

## What You Need To Know:

### -How to declare a State of Emergency

- Understand what your authorities & responsibilities are
- What your role in Command and Control is
- Be prepared to participate in decision-making and setting priorities

### *In a perfect world, you should:*

- Be familiar with Emergency Declaration Statutes pertaining to your jurisdiction
- Understand Incident Command System—ICS
- Have a town or municipal Emergency Plan
- Support Emergency Training & Exercise efforts and retain records
- Conduct exercises jointly with the county
- Know how to request assistance
- Review Plans and Ordinances frequently
- Work with PIO's to put out Unified messages to Public
- Have necessary MOU's and review annually

### *What is expected of you during a Disaster?*

- Provide Damage Information to Emergency Management's cell phone right away!

## Document, Document, Document!

- Coordinate with the Emergency Management Director/EOC Staff
- Consider issuing an emergency proclamation. This can help position your community to receive additional state & federal assistance
- Understand the incident objectives, provide visible leadership in EOC and help set policy
- Exercise sound reasonable judgment and make decisions with appreciation of legal considerations
- The public will need to be informed - Collaborate with PIO's for unified messages
- **Promote timely completion of Preliminary Damage Assessments—Individuals & Businesses**
- Tour damaged areas/meet impacted residents
- Develop a recovery plan and work with state and federal agencies to secure recovery funds
- Consider mitigation projects which could lessen or prevent future damage
- Work with the Long-Term Recovery Unit to address long-term needs for survivors
- Participate in "after action" reviews/critiques

## Document, Document, Document!



WHEN BAD THINGS HAPPEN TO  
SMALL TOWNS

THE ROLE OF ELECTED OFFICIALS IN  
DISASTER RESPONSE AND RECOVERY





# WHEN BAD THINGS HAPPEN TO SMALL TOWNS



## **When you least expect it...**

- A tornado hits your community
- A tanker truck carrying toxic chemicals jackknifes on the highway
- Flooding due to 6 inches of rain
- A severe ice storm shuts down transportation and power for several days
- A wild-land fire burns out of control forcing evacuations

## **Understand that:**

- Lives & properties will be destroyed!
- You won't know how bad it is for a while!
- You will make too many decisions with too little information!
- The first 12 hours will be chaotic and confusing!!!
- You will need help! **You will be in charge!**

## **During the first 12 hours of response:**

- You will rely on your emergency response professionals to:

**Protect lives and property**

**Conduct search and rescue**

**Open roads**

**Provide security**

**Transport injured**

**At "first daylight" you realize that:**

- Your community will be changed forever!
- You are physically and emotionally exhausted!
- The red lights and sirens are gone - now what?
- Residents and business owners have more questions than you have answers!
- Friends, relatives and media want access to your community!
- The long and difficult recovery has begun!

## **You face many difficult issues:**

### **Damage Assessment:**

-You will be asked for an estimate of the dollar amount of damages to public infrastructure, homes, businesses, personnel overtime and equipment costs - **all in the next 12 hours!**

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### **Perimeter Security:**

- Access to homes and businesses will be limited
- Pet and livestock rescue issues
- Utility restoration is in progress - is it safe to allow entry?
- The pressure to dismantle perimeter security will be immediate!

### **Public Information:**

- **Info needs to get out to the public ASAP!**
- Press releases, media interviews, tours of the damaged area, public meeting

### **Shelters & Mass Feeding:**

- Shelter Management Issues
- Special Needs Shelters

### **Debris Removal:**

- Remove yourself or hire a contractor?
- What/how do you dispose?
- Special concerns—contaminated materials

### **Volunteer Management:**

- Every single volunteer **MUST** be signed in and out! Failure to do so may cost you money and hold you liable!

### **Donations:**

- Tons of useful stuff will be donated!
- Financial donations