider the potential likelihood, scope of impact, and challenges of extreme disasters considered likely to occur before 2050. ♦

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It's The New Normal

By Julie Frasco, Executive Director, Frasco and Associates LLC

The author will be speaking as part of the IAEM 71st Annual Conference on Nov. 6 at 11:00 a.m.

Days away from the 2023 fall solstice, this time of reflection sees many worldwide suffering deeply from the extraordinary socio-economic impacts resulting from weather events. Extreme weather seems to be occurring weekly, if not monthly. The term extreme is losing its impact due to the severity, frequency, and intensity of 1-100 and 1-1000 storms occurring multiple times in just these past eight months of 2023.

Unless you are personally or vicariously living through the disaster du jour, the natural human tendency to deny and avoid the occurrence of these events remains the preferred antidote. It's still much more palatable to scroll past the tragedy unfolding in real time or turn the tv channel than face the dawning reality that a relentless onslaught of supercharged storms and destruction caused by rapid climate change is the new weather normal. For the data fans, the statistics are there; the likelihood of personally experiencing and having to recover from a mass disaster is very real.

Just one year ago, the *Washington Post* analyzed federal disaster declarations following the destructive summer of 2021 and identified that one in three Americans live in a county hit by a weather disaster¹. We know that the devastation that has struck this year exceeds both the severity and intensity of the storms that this report analyzed and yet it still seems those fortunate few who have not been directly or vicariously impacted remain detached from this reality. Why? Because it's scary; and for some, debilitating to consider and plan for life-changing disruption.

However, it is our job as emergency managers, business continuity

planners, and crisis communicators to lead people, vendors, and communities through their fear and mental paralysis to action. Actions that we need to aid our response efforts and preparedness activities.

On day one of the 2023 IAEM conference, I will demonstrate how to create and deliver the critical message: Extreme weather events and their impacts are normal. During the discussion and demonstration you will learn how to articulate a path forward as an EM professional in your community, city, association, and society. We are living in an era where these intense, extreme events are the new normal and we can help ourselves and our communities manage this reality if we can articulate that extreme weather is expected now and communicate a path forward. I believe we can do this by framing our planning and messaging around three concepts: Adapting, Adopting, and Adjusting.

In short, we are already adapting to living with the impact and consequences of extreme weather through personal and municipal mitigation efforts and other preparedness actions. It's the adopting phase where many jurisdictions locally to internationally find themselves. That period is where the rules, procedures, policies, practices, and standards must be drafted, approved, implemented, and measured - in coordination with neighboring actors and or within scales of social and economic structure. The impact on homeowner insurance policy rates is also an example of this phase.

Adjusting occurs after the legal and economic frameworks have been codified, legal challenges are resolved, and ongoing mitigation

efforts are funded. Adjusting, in this theory, is the phase when we need to truly socialize normative changes created by the new normal. Helping society, businesses, and communities adjust to the psychological changes extreme weather will have on social life such as holiday celebrations, harvest seasons, shipping routes, mining, and traveling seasons for instance will be a priority to communicate. Leaders across all industries, emergency managers, business continuity, and public affairs professionals will need to have a strong message at the ready to help move their teams and stakeholders forward during these uncertain times.

In our brief hour, we will not only craft this takeaway message together for you to use immediately, but you will also gain a high-level overview of the academic and scientific research that developed and informed these communication strategies. I have spent the last 20+ years as a crisis and emergency risk communicator, emergency manager, and business continuity practitioner developing this concept and now is the time to put it into practice.

Join me as we rapidly apply this framework for organizing critical and difficult information into effective messaging that explains to your team and stakeholders how we are already adapting to rapid, seismic change and progressing toward adjustment. Let's move people through fear to positive action. ◆

Source

¹ Sarah Kaplan, Andrew Ba Tran, September 4, 2021, NEARLY 1 IN 3 AMERICANS EXPERIENCED A WEATHER DISASTER THIS SUMMER, The Washington Post, washingtonpost.com

Meeting People Where They Are: How FEMA is Driving Inclusive and Equitable Community Engagement to Bolster Community Resilience and Preparedness

By Justin Ángel Knighten, Director, FEMA Office of External Affairs; Marcus T. Coleman, Jr., Director, DHS Center for Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships

The authors will be speaking as part of the IAEM 71st Annual Conference on Nov. 8 at 11:00 a.m.

