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Damage Assessment: Building and Sustaining a Viable Capability at the Local Level

In the immediate aftermath of disasters, local emergency managers are often under significant pressure to conduct damage assessments to identify critical needs throughout the community, generate cost estimates, determine the severity of damages, and provide critical information to elected officials so they can determine whether to issue emergency and/or disaster declarations. As such, local emergency managers should consider the development of local damage assessment programs by 1) engaging all relevant jurisdictional partners with multidisciplinary skillsets; 2) providing routine training opportunities on the latest national standards; 3) investing in and implementing web-based damage assessment software programs that are compatible with tablet devices; 4) acquiring and maintaining a fleet of standardized damage assessment 'go-kits' filled with tools and supplies, and 5) partnering with state emergency management agencies to ensure software interoperability from the local level to the state level. By utilizing this approach, emergency managers will increase their damage assessment capabilities which will better serve their jurisdictions.

Presentation Theme: Local emergency managers can create effective and efficient damage assessment programs by developing multidisciplinary

teams, providing consistent training opportunities, utilizing damage assessment software programs, maintaining adequate supplies in mobile containers, and integrating with state emergency management agencies.

Collaborators, Advisor(s) and Department(s) that assisted with this research: No other collaborators.