

# Emergency Management Performance Grant:

*10 Years of the Nation's Return on Investment*

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**2020 Edition**

Joint Report Presented by:





May 11, 2020

For the past ten fiscal years, the U.S. Council of the International Association of Emergency Managers (IAEM-USA) and the National Emergency Management Association (NEMA) have offered this joint report detailing the return on investment realized by the Emergency Management Performance Grant (EMPG) program. This program is the only source of federal funding provided directly to state and local governments for all the functions which help build a robust emergency management system.

In celebration of ten years of this report, this iteration represents an examination of the work conducted through this program for the past decade, including through Fiscal Year 2019 (FY19). Over the past ten years, recipients of this grant have consistently demonstrated a strong commitment to building all-hazards emergency management capacity at the state, local, and tribal levels of government; for every dollar of federal funds invested, at least that much is matched by both grantees and sub-grantees. Through this program, state and local governments:

- Strengthen the nationwide capability to mitigate against, respond to, and recover from any potential hazard or emerging threat;
- Manage thousands of events without requiring a major or emergency declaration;
- Empower residents to ensure their own personal preparedness;
- Maintain critical technologies to support communications and public alerts; and
- Coordinate across state and local jurisdictional boundaries to support mutual aid agreements.

The emergency management system built by these funds addresses any potential hazard, most recently tested nationally through the state and local responses to the COVID-19 outbreak. For such an event, state and local governments must rely on a broad coalition of officials, and most turned to their emergency managers to coordinate the response. The resources and capabilities built through EMPG, regardless of the federal agency in charge of the response, helped state and local governments have the necessary resources to manage the coronavirus response. This was done in no small part by Congress appropriating \$100 million in supplemental funding which will be highlighted in the 2021 version of this report.

Like any dynamic system, however, the evolution and reliance on the emergency management system across the nation requires additional investments at all levels of government to ensure success. According to survey data, it would require an additional \$136 million for all states and jurisdictions to fully-participate in the program. In FY21, NEMA and IAEM call on Congress to incrementally buy-down the funding gap with a payment of \$27 million, or 20 percent, of the current shortfall.

EMPG stands as the beacon of Congressional commitment to ensuring communities and states are more ready to prepare, mitigate, respond, and recover from all hazards. We remain thankful for the commitment within Congress to maintain this worthwhile program and will continue to do all we can as associations to reflect on the appropriated funds, provide transparency in how these funds are allocated, and remain good stewards of taxpayers' dollars.

Sincerely,

Sima Merick  
President, NEMA  
Director, Ohio Emergency Management

Teri Smith, CEM  
President, IAEM-USA  
Manager, Organizational Emergency Preparedness and Safety  
Lawrence Memorial Hospital

The Emergency Management Performance Grant is essential for the building and sustainment of critical capabilities for disaster preparedness, response, recovery, and mitigation across the country. Much is accomplished through the collaborative investments in EMPG. The program enables state, local, and tribal governments to prepare for all hazards through planning, training, exercises, and enhancing professional expertise. But emergency management is a profession with diverse responsibilities, so EMPG also supports response capabilities, communications systems, emergency operations centers (EOC), mutual aid agreements, and public outreach campaigns. In the following pages, state, local, and tribal activities are highlighted and explained to provide a glimpse into the success that Congress enables through their commitment to first responders and emergency managers nationwide.

Emergency managers are the coordinators and collaborators who bring together state, local, and regional entities to save lives, orchestrate the government’s response to an event, and work for years afterward to ensure a robust recovery. On average, the survey is completed by 51 states and territories and over 1,000 local emergency management agencies.

Also, while the number of tasks accomplished by local and tribal jurisdictions shown in this report are impressive on their face, special consideration should be given to the fact that approximately 30 percent of the responding jurisdictions accomplished this work with less than a full-time emergency manager coordinating the effort and approximately 36 percent of the tasks were carried out in jurisdictions with populations of less than 25,000.