Community engagement is at the core of our work in emergency management. It is not possible to do this work without strong relationships with community-based organizations and partners. As we see disasters escalating in severity due to climate change, we are witnessing the disproportionate impact they are having on vulnerable and underserved communities. That is why it is so vital that we are equitable and inclusive in how we engage with people. In other words, we need to meet people where they are.

FEMA spent the month of June sitting with LGBTQ+ communities across the country, from Puerto Rico to St. Louis to Oakland. Recent reports¹ and research highlight the impacts of disasters on LGBTQ+ people, emphasizing that the unique needs of this community must be understood and considered in emergency planning. We knew we needed to build trust to truly understand the needs of this community before, during, and after disasters². Through a series of roundtable conversations, we paired FEMA employees with community-based organizations that support the LGBTQ+ community and local government partners. Together, we committed to listen and learn.

We know showing up and asking, “what do you need?” is not an effective strategy, especially for communities that have often been left out or who harbor mistrust of the government. Yet, often, it is difficult to know where to start, how to build relationships with partners,

and how to handle these conversations.

Earlier this year, FEMA released a new *Guide to Community Engagement* to support the workforce in implementing the goals of the *FEMA 2022–2026 Strategic Plan*, including Goal 1: Instill equity as a foundation of emergency management. This guide demonstrates the importance of community-based partnerships in inclusive outreach. It gives FEMA employees tools, strategies, and resources to ensure community engagement activities bring the right people to the table, that engagements are inclusive, demonstrate cultural humility, and deepen existing relationships or foster new ones.

Equitable and inclusive community engagement is vital, but achieving it is not always easy. FEMA staff leveraged the *Guide to Community Engagement* for this summer’s roundtable conversations, following its recommendations and tools from the planning phase through the finish, including:

- Identifying trusted partners and community-based organizations to invite.
- Developing invitation language that was inclusive and culturally competent.
- Creating a program agenda to discover barriers LGBTQ+ individuals face and learn about community strengths and resources.
- Planning post-roundtable follow-up to demonstrate our commitment to ongoing support and engagement.

Learning about a community is essential in establishing trust and developing relationships with community-based organizations, partners, and stakeholders. Increasing understanding about a community before engaging is a sign of respect and an acknowledgment that the community is not solely responsible for educating others about their needs. While planning these roundtable conversations, we used the community assessment guide, a tool in the *Guide to Community Engagement*, to learn about the LGBTQ+ community—including demographics, resources, history, and the impact of current events. Using this tool, we began to understand barriers to disaster preparedness and response LGBTQ+ individuals experience. Knowing this ahead of time increased our learning during the roundtables. Below are a few examples of community background and data and what we learned from engaging directly with partners and community representatives.

■ **Safety.** LGBTQ+ people are nine times more likely than non-LGBTQ+ people to be victims of violent hate crimes.³ Attendees of the roundtables shared how traditionally queer spaces are often targets of violence. Following instances of violence or threats, these spaces can be used to have conversations about safety, bringing law enforcement and community members together to discuss safety concerns and develop safety plans.

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Making Waves in the Desert

By Michelle Seitz, BSEM, MSHSM, Emergency Manager City of Tempe, Tempe Fire Medical Rescue Department; Andrea Glass, Assistant Fire Chief, Tempe Fire Medical Rescue Department

The authors will be speaking as part of the IAEM 71st Annual Conference on Nov. 7 at 1:30 p.m.

As I began to research this year's IAEM conference theme, "Turning the Tide," I encountered various interpretations of the phrase. If I were turning the tide I could change a process, shift momentum, or simply transform. Turning the tide is also compared to the "moment of truth," "point of no return" and the crux of "when push comes to shove." But what could all this mean for emergency management? As Debbie Harry from Blondie tells us, when the tide is high, we must hold on. From an emergency management perspective, a high tide could mean disaster. When the disaster clears and the tide resides, we gather what's left. We collect the lessons learned from all aspects of the incident, much like the remnants found in the isolated pockets of a tide pool, and move forward in hopes that we are better prepared for coming waves.

