

Northwest Central
Joint Emergency Management System
Annual Report
2019-2020





Mick Fleming
Director

Message from the Director

As Emergency Managers our job is to equip our communities with the tools to prepare for, respond to, mitigate, and recover from a disaster regardless of origin. The field of emergency management adopted the all-hazards approach as a lesson learned from focusing on one threat or hazard rather than looking at the bigger picture. The concept of the all-hazards approach emphasizes that we must always be ready for what may come next and that there will always be a need to increase our capabilities so that we can effectively address both the hazards we are familiar with and those we have yet to encounter. The year 2020 and the challenges associated with COVID-19 provided us with an example of why the all-hazards approach is necessary no matter the size or shape of the jurisdiction.

Working together our communities faced each challenge that this year delivered to our region. The strength of the Joint Emergency Management System was truly realized this year as all ten of our partner jurisdictions worked through issues together, sharing best practices, and providing support where possible in the face of a global disaster.

This annual report is meant to highlight the planning, training, exercise, and response accomplishments of the previous year and look at what the agency plans to accomplish in the coming year. I am very proud of the services that the Joint Emergency Management System was able to provide our member communities this year and I hope that you find the information contained in this report valuable.

Mick Fleming, CEM
Joint Emergency Management System Director

Message from the Chairperson

2020: The Year of Emergency Management

Starting year 4 of the Joint Emergency Management System (JEMS) in January 2020, the tone was upbeat due to a strong economy, plentiful jobs, and few concerns. JEMS had a solid regional training focus planned for the year. How those plans changed by Mid-March with the advent of COVID-19, mandatory shelter-in-place orders, elimination of face-to-face training, and an unprecedented economic shutdown impacting large sectors of our local economy.


The global COVID-19 pandemic turned into a declared Federal, State, and Local disaster of unparalleled duration. The pandemic created not only a public health crisis but also a fiscal crisis for our member agencies and raised a cloud of uncertainty for the future. As of this writing, the long-term implications of the COVID-19 pandemic are still being felt by all of us; however, due to JEMS, our members have been resilient and robust in the midst of uncertainty.

Anchoring our members against the COVID-19 pandemic was the Joint Emergency Management System. JEMS was there to provide:

- Initial meetings to prepare for COVID-19 in our region and plan for the inevitable arrival of the virus;
- Planning for unforeseen circumstances once the virus arrived;
- Technical support and assistance to our local Emergency Operations Centers (EOCs) during the early stages of the pandemic;
- Financial training to our communities on how to obtain Federal (FEMA and CARES) financial reimbursement;
- Support for locating COVID-19 testing centers, on-going staff video training, sharing technical assistance, and communicating about necessary personal protective equipment (PPE) and other inventories of protective resources;
- On-Going communication regarding Federal and State orders and sharing of best practices throughout the ordeal;



Ray Rummel
Chairperson

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- Creation of Recovery/Restoration Plans and After-Action-Reports for continuous improvement; and,
 - Planning for the distribution of vaccinations to hopefully protect against COVID-19 and end the pandemic in our region.

JEMS has always been viewed as a regional success by its members, but it had never been through a crisis like the one posed by COVID-19. Together, our JEMS members have endured, learned, improved, and thrived during the course of the pandemic. We are planning for the future with a tremendous base of knowledge, much better prepared from the experience.

JEMS remains our regional anchor, protecting some 350,000 residents and tens of thousands of businesses, quietly and effectively behind the scenes. As a result, the year 2021 be a better year (and hopefully a normal year) for all of us!