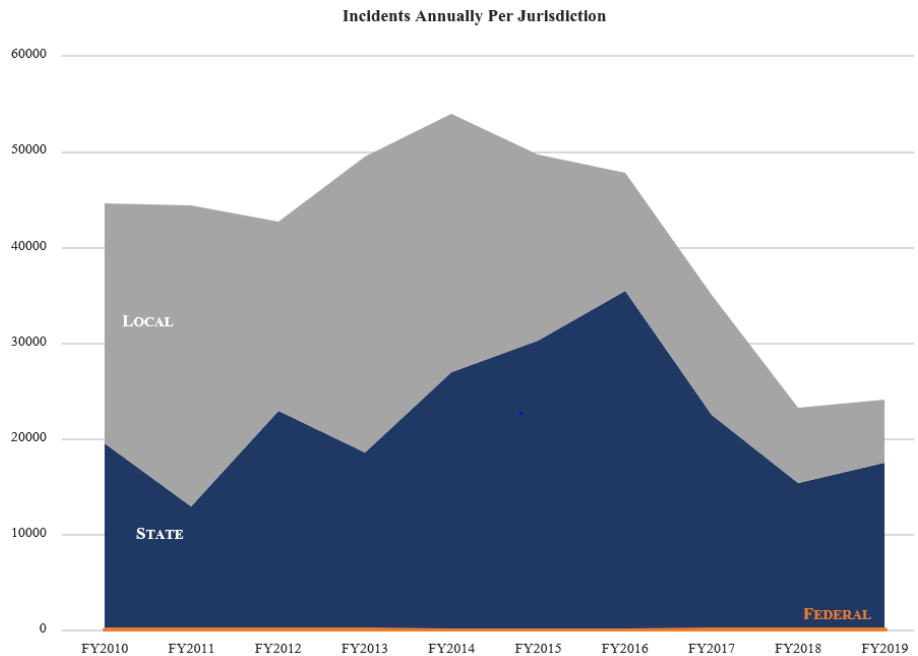
REDUCING DISASTER COSTS TO THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT

The past decade included some of the most significant disaster years in American history. Several hurricanes broke records for cost of damages sustained, wildfires raged over the American West, and flooding impacts escalated nationwide.

Over the course of this timeframe:

- 784 disasters required a major or federal emergency declaration;
- Beyond that, **222,662 events required state assets** but did not reach the level of a major declaration, and;
- **Local assets supported an additional 192,777 local and tribal events** using EMPG funded staff or assets without state or federal support.

Numbers above include only those incidents in which there was not a major or emergency declaration through the Stafford Act.



*In the years reported, states, localities, and tribes managed 406,323 events without additional federal expenditure due to capabilities afforded through EMPG.*

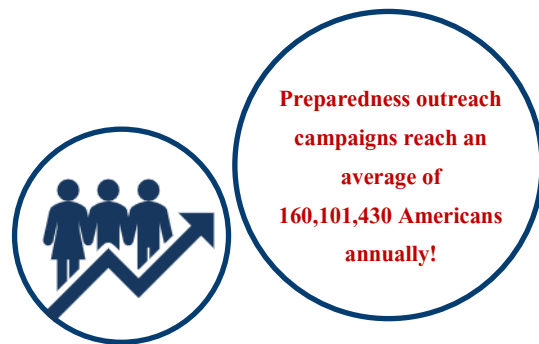
During fiscal year 2019 alone, 118 disasters required a major or emergency declaration, 17,530 events required state assets but not a gubernatorial declaration, and local assets supported yet another 6,597 local and tribal events using EMPG funded staff or assets without additional state or federal support.

## SHARED FUNDING COMMITMENT

For every dollar Congress appropriates for EMPG, state and local government must match dollar-for-dollar and typically provide match well beyond that which is required, providing an unparalleled value to the taxpayer. Between 2012 and 2019, funding for EMPG remained static, even as costs rose and record-breaking disasters occurred. The additional \$5 million appropriated in FY20 will expand existing capabilities, but a significant funding gap remains, causing long-term impacts to readiness that are a detriment in the face of a disaster.

## EMPOWERING THE PUBLIC THROUGH PREPAREDNESS

Supporting public preparedness is critical to successful responses when disaster strikes. Over the past decade, EMPG has supported 15,167 statewide preparedness outreach campaigns and 202,044 local and tribal campaigns. In FY19 alone, state officials conducted nearly 1,500 resident and community preparedness outreach campaigns. During this time frame, FEMA reported increases in households undertaking preparedness actions according to the National Household Survey.