Only, what if we don't have to wait until the tide is high and disaster strikes to understand what will occur in real-life disasters? If we conduct candid conversations with our first responders in the field regarding response to smaller incidents, we can better predict what will realistically occur if a large-scale disaster strikes tomorrow. We can comprehend current staffing levels, resource availability, and response timelines. These details cannot be found in a plan on a shelf. They are garnered from simple conversations and the building of trust. We call this, reality planning.

Arizona has built a collaborative specifically focused on regional response capabilities, which is referred to as the Mass Casualty Tracking Reunification Arizona Col-

laborative (MCTRAC). Our regional approach to mass casualty incident (MCI) response, victim tracking, and reunification focuses on principles that are simple, realistic, feasible, interoperable, and cost-effective solutions. These solutions stem the tide and build community resilience and strength.

We don't have to go far to see the need for a collaborative regional response to a large-scale MCI as all too often we find ourselves in a recurrent sea of tragic headlines. In Arizona, we have been very purposeful and strategic in our approach to collectively develop our comprehensive concept from the ground up. At first, we bring our critical partners to the table individually, providing them with the opportunity to speak frankly, voice concerns, and provide feedback. As we move forward with the larger collaborative, we continue to listen and adjust our concept based on the current response capabilities of our partners. We cannot fully prepare if we are not aware and directly receptive to the shifting capacities of our critical partners.

We have developed a strong framework to serve as the anchor to our concept. Our concept:

- Underscores the importance of life safety.
- Capitalizes on the use of existing resources.
- Relies on collaborative capabilities, not on a specific system.
- Provides additional resources and support to existing systems.
- Is scalable and adaptable concept for all disasters or MCIs.

We are truly turning the tide in the multidisciplinary MCI response, victim tracking, and reunification

operative as the concept is initiated at the forefront of the MCI through:

- Early notification of critical partners.
- Immediate dispatch of fire, EMS, and law enforcement assets to hospitals—treating hospitals as an extension of the MCI—with capabilities for rapid infusion of additional resources as needed.
- Prompt establishment of the victim reunification process.
- Innovative use of drones.
- Enhanced use of emergency managers in roles for which they are equipped and qualified.
- Cost-effective, image-driven, HIPAA-compliant victim tracking technology that can be used with Just-In-Time (JIT) training.
- Investigative technology to expedite witness information collection.
- Evacuation technology to improve recovery needs for victims of disaster.
- Fatality management force multipliers (crime lab partnerships) and accelerated communications.
- Victim Coordination Unit training for reunification, fatality disclosures, and more.
- Rapid resource allocation for critical needs in rural regions via air operations.

If we plan collectively and strategically, we can think of new and inventive ways to support our first responders in the field. This works two-fold; it improves our response capability and increases the survivability of our victims. In pre-planning for large-scale MCIs, individual agencies inordinately fixate on what they do not have, and what they are lacking. Individual agencies do

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Meeting People Where They Are

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■ **Shelters.** The United States Transgender Survey found that seven in 10 transgender people who had accessed a shelter the previous year were kicked out for being transgender, physically or sexually assaulted, or faced another form of mistreatment because of their gender identity.⁴ Many in the LGBTQ+ community face barriers when accessing shelters following a disaster. However, we gained additional insight into identification barriers some LGBTQ+ persons face when their name does not match legal documents.

■ **Distrust.** The LGBTQ+ population has a significant lack of trust in emergency responders and health-care systems that have discriminated against them.⁵ Community roundtables taught us that identifying trusted messengers and allies is essential in reaching LGBTQ+ community members. Trusted messengers can act as force multipliers to share messages or can create safe spaces to bring the community together and invite government agencies to listen, learn, and identify ways to support.