Ray Rummel

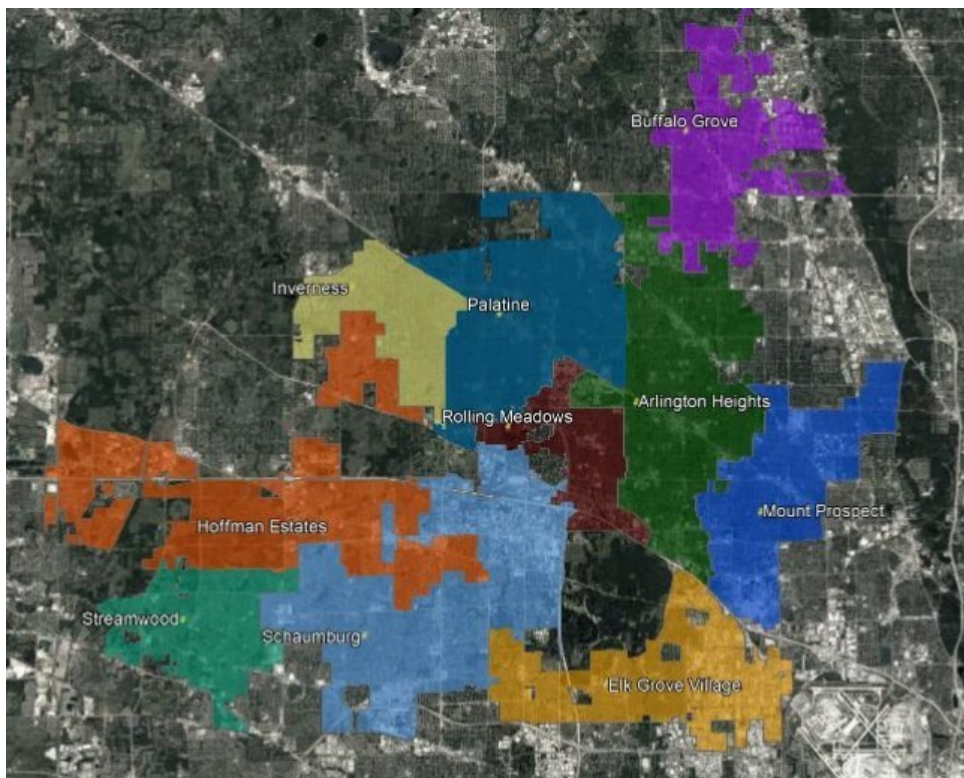
Chairperson, Joint Emergency Management System

Mission Statement:

To work collectively with our member agencies through organized planning, training, exercise and evaluation efforts to ensure that all of our communities are able to mitigate, prepare for, respond to and recover from all hazards, as well as provide regional assistance in a standardized manner.

Member Communities:

- Arlington Heights
- Buffalo Grove
- Elk Grove Village
- Hoffman Estates
- Inverness
- Mount Prospect
- Palatine
- Rolling Meadows
- Schaumburg
- Streamwood





Governing Board

The Governing Board is made up of the Chief Administrative Officer of each subscriber community. The Chair and Vice-Chairperson are selected annually by a vote of the Governing Board.

- Ray Rummel—Chairperson
Elk Grove Village
- Randall Recklaus
Village of Arlington Heights
- Jim Norris
Village of Hoffman Estates
- Sam Trakas
Village of Inverness
- Michael Cassady
Village of Mount Prospect
- Dane Bragg—Vice-Chairperson
Village of Buffalo Grove
- Reid Ottesen
Village of Palatine
- Barry Krumstok
City of Rolling Meadows
- Brian Townsend
Village of Schaumburg
- Sharon Caddigan
Village of Streamwood

Executive Committee

The Executive Committee is made up of representatives from each member community.

- Andrew Larson
Village of Arlington Heights
- Mike Hish
Village of Inverness
- James Walters
Village of Schaumburg
- Mike Baker
Village of Buffalo Grove
- Brian Lambel
Village of Mount Prospect
- Chris Clark
Village of Streamwood
- Richard Mikel
Elk Grove Village
- Scott Andersen
Village of Palatine
- Sarah Marcucci
Village of Hoffman Estates
- Jeff Moxley
City of Rolling Meadows

Joint Emergency Management System Staff

The Joint Emergency Management System staff is made up of three individuals (2 FTE): the Joint Emergency Management System Director, an Emergency Management Analyst, and a Training and Exercise Specialist. All staff operate out of a shared office space with the Northwest Central Dispatch System. Each staff member is assigned projects based on their area of expertise but often projects and assignments require a team approach to accomplish the goals of the organization. As plans and policy documents are drafted for adoption by the member communities a set of trainings or informational workshops are also developed to accompany them. When incidents occur in our office's area of responsibility and emergency management assistance is needed, all staff are reorganized to support the needs of the member communities.

Doug Hoyt is an Emergency Management Analyst. Many of Doug's projects include developing plans, tool kits, and job aids so that emergency operations across our communities are following industry standards. Doug is a key participant in reviewing each community's plans before they are submitted for approval. Doug is also responsible for maintaining the Incident Resource Inventory System (IRIS), which was developed using a FEMA toolkit to document all of the shareable resources within our communities.



Robert Kukla is a Training and Exercise Specialist. Bob's primary responsibility is the development of exercises for each member community. Each community is required to participate in at least one Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Program (HSEEP) compliant exercise each year and Bob is responsible for ensuring that each community not only participates in an exercise but also that the exercise is documented properly to ensure that the community receives credit. Bob is also responsible for developing our emergency management trainings for new municipal staff.

