



STRUCTURE OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT IN IOWA

Local Emergency Management in Iowa is structured as a commission form of government. Emergency Management Commissions are created as countywide governing bodies in the Code of Iowa 29C. The Commissions are made up of the mayors of all the cities (or their designated representative), a member of the Board of Supervisors (or their designated representative), and the Sheriff (or their designated representative). The Commission establishes an agency to carry out the daily operations and hires a Coordinator to lead the agency.

MISSION

The mission of local emergency management is to serve the public through a four-part strategy: 1) creating and enhancing partnerships with local jurisdictions, the private sector, non-profit organizations, and citizens; 2) develop emergency plans, facilitate training, and conduct disaster exercises with other stakeholders; 3) coordinate emergency and disaster operations; and 4) facilitate community recovery operations and programs following the impact of natural or man-made disasters.

RESPONSIBILITIES

There are 11 specific responsibilities that local emergency management commissions are responsible for. They are: hazard analysis and risk assessment; resource management; planning; direction, control, and coordination; damage assessment; communication and warning; operations and procedures; training; exercises; public education and information; and agency administration. More detail on each of these core responsibilities can be found in Iowa Administrative Code, Section 605, Chapter 7.

OTHER IMPORTANT CONCEPTS

All disasters are local. They affect local citizens, property, economies, and environments. Therefore, it is the responsibility of local government, neighbors, and businesses large and small to prepare for and be capable of responding to disasters that occur in our communities. Local emergency management agencies work to bring stakeholders to the table to address risks and work proactively through planning, training, and exercises. They are there to coordinate the local response so that resources are put to their highest and best use. Local emergency management agencies are also there serving as the critical linkage to integrate cities and counties with the state and federal partners.

Local elected and key appointed officials play a vital role in this process. Critical decision making must take place under stressful situations. Working with the local emergency management agencies these decisions can be thought through before the disaster strikes in a less emotionally-intense environment. Expectations can be shared and resources identified outside of the fog created by a disaster.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Iowa Emergency Management Association: <http://www.iowaema.com>

Iowa Homeland Security and Emergency Management Division: <http://www.iowahomelandsecurity.org>

ABOUT THE IOWA EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATION

The Iowa Emergency Management Association is a professional society of Emergency Management Coordinators and others united for the purpose of mitigation, preparedness, response and recovery planning from the effects of man-made and natural hazards in order to assist in the preservation of life and protection of property for the citizens of the State. The Association is organized to perpetuate, protect and advance the interests of the profession and to serve the economic, educational, ethical and social needs of its members.