Alexander Falcone, Emergency Manager, City of Coral Springs, FL

COMPETITIVE DIVISION - PRACTITIONER

Back to Basics: Establishing a Municipal Emergency Management Program

Emergency Management is continually growing as a distinct profession resulting in growth of the field both domestically and abroad. Emergency management positions are being created at all levels of government and across private industry. A key component of this has been the recent professionalization and expansion of emergency management agencies at the local level. This report goes "Back to Basics" analyzing the establishment of an emergency management program at the municipal level and through the identification of six core elements essential to program development.

These core elements include: Planning, Emergency Alert and Warning, Hazard Mitigation, Public Information, Incident Stabilization and Human Services.

Agencies interested in establishing an emergency management program, or revising a current position should consult these identified core elements to ensure their program is operating effectively, efficiently and strategically. As programs develop outside the traditional realm of emergency services, dedication to these elements become more important. As a distinct profession, emergency management can provide a level of professional administration to complex incidents of varying severity. Focus on these core areas improves the service offered, lends validity to the provided services, and improves the overall return on investment for the program as a whole.

It is because of these reasons that the author recommends that any agency looking to form or revise an emergency management program, consult, and include these six core elements into their program.