

SEVERE WEATHER AND HURRICANE PREPAREDNESS CONSIDERATIONS FOR MUNICIPALITIES

As Connecticut enters the time of year when we are most likely to experience a hurricane or similar tropical storm, with potential flooding, storm surge, wind damage, and power outages, state agencies, local communities, tribal nations, and the private sector have all been working to enhance our readiness and capabilities. The following recommendations are provided to help guide municipalities as they perform key preparedness activities:

- Meet with the local Unified Command team (including Police, Fire, Emergency Management, EMS, Public Works, Social Services and functional needs organizations, etc...) to review your local emergency operations plan (LEOP). The LEOP template contains 4 Emergency Phase Checklists to address preparation, response, recovery and mitigation actions. These checklists are located on page 88 of the LEOP Template under the heading GO Documents: Emergency Phase Checklists.
- Review procedures for opening, staffing and equipping your local Emergency Operations Center. Review response, communications, and coordination procedures. Test equipment, including back-up communications systems for local responders, with regional and state partners. Make sure that staff has refreshed their training on the use of Web EOC.
- Review the Local EMD/Municipal Officials Handbook (an updated version will be released shortly) which contains easy-to-follow checklists and a quick reference guide for local CEOs and EMDs.
- Review evacuation protocols for residential areas and critical infrastructure in areas in town that are susceptible to flooding or storm surge; coastal towns review storm surge (SLOSH) maps and make sure residents and visitors in flood-prone areas are aware of that fact and know their evacuation routes. The SLOSH maps are also available on the DEMHS website ([Click Here for Shoreline Evacuation Maps](#)).
- Communicate with residents and visitors about basic preparations, and review procedures and methods for communicating with them before an event, as well as back-up methods for communicating after a storm event if communications systems are disrupted. Test the systems. Some towns use town employees or officials to assist with this. Make sure you are able to communicate with diverse communities and those with functional needs.
 - Reinforce the message to local residents to MAKE A PLAN for their families and businesses; GET A KIT (with basic supplies such as food, water, and medications to be on their own for at least 3 days); [STAY INFORMED](#), including having sufficient batteries and charging capabilities in order to be aware of warnings and possible evacuation notices, and; be ready to CHECK ON YOUR NEIGHBORS.

- Review and update as needed your critical points of contact, including Red Cross and other volunteer organizations, energy and other utility liaisons, key vendors, businesses, transportation and community/social service partners. Review procedures for mutual aid, including communications with mutual aid resources if they are operating in your community.
- Review procedures/authorities for declaring local states of emergency, disaster damage and costs assessments, as well as methods to collect damage information from residents.
- Review and confirm prioritization of power restoration and road clearing in the event that roads are rendered impassable by fallen trees and debris.
- Review locations, staffing and supply plans, existing equipment, and communication methods with local community shelters and volunteer organizations.
- Review local commodities points of distribution and staffing plan to run these locations, and consider how your community will sustain logistics for recovery following a major event.
- Confirm who will take on the role of long term recovery coordinator (for example, town planner or other official) to lead the community's long term recovery if needed.