Staff Achievements

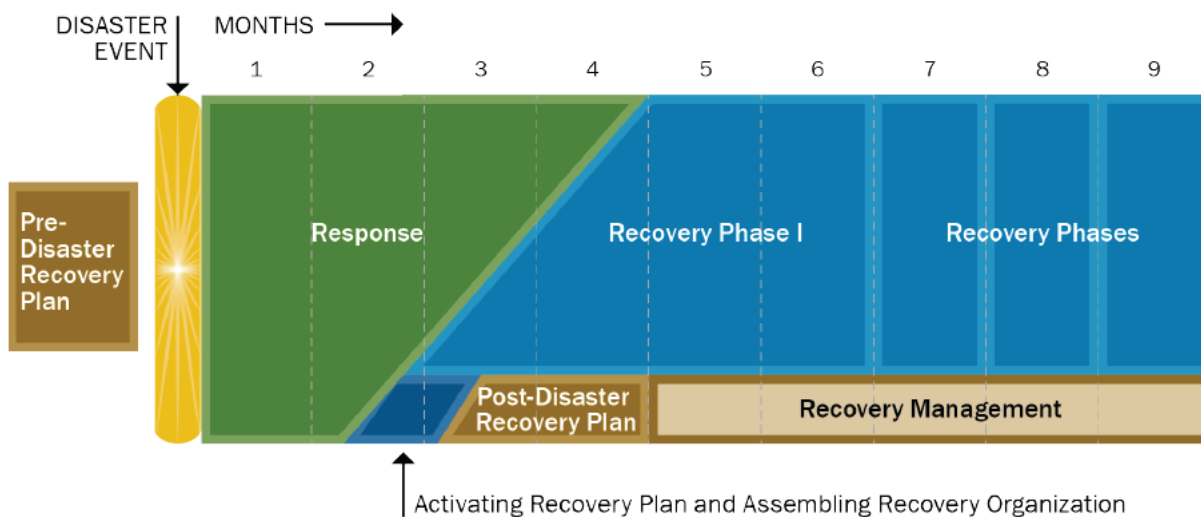
On March 13, 2020, Doug Hoyt and Bob Kukla graduated from the FEMA National Emergency Management Basic Academy. This is a series of classes designed to support the careers of emergency managers through a training experience combining knowledge of all fundamental systems, concepts and practices of cutting-edge emergency management. This was the first time that this course was offered in the State of Illinois. In order to complete the Academy course, they had to complete a series of 11 online prerequisite classes, and then 5 in-person classes taught by Emergency Management Institute instructors over a period of five months. Those classes included Foundations of Emergency Management, Science of Disaster, and Planning: Emergency Operations, Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Program (HSEEP), and Public Information and Warning. In addition to Doug and Bob, the JEMS community was also represented by Jim Miller, Emergency Management Coordinator for Mount Prospect, and Sarah Marcucci, Emergency Management Coordinator for Hoffman Estates.



In August 2020, Mick Fleming received his recertification as a Certified Emergency Manager from the International Association of Emergency Managers. This credential is an internationally recognized program for emergency management professionals that was created to raise and maintain professional standards within the Emergency Management field. Initial certification requires the applicant to have a high level of education and training, to demonstrate thorough knowledge of the field by successfully completing an examination and producing letters of reference from other professionals, to have extensive experience in the field encompassing all phases of emergency management, and to demonstrate contributions to the profession. In order to maintain certification, professionals must document continuing training and education and professional contributions over a five-year certification period.

Recovery Plan Development and Rollout

In 2018, the State of Illinois changed the administrative code sections that outlines the requirements of our emergency operations plans. One of the new requirements is that each community needs to have a Pre-Disaster Recovery Plan that describes how that community will recover from a major emergency after the response phase of the incident is complete. The JEMS staff developed a template for the recovery plan to facilitate multi-jurisdictional and interagency coordination in recovery operations, particularly between local government, the private sector, regional operational entities, state and federal agencies. It also identifies the components of the recovery section within an EOC (in accordance with the National Disaster Recovery Framework), and establishes associated operational concepts, protocols, and procedures. The plan considers short-term and intermediate recovery goals, such as providing adequate sheltering for affected residents and restoration of critical infrastructure, as well as long-term goals including strengthening a community's economic and industrial base, developing new, permanent, sustainable and accessible housing to meet the needs of the community, ensuring the appropriate placement of critical infrastructure and public facilities to meet community needs and promote resilience from future events, and re-establishing tax revenues and other income sources.

