



STATE OF WISCONSIN \ DEPARTMENT OF MILITARY AFFAIRS  
WISCONSIN EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

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**Wisconsin Emergency Management**  
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**Components of Emergency Management are:**

- Mitigation – Mitigation efforts attempt to prevent hazards or reduce the effects of disasters when they occur.
- Preparedness- identifying hazards developing plans of action conducting training and exercises, securing supplies and recourses for when the disaster strikes.
- Response- The mobilization of the necessary emergency responders, recourses and volunteer agencies to when lives and property are at risk.
- Recovery - to restore the affected area to its previous state. Recovery efforts are primarily concerned with actions that involve rebuilding destroyed property, re-employment, and the repair of other essential infrastructure.

**Emergency Management Organization and Funding**

- Wisconsin Emergency Management has a staff of about 45 full time people who are funded with federal funds with EMPG and program revenue through REP and EPCRA. EMPG requires a 50% match.
- 72 county emergency management directors including 20 that are part time and 30 that are one person offices.
- County programs are funded through a combination of EMPG, EPCRA and Homeland Security Funds

**Emergency Response in Wisconsin**

- All events begin locally.
- If local emergency responders need additional assistance – they usually first turn to their own mutual aid for support from agencies within their county or region.
- State is notified thru the WEM 24 Hour Duty Officer System.
  - Last year – WEM received over 390 Duty Officer Calls ranging from weather events to hazardous material spills.

- Other mutual aid includes Mutual Aid Box Alarm System (MABAS) and Emergency Police Services (EPS).
- State also dispatches WEM Regional Director. Other state agency assistance may be needed.
- State is in contact with FEMA to alert them of the incident.
- Federal assistance.

### **State of Wisconsin Response**

- WEM is in frequent contact with the National Weather Service.
- State response begin with WEM monitoring severe weather conditions or by being notified by a county that an event has occurred.
- Wisconsin Emergency Management coordinates disaster preparedness, response and recovery efforts in support of local governments.
- WEM coordinates with state agencies to provide resources.
- State of Emergency vs. All Events EOC activations.
- When there is a chance of severe weather with damaging winds, tornadoes, heavy rains and blizzards – the WEM Administrator will determine if the EOC will be partially activated to lean forward.
- WEM has several resources including Regional Directors, Emergency Fire Services Coordinator and Emergency Police Services Coordinator.
- WEM has a Mobile Command Center, Portable 80 foot tower and Communications Trailer with ACU1000.
- State Agency Resources – i.e. National Guard, Department of Corrections, State Patrol, DNR, Department of Health Services.

### **Levels of EOC Activation**

- **Level #1 Full Activation** - WEM, DMA, DHFS, DNR, DOT Highways, State Patrol, DATCP, DOJ and DOC having representatives in the EOC. Other state agencies may be in the EOC as well.
- **Level #2 Partial Activation** - WEM, DMA, DHFS, DNR, DOT Highways, State Patrol, and DOJ have representatives in the EOC. Other state agencies are on standby.

- **Level #3 Minimal Activation** - This activation is intended to monitor severe weather conditions in the state. In addition to WEM staff, State Patrol and DOT Highways will be asked to send a representative to the EOC. Other state agencies on standby.

## Recent Incidents

### **Falk Explosion – December 6, 2006**

- A propane gas explosion occurred at the Falk Corporation facility in the Milwaukee area. Three people were killed and more than 40 were injured. The explosion caused widespread damage to an area approximately the size of two football fields.
- Numerous local law enforcement and fire responded including the Milwaukee Fire Department's Heavy Urban Rescue Team and Level A Hazmat Team.
- The State Emergency Operations Center was activated. The Southeast Regional Director was sent to the scene. The Southeast Regional Director, Emergency Police Services and Emergency Fire Services Coordinators contacted local officials and offered assistance.
- EOC remained activated for 5 hours. No request for State Assistance.

### **Stoughton/Viola Tornadoes August 18, 2005**

- 27 Tornadoes hit Wisconsin – the most confirmed tornadoes that have ever occurred in the state in a single day.
- F1 Tornado hit the Village of Viola – causing widespread damage
- F3 Tornado hit Stoughton area. One person killed and nearly 200 homes damaged or destroyed.
- The State Duty Officer was aware of severe weather and was monitoring the storms. The EOC was partially activated with WEM staff after the tornadoes hit. Regional directors were sent to Stoughton and Viola.
- The Department of Natural Resources sent two incident management overhead teams in Viola and Stoughton to assist with coordinating volunteer resources. State Patrol assisted with traffic control in Viola.
- Federal disaster assistance was requested but FEMA denied a federal disaster area assistance.

### **Tornadoes in Northeast Wisconsin – June 7, 2007**

- On June 6, the National Weather Service alerted WEM of a high risk for severe storms the next 24 hours. WEM activated the EOC with mainly WEM staff for 8 hours on June 7.
  
- Five tornado touchdowns were reported. Largest tornado was an F3 on the ground for 40 miles hitting Shawano, Menominee, Langlade and Oconto Counties. Damaged took down 14,000 acres of forest, damaging dozens of buildings.
  
- The damage would not have qualified for a federal disaster declaration. However, the State Disaster Fund was used to provide assistance.

### **Flooding in Southern Wisconsin – August 2007**

- The State Emergency Operations Center was activated the morning of August 18 after torrential rains caused widespread flooding in Southwestern Wisconsin.
  