## PLANNING, TRAINING, AND EXERCISES

Reduced need for federal disaster assistance is the result of a process which builds baseline capabilities throughout state and local governments and communities. This achievement comes through a carefully choreographed process of planning, training, and exercises.

### PLANNING

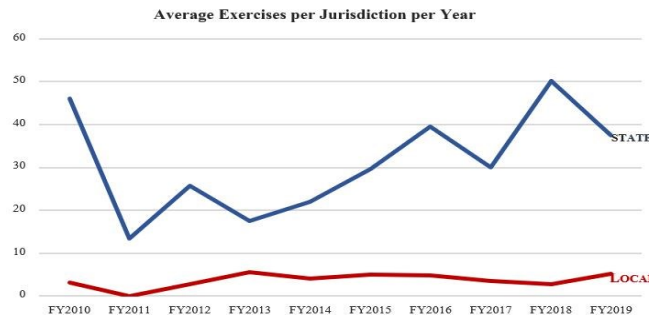
*Speeds recovery*  
*Reduces administrative costs*  
*Prepares for mitigation*

On average, **nearly 23,000 plans are developed, updated, or maintained annually.**

Plans address overarching topics such as response, recovery, and mitigation. EMPG funds targeted planning efforts including pandemic influenza, a New Madrid earthquake, evacuations, energy assurance, and incident playbooks.

### EXERCISES

*Assess planning and training*  
*Confirm assumptions*  
*Provide real-life scenarios*



*Average number of exercises conducted by a jurisdiction in fiscal years 2010-2019.*

Types of exercises include workshops, drills, and functional full-scale exercises. **25,885,846 state and local stakeholders participated** in these exercises during the years examined.

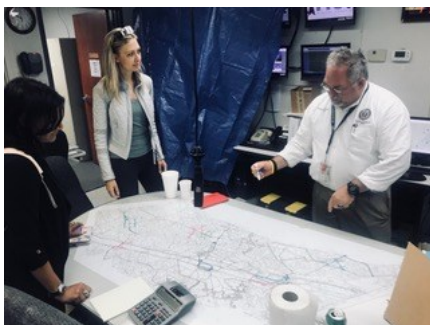
### TRAINING

*Ensure effective use of systems*  
*Translate planning into action*  
*Identify gaps in planning*

On average, **over 17,000 classes are held and over half a million people are trained annually.**

Classes cover the full range of emergency management issues. Participants include public officials, emergency response personnel, and even the general public.

## EMPG-SUPPORTED SUCCESS



**“I believe EMPG allows us to better serve the residents in all mission areas.”**

Anthony Clifton, Director, DeKalb County Emergency Management Agency

**DeKalb County, Alabama** utilizes EMPG funding in a number of ways. During the devastating spring floods of 2019, officials drew on capabilities created by EMPG to coordinate the county’s response and recovery. EMPG support also allows the county to update and assess its threats and vulnerabilities and identify gaps, allowing emergency managers to better plan and work on building those capabilities to meet dangers to the residents.

## COMMUNICATIONS & WARNING SYSTEMS

Public safety communications technologies evolve rapidly. Over the past ten years, this includes evolutions including the allocation of the D-Block radio spectrum to public safety, the emergence of Fifth-generation wireless, and incalculable technology boom in general. Any system created today must be dynamic and flexible to keep-up with the technology of tomorrow. To provide residents with effective frontline disaster management for the last ten years, state, local, and tribal officials utilized EMPG to support:



50,658 local and state emergency response systems or services

including WebEOC platforms, shelter management capabilities, and donation management software

16,170 state and local community warning systems

22,254 redundant communications systems



3,495 state emergency operations centers and more than 14,000 at the local level

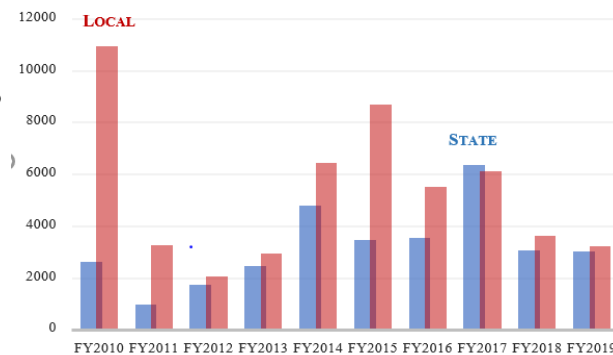
These systems provide the ability to alert and warn the public of both pending and spontaneous disaster events.