This is just one example of how FEMA's *Guide to Community Engagement* supports equitable and inclusive engagements in communities, and there are many more! In May, we brought together local government social services agencies and nonprofits in the City of Chicago and surrounding counties to understand the impacts of extreme heat events in vulnerable communities. What we learned informed FEMA's first agency-wide Extreme Heat Summit, ensuring we kept top of mind the people we serve as we reviewed policies and programs to tackle the climate crisis. We also took what we learned and tailored our tools and messaging for the

[#SummerReady](#) preparedness campaign. In July, we hosted a national summit with experts, community partners, and federal agencies to listen and learn about the barriers older adults and their caregivers face in preparing for disasters. We learned that older adults are resilient and an asset to their communities and how to make our preparedness messaging more inclusive and actionable. Our new understanding then informed National Preparedness Month messaging, including a new resource, [Disaster Preparedness Guide for Older Adults](#). This engagement with older adult communities builds on past Ready campaigns where we developed culturally competent preparedness messaging and resources for [Latino](#) and [Black and African American](#) communities. Listening to and learning from diverse voices and experiences leads to more innovative ideas, informed decisions, greater public support, and equitable outcomes.

The guide serves as a tool for engagement and improving outcomes from disasters for all. It can be used to improve communications in underserved communities and develop best practices around bringing all voices into the important work of emergency management and community engagement. ◆

Sources

1. [Inclusive and Equitable Emergency Management for LBGTQIA+ Communities](#)
2. Prior to the June community roundtables, two webinars were hosted to understand better [preparedness, mitigation, response, and recovery considerations](#) in LGBTQ+ communities
3. [UCLA School of Law Williams Institute: LGBT people nine times more likely than non-LGBT people to be victims of violent hate crimes](#)
4. [Wiley Online Library: Queer and Present Danger: Understanding the Disparate Impacts of Disasters on LGBTQ+ Communities](#)
5. [Center for Disaster Philanthropy: LGBTQ+ Communities and Disasters](#)

Making Waves in the Desert

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not respond alone. When agencies focus on individual gaps, they fail to recognize the extensive resources and capabilities embodied across the consolidated team. Our concept collectively considers the totality of assets across all agencies. If a need is identified, we join forces to establish an effective and efficient way to secure alternative means to ensure a successful outcome.

The MCTRAC concept is not a standardized version of a response plan, instead, it can be tailored to conform to each jurisdiction's capabilities and needs. Unlike a standard plan, our concept is a living document, a continual work in progress. As a collaborative, we embrace our interdependency. We understand that our ability to effectively respond to the needs of our community relies heavily on our capacity to work together. We all share the same waters, as we ebb and flow with the rise and fall of the tides. As William James once said, "We are like islands in the sea, separate on the surface but connected on the deep." As we continue to embrace our collective concept, we are building a more resilient community. The State of Arizona may not have an ocean, but that hasn't stopped us from making waves in the desert. ◆



A Discussion of School Sheltering and Dismissal Policies for High Impact Weather Events

By Chris Darden, Meteorologist in Charge, NWS Birmingham; Chris Tate, Emergency Management Officer, Jefferson County (AL) EMA

The authors will be speaking as part of the IAEM 71st Annual Conference on Nov. 6 at 11:00 a.m.

Severe weather is an unfortunate way of life in Alabama. Although tornadoes are possible every month of the year, a distinct peak is noted from November through May. This period sees a significant overlap with the traditional school calendar and often results in a complex challenge for decision-makers. These challenges include whether to cancel schools/activities, early dismissals, or hold students over when the weather is ongoing. School administrators must consider variables on liability, not only for the students, faculty, and staff at the school, but also for parents and visitors on the school campus (consider after-school activities as well!). They must determine whether they'll have sufficient time for buses to complete their routes, including getting the driver back to the bus yard, before severe weather arrives. Unfortunately, many school systems don't realize the incredible number of resources and partners all around them who have the same mission and passion to keep these kids safe; and it takes one incident to drive that point home.

A "sea change" was noted in this decision-making model after the deadly Enterprise Tornado on Mar. 1, 2007. Schools were in session when an EF-4 tornado struck Enterprise High School killing 8 students. Passionate exchanges of thought and concern were had in the weeks, months, and years since on whether the district should have let the kids stay home or not. Elected officials grappled with legislative options that might help schools keep kids



Photo from inside Enterprise High School in Alabama after the March 1, 2007, tornado. This is where many of the eight children were killed when the walls and roof collapsed. Photo Credit: Dothan-Houston County (AL) EMA

safer. But these options have costs: political, financial, and human.