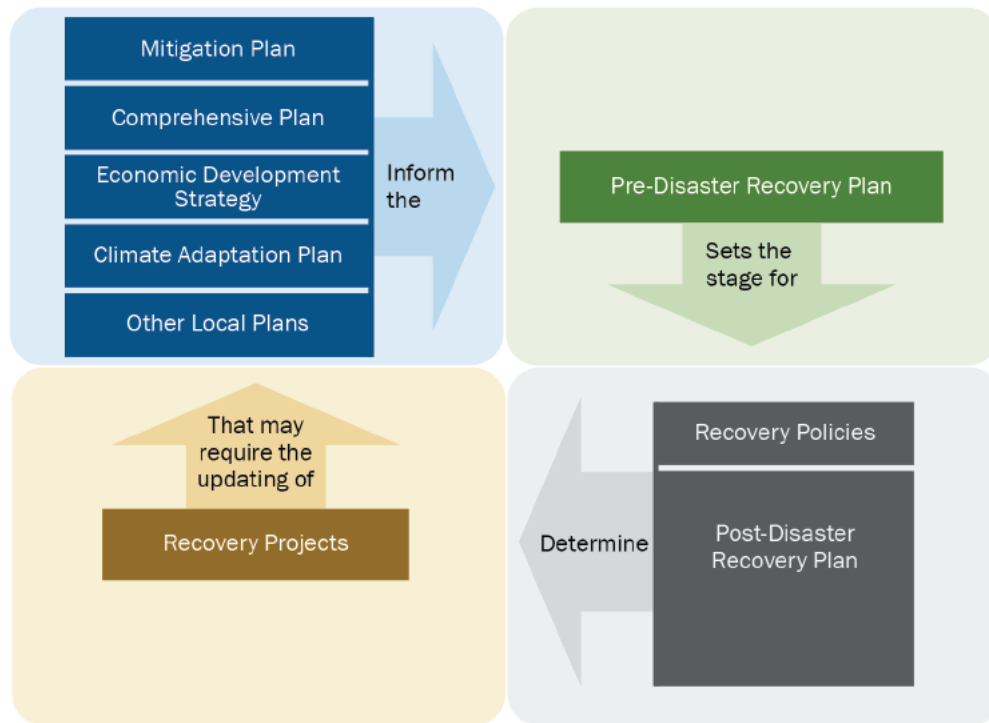


Recovery Plan Development and Rollout

In order to meet these goals, the plan makes use of Recovery Support Functions, which are similar to the Emergency Support Functions in our Emergency Operations Plans. This promotes continuity between the plans, and facilitates working with other levels of government in a recovery environment. These functions include:

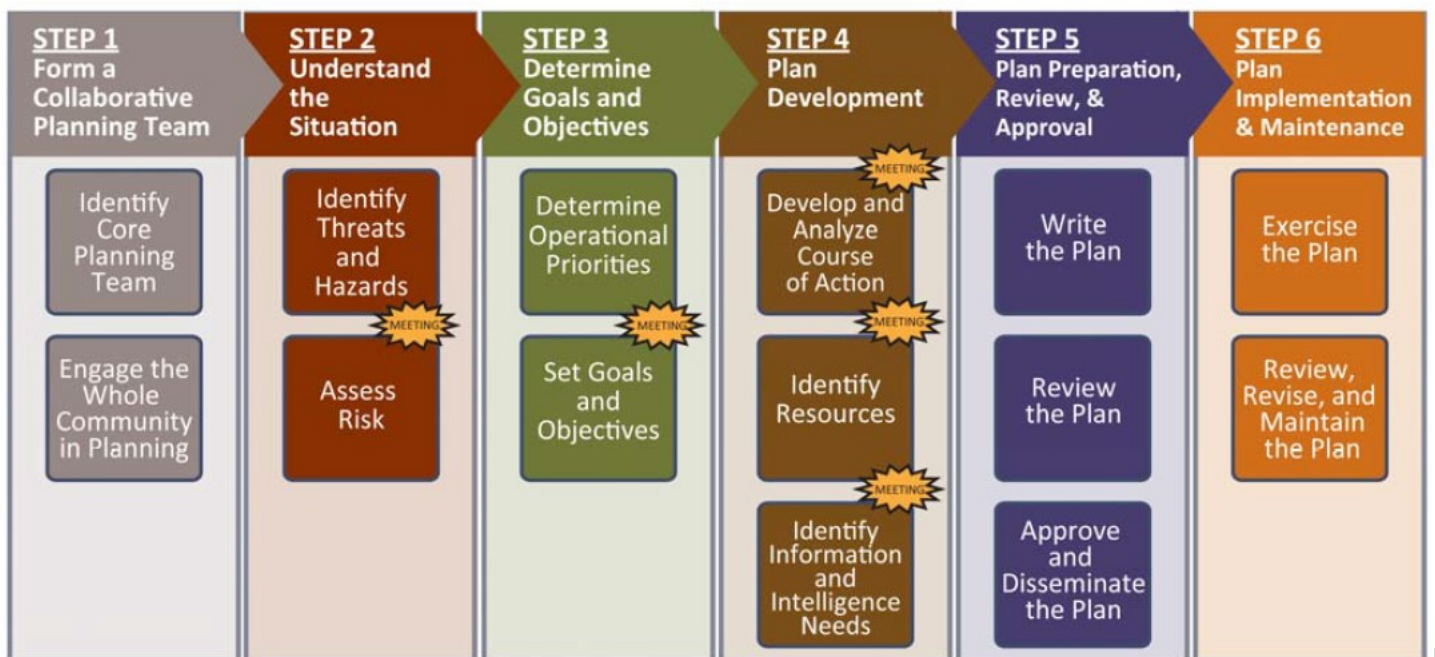
- Community Planning and Capacity Building
- Economic Recovery
- Health and Social Services
- Housing
- Infrastructure Systems
- Natural and Cultural Resources.