Rather than just purchasing new communications systems, states, localities, and tribes also maintain or upgrade existing systems to carefully manage tax dollars without sacrificing high quality capabilities.

## WORKING TOGETHER THROUGH MUTUAL AID

Mutual aid agreements between jurisdictions minimize the need for immediate federal support thereby reducing costs to the federal government. These agreements remain critical to mounting an effective response in the wake of a disaster and mobilizing tested emergency management capabilities across city, county, tribal, and state lines. EMPG supports an average 5,293 local and tribal and 3,212 statewide mutual aid agreements, memorandums of understanding, and memorandums of agreement with neighboring jurisdictions, non-profit agencies, Volunteer Organizations Active in Disasters (VOADS), and the private sector annually.

### MUTUAL AID AGREEMENTS



## EMPG-SUPPORTED SUCCESS

### NEVADA

The State of Nevada utilized EMPG funds to plan, train, and exercise the Family Assistance Center employed in the aftermath of the 2017 Las Vegas shooting. These efforts allowed the center to provide help to victims and family members affected by the incident with services including lodging, travel and transportation, grief counseling, legal services, on-site childcare, filing police reports, documentation and other assistance.

### OREGON

For several years, Oregon used EMPG to develop and maintain a “Cascadia Playbook” to better prepare the state for one of its most significant hazards. This effort upgraded a previous version of the playbook and convened multiple state agencies in reassigning Emergency Support Function (ESF) leads.

### TEXAS

In 2019, Texas utilized EMPG to conduct a cybersecurity exercise. **Weeks later**, the state experienced a ransomware incident that took 22 municipalities’ computers offline, preventing them answering emails, providing copies of birth certificates, and receiving payments for utilities. Lessons learned during the exercise informed the response and led to updates to the state’s Cybersecurity Strategic Plan and those of partner agencies.



## CONCLUSION

EMPG remains a critical driver of progress and success made across the country in preparing for, responding to, and recovering from all hazards. The program's success is shared by all levels of government and the Federal government is critical to its continued success. When considering the effectiveness of this program:

- At just over \$1 per resident, and when including the match requirement and additional state and local investment, the return on investment exceeds \$700 million. Every state and community is more prepared because of this program.
- An estimated \$136 million is required to allow all eligible jurisdictions to participate in the full extent of the program.
- In the FY21 Appropriations, Congress should include a 20 percent buy-down on the current \$136 million capability shortfall to bring the total for EMPG to \$382 million.
- During the ten years evaluated in this report 406,323 events were managed by local, tribal, and state governments without federal assistance. This figure is staggering when compared to the 784 federal disaster declarations during the same time frame.

Without a robust emergency management system at the state, local, and tribal levels, the responses to many disasters would falter or require unplanned federal support. Capabilities afforded through EMPG allow these events to be managed without additional federal expenditures. While disasters remain unpredictable and no investment can fully eliminate risk, supporting the development of state, local, and tribal capabilities through EMPG is proven to minimize disaster effects on affected populations and limit federal expenditures in the response and recovery phase.

### ABOUT NEMA:

Established in 1974, NEMA represents the emergency management directors of the 50 states, territories, and the District of Columbia. These professionals are responsible to their governors for all-hazards emergency preparedness, mitigation, response, and recovery from all emergencies, disasters, and threats to the homeland. NEMA is a non-profit, non-partisan organization headquartered in Lexington, Kentucky, and an affiliate of the Council of State Governments.

### ABOUT IAEM-USA:

IAEM-USA is the nation's largest association of emergency management professionals, with over 4,200 members, including emergency managers at the state and local government levels, tribal nations, the military, colleges and universities, private business and the nonprofit sector. Most of the members are city and county emergency managers who perform the crucial function of coordinating and integrating the efforts at the local level to prepare for, mitigate the effects of, respond to, and recover from all types of disasters, including terrorist attacks. The membership includes emergency managers from large urban areas as well as rural areas. IAEM is a non-profit, non-partisan organization headquartered in Falls Church, Virginia.

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