Since that awful day in 2007, a more proactive and perhaps risk-averse increase in school closures has been noted, despite the requirement that all new public school construction and many renovated after 2012 in Alabama include FEMA-rated storm shelters. While perhaps a noble endeavor, these decisions have socioeconomic and structural pitfalls. Although schools may dismiss early or cancel, the parent's employer may not follow suit. As such, the child will be sent to a home that is potentially less fortified, without supervision, and will likely not be attuned to the severe weather threat. If you are reading this article, chances are your

children are much better equipped to stay informed and safe during a severe weather incident when they are home alone. But what about the rest of the population?

Alabama has one of the highest concentrations of manufactured homes in the country with 16% of the population living in them – with a significantly higher percentage in rural communities. Manufactured homes and mobile homes are ideal living spaces for a large percentage of the country's population. They are relatively inexpensive compared to most stick-built homes and are readily available. Many newer models meet the HUD environ-

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School Sheltering

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mental impact standards, making them energy efficient. They are also good alternatives for college students who want to live off campus and have their own space. Alternatively, manufactured homes are often owned or rented by some of our most vulnerable populations: single-parent households, minorities including our African American and Hispanic populations, poverty-stricken, unemployed, food-insecure, etc. This typically translates into a large population who have fewer resources to stay prepared, an inability to relocate before severe weather impacts their location and landlords and installers who do not properly anchor homes to the ground because they can get away with such negligent acts. Studies show that you are up to 20 times more likely to perish in a tornado in a manufactured home than in a site-built home (Strader & Ashley, 2018). So, if your population resembles ours, it begs the question: Are the kids safer at home or school?

The presentation to be given at the upcoming IAEM Conference will highlight recent lessons learned in impact messaging and lifesaving school sheltering during a tornado outbreak to Turn the Tide of how we partner with our schools and public safety organizations to keep our kids, faculty, and staff safer and better informed during severe weather outbreaks. To be discussed are ongoing efforts between NWS BMX, EMA, first responder agencies, and school districts to conduct severe weather shelter analyses for schools. We will look at the resources available to us all as we try to identify the safest locations to shelter given the situation (age of the building, construction type,



Remnants of a MH after the 2019 Lee County, Alabama tornado that killed 23 people. The living space no longer exists, and the steel frame has been wrapped around a pole. Photo Credit: WBRC Fox 6

population of the school, etc.). We will then discuss how emergency plans are developed in Alabama schools, who reviews them and how they are reviewed, and ways we can improve the planning. Lastly, we will discuss how establishing real-time collaboration with the school's decision-making process helps to reduce confusion and develop more appropriate responses to critical incidents. We hope to invigorate a larger community conversation about adverse weather policies in our schools. We also hope to broaden the discussion on becoming better partners with our school systems, including public, charter, and private schools, to help them improve their emergency plans and make collaborative, evidence-based sheltering recommendations. ◆

Source:

Strader, S. M., & Ashley, W. S. (2018). Finescale Assessment of Mobile Home Tornado Vulnerability in the Central and Southeast United States. *Weather, Climate, and Society*, 10(4), 797-812. <https://doi.org/10.1174WCAS-D-18.0060.1>

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Preparing for Medical Surge from a Distant Radiological Disaster

By Cullen Case Jr. CBCP, CEM, MPA, Program Director, Radiation Injury Treatment Network

The author will be speaking as part of the IAEM 71st Annual Conference on Nov. 6 at 2:15 p.m.

Many communities have well-exercised plans for local disasters. However, few have invested significant resources in planning for how a distant incident would impact their community. History has shown that there is value in preparing for such incidents; from the displacement of people resulting from Hurricane Katrina to the more recent Afghanistan evacuees. Each of these resulted in a surge of evacuees in the receiving communities and in just about all cases it was a no-notice incident to those communities as they began planning for the influx of people. In these instances, there was not a significant medical surge that accompanied the people that were displaced; following a radiological disaster there will be waves of displaced people who are healthy as well as waves of medical surge ranging from patients with traumatic injuries to those later with only acute radiation syndrome. Communities will need to plan for reception, medical triage, placement into a shelter/housing, as well as follow-up for all categories of people that descend upon them.