- The EOC remained activated for 8 days with representatives from:
  - WEM
  - National Guard
  - Department of Corrections
  - Department of Health & Family Services
  - Department of Natural Resources
  - State Patrol & Department of Transportation – Highways
  - Volunteer Agencies - Red Cross and Salvation Army
  
- WEM sent staff to the various impacted counties. In addition, county emergency management directors not impacted by the flooding worked in county EOC's that were activated to provide assistance and give the county director a break.
  
- A federal declaration for 14 counties was approved. WEM staff worked in the Joint Field Office in LaCrosse with FEMA and the U.S. Small Business Administration, staffed Disaster Recovery Centers and participated in Community Relations Teams.

## **Flooding – June 2008**

- The week of June 2, the National Weather Service alerted WEM that there was a chance for heavy rains and tornadoes later in the week.
- June 5, heavy rains caused flooding in Bagley in Grant County. The State EOC was activated. The State Emergency Operations Center (EOC) was partially activated at 7:00 a.m. to monitor the storm situation. Staff members from Wisconsin Emergency Management, Wisconsin National Guard, and Wisconsin State Patrol were in the EOC.
- June 6, the State EOC was partially activated due to several tornado warnings.
- June 7, the state EOC was partially activated at 2:30 p.m. to monitor the storm situation. Staff members from Wisconsin Emergency Management, Wisconsin National Guard, and Wisconsin State Patrol were in the EOC.
- By early evening, additional state agency staff were in the EOC as the threat turned from tornadoes to heavy rains and reports of flooding. The Governor on June 8 declared a State of Emergency for 30 counties.
- The EOC remained activated until June 24.
- A federal declaration was issued on June 14.

## **Disaster Funding**

- Responsible Party (Example - hazmat spill).
- State Disaster Fund –Created statutorily in 2005 to assist local governments.
- The Flood Damage Aid program administered by state DOT.
- Federal Disaster Declaration (individual assistance, public assistance and hazard mitigation).

## **State Disaster Fund**

- Used for 11 events since June 2005.
- May 2005, there were two applicants from Adams County for the Cottonwood Fire. **\$16,493**
- In June and July of 2005, there were 15 applicants in the counties of Ashland, Barron, and Bayfield for Severe Storms and Tornadoes **\$101,799**
- In August of 2005, there were about 20 applicants in Dane, Richland, and Vernon for Tornadoes **\$507,296**

- In September and October, 2005, there were 35 applicants in Ashland, Barron, Bayfield, Burnett, and Rusk Counties for flooding and severe storms. **\$183,875**
- In June of 2006, there was the City of Hartford in Washington County for a tornado. **\$61,420**
- July of 2006, there were 6 applicants from the Ellison Bay explosion in Door County. **\$125,573**
- In July 2006, there were 14 applicants from Ashland, Bayfield, and Price counties for severe storms. **\$49,234**
- In June of 2007, there were 12 applicants from the Tornadoes in Langlade, Marinette, and Oconto Counties. **\$ 154,412**
- In July of 2007, there were 4 applicants from Grant County for the Bagley flooding. **\$90,561**
- Staff members are still implementing funding for August 2007 flooding and Kenosha Tornado 2008.
- When the fund was established – there was no authorization for position or funding to administer this program.

### **Federal Declaration Disasters**

- July 2002 flooding and storms public assistance only 4 million dollars
- September 2002 flooding and tornadoes 3.2 million
- June 2004 flooding and severe storms 26.6 million
- September 2005 (hurricane Katrina P.A. only) 1.1 million
- August 2007 flooding and storms 24.1 million (claims are still being processed)
- February 2008 Snow Emergency 11.3 million (claims are still being processed)
- June 2008 flooding and severe storms 54 million has been paid out in individual assistance, public assistance costs are estimated at 89 million, hazard mitigation grants will total approx. 25 million.

### **Hazardous Materials Emergency Response**

- Regional Level A Teams are located in LaCrosse, Madison, Eau Claire/Chippewa, Superior, Milwaukee, Appleton/Oshkosh, Wausau, and Racine
- The state provide \$1.4 million per state fiscal year from GPR (effective FY 1997)
- There are 40 County B Teams in Wisconsin. The state provides \$10,000 per public county hazmat team.

### **Planning, Training and Exercising**

- WEM and county emergency management are in the process of converting the state or county operations plans to Emergency Support Functions (ESF's) to follow suit with the National Response Plan.
- Planning also is focusing on Regional Planning and Mass Evacuation Plans.
- In 2007, WEM Training offered 212 classes with over 5,000 students participating.
- In 2007, there were 45 all-hazards exercises conducted with over 7,300 participants.
- Currently, all 72 counties have training and/or exercises planned with WEM.

### **Challenges – Communications**

- Common Radio Frequencies
- SIEC – Developing a backbone with Public Safety Interoperable Communications (PSIC) funds to foster statewide interoperable communications in Wisconsin.
- ACU 1000 - most do not have this capability (about 5 communities)
- Use of NWEM (non-weather emergency messaging) and localized use of EAS (emergency alert system)
- Increase use of E-sponder software

### **Challenges – Funding & Staffing**

- Emergency Management Performance Grants (EMPG) – Congress has increased EMPG funding from \$170 million to \$315 million but with a required 50% match.
- Many counties will not be able to use this funding due to match.

- 20 counties have only a part time county emergency management director and 30 counties only have one person in the emergency management office.
- Wisconsin does not have funding set aside to pay for disaster costs or EOC activations.
- WEM does not have enough staff to fully activate the State EOC for two 12 hour shifts.
- State and locals are doing more with no additional funding or staffing increases (i.e.; homeland security grant requirements, pandemic planning, long term recovery participation, training, and exercising).