Most people roll their eyes when I begin talking about radiological or nuclear disaster preparedness; either because they feel that it is unlikely that there will be a detonation of an improvised nuclear device in the United States or because they think that if there is a nuclear detonation that all hope is lost as everything will be overwhelmed. The original 2005 version of the National Planning Scenarios included 15 scenarios to plan for including an improvised nuclear device detonated in the United

States. Among the other scenarios, many have occurred over the past 18 years (e.g., pandemic, nerve agent, earthquake, hurricane, etc.). Of note is that an improvised nuclear device detonation would not be hopeless, and it is not completely unlikely. With a quick internet search, one can find reports of the many threats from foreign governments and many attempts by terrorist organizations to acquire the materials. Most recently the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (a.k.a. North Korea) launched over 90 missiles in 2022 to test their nuclear warhead deployment vehicle; as well as Russia's President directly threatened nuclear war in response to the international community's response to Russia's invasion of the Ukraine.

This doesn't mean that every community needs to have a well-oiled plan for the possibility of a nuclear detonation in their city, although many larger metropolitan areas should have a plan (and most do). That said, it would behoove all communities to invest in planning for the medical surge from a distant metropolitan city that is attacked.

Since 2006 the Radiation Injury Treatment Network (RITN) has developed many resources to assist in preparing for a distant rad/nuke incident. The 77 hospitals that participate in RITN are preparing for the casualties with acute radiation syndrome as they require specialized medical care. Along the journey since 2006 we have learned some lessons that we would like to pass along to the preparedness community that will be shared in this session at IAEM in Long Beach.

We will discuss the basics of radiation so everyone has the same baseline then dive into one of the National Planning Scenarios that would result in a radiological disaster. From that, we will cover a few medical considerations from the surge of patients and finally review resources so that participants can build off the quality work that has already been done in this space; ranging from exercise materials to a few apps that can be downloaded in advance of a disaster, some online training resources, to planning and response resources. Finally, there will be resources for the participants to use later.

It is my hope that you will walk away from this session having considered this particular scenario in a new light and that you will have your eyes opened to the benefit of planning for the impact of a distant incident that may not have crossed your mind before. No one can prepare for everything and this is no different. That is why at the start of this short article I noted a few disasters that had a similar effect that could be incorporated so that the time and effort invested is beneficial for multiple disasters. It may not be an all-hazards appendix to your base plan, but at least it would be an easier sell to your partners as you work on the plan to be prepared for multiple possible distant disasters that could result in an influx of people/evacuees as well as medical surge. ♦

Quake Heroes: Chronicles, Stories, and the Lessons of the 1994 Northridge Earthquake

By Mark Benthien, Executive Producer, Quake Heroes; Director for Communication, Education and Outreach for SCEC, University of Southern California; Mark Romano, Director and Producer, Quake Heroes; President, RomaScope; Victoria Romano, Director of Sales & Outreach, Quake Heroes; CEO, RomaScope

The authors will be presenting as part of the IAEM 71st Annual Conference on Nov. 6 at 8:00 p.m.

It can be challenging to convince people to prepare for a disaster, especially when they don't know when it will happen! However, we know that simple actions the public can take now will make a difference during and after disasters: learning basic first aid, storing extra food and water, having a fire extinguisher, holding safety drills, and (for earthquakes) securing objects so they won't fall and cause injury. But how do we effectively motivate preparedness actions? For our team, we started by looking into social science research that studied this question. We found that there are a few core principles for "communicating actionable risk" (Wood, 2012):

- Information needs to be accurate and received by multiple different sources, conveying a consistent message.
- This information needs to not

only be "received" but also "observed" (e.g., not only being told preparedness is helpful but also seeing others take action and benefiting from it "social cues").

- Information needs to be conveyed by sources that the individual can identify and empathize with.
- Emotional engagement leads to more effective retention of information and motivating action.

Talking with friends and family about what an individual has learned (known as "milling") affirms that an individual should adopt this new behavior.

To put these social science



Quake Heroes is screened at a large public event to motivate earthquake safety actions.

principles into practice, the Southern California Earthquake Center, headquartered at the University of Southern California (USC), partnered with graduates of USC's School of Cinematic Arts to create an innovative movie that combines earthquake knowledge, social science guidance, and cinematic approaches.

Unlike instructional safety videos, "Hollywood" style movies not only convey a clear message, but show a protagonist overcoming challenges and learning lessons, with a diverse cast of characters that the audience can empathize with and be emotionally engaged with. People talk to their friends and families about such movies, and we believed



Ana is a confident and qualified nurse, but she is rattled when the circumstances following the earthquake seem to prevent her from being able to protect her daughter and others.

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Quake Heroes

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the combination of science and cinema would be an effective way to motivate preparedness actions.

The result has exceeded our expectations! Set against the backdrop of the 1994 Northridge Earthquake, the 55-minute *Quake Heroes* film follows the incredible true stories of diverse individuals, each with their own unique story of bravery. They include Mike Kubeisy, a photographer who rescues his neighbors and finds love amidst the rubble; Ana Zamora, a nurse who battles the odds to save patients in a flooded hospital; Joe Rico, a news reporter who is first on air after the earthquake and continues all day while communicating with his family over the airwaves; and Buffy Grenier-Fitch, a counselor who aids her neighbors in their hour of need, reminding us not only of the importance of community and the bonds that tie us together, but also what will be needed when the next large quake hits.

This is why we are encouraging community groups, schools, government agencies, businesses, etc. to plan *Quake Heroes Expos*; each will begin with a screening of the film and be followed immediately by a “Seven Steps to Earthquake Safety” information and preparedness fair with booths for each step including safety training class sign-ups, an earthquake simulator, vendors selling safety straps, kid-friendly activities, and more. Having these options available, while attendees are emotionally engaged and motivated after viewing the film, has been very effective.

In August, we concluded our testing phase and began efforts for the rollout of many *Quake Heroes Expos* in 2024 as a cornerstone of the Northridge Earthquake 30th Anniversary campaign being organized by SCEC and its many partners. The Cal-



Rey is an EMT who crawls into a collapsed parking structure to care for an individual who is pinned under a fallen pillar. The eight-hour rescue is punctuated by frequent aftershocks.



Mike thinks he needs to work faster and harder to save his neighbors after the earthquake strikes, but what he really needs to do is slow down and act carefully.

ifornia Office of Emergency Services is providing support for several free Expos for underserved communities across Southern California, however, we are seeking many other venues to share the film and motivate action!

We are excited to share the *Quake Heroes* film with the IAEM community in Long Beach this year on Monday evening, Nov. 6! The film and the Expos are tools for not only motivating preparedness actions for earthquakes, but also for emergency managers to engage their communities. In addition, the overall concept is ready to adapt for a variety of

hazards, including hurricanes, wildfires, terrorism, etc. We hope you can attend our screening and Q&A at this year’s IAEM annual conference to learn how a similar project could amplify your message and inspire action in your community. ♦

Source:

Wood, M. M., Mileti, D. S., Kano, M., Kelley, M. M., Regan, R., & Bourque, L. B. (2012). Communicating actionable risk for terrorism and other hazards. *Risk analysis: an official publication of the Society for Risk Analysis*, 32(4), 601–615. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1539-6924.2011.01645.x>

EM Calendar

Visit www.iaem.org/calendar for details on these and other events.

Oct. 18	Expanding your Conference Experience: Getting the Most out of the IAEM Annual Conference
Oct. 19	PSPR2 Seminar: Post Incident Scams and Fraud
Oct. 19-21	Emergency Disaster Reduction and Rescue Expo Jakarta International Expo, Jakarta, Indonesia
Nov. 1-2	2023 National Summit on K-12 School Safety and Security
Nov. 3-9	IAEM Annual Conference Long Beach, California
Nov. 16	PSPR2 Seminar: Civil and Criminal Judicial Processes
Dec. 5-7	2023 EPA International Decontamination Research & Development Conference Charleston, South Carolina



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New IAEM Members: Aug. 16- Sept. 15, 2023

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New Member Listing[continued from page 30](#)

— — — — —
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