As communities update their Emergency Operations Plans, these Pre-Disaster Recovery Plans are also being developed specifically for each municipality. They are then submitted to the State of Illinois or the appropriate county for approval. Along with the EOP and the COOP, they provide a comprehensive framework for how the community will handle a disaster.



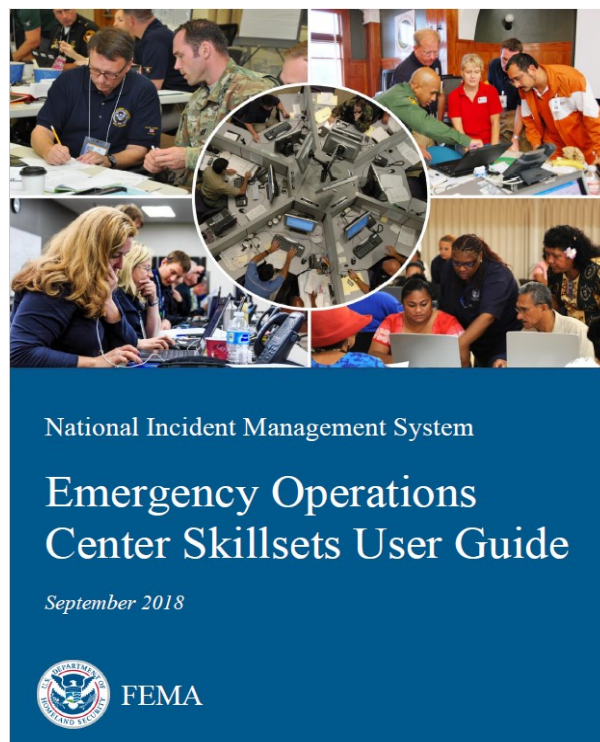
EOP and COOP Updates

Updating Emergency Operations Plans and Continuity of Operations Plans is a continuous process. Each community needs to update these plans every 2 years, so that means that there are five communities' plans each year which will require an update. Due to the COVID-19 situation this year, IEMA, Lake County, and Cook County have delayed the requirements for submitting plans, so our previous schedule of plan submissions will be changing in the coming years. In addition to the regular plan updates, the State of Illinois also makes periodic updates to the Administrative Code which affects how we revise various sections of the plans. Significant changes to the Code were made in 2018, and our standardized EOP template was updated to reflect those requirements. Specifically, we developed new functional annexes to meet the requirements for Alert and Warning, Volunteer and Donations Management, Critical Infrastructure annexes. We also developed and incorporated section specific annexes for the Management, Finance, Logistics, Operations and Planning Sections of the EOC. Consequently, as each community comes due for its regular update, JEMS staff continue to work with the Emergency Management staff from each municipality to make sure that the plans are up to date with the new requirements, and to try to maintain as much standardization as possible between those plans.



EOP and COOP Updates

One of our program goals is to develop a mutual aid list of EOC personnel who can work in another community's EOC in the event of an emergency in which the stricken area is unable to fill all of the necessary positions, due to a long duration incident or lack of personnel to fill a particular spot. By maintaining regionally standardized plans, those personnel approved to provide mutual aid will have a better understanding of the roles in a common EOC structure, and therefore a shorter learning curve to get up to speed in neighboring EOC.



Continuity Event

An event can disrupt the performance of essential functions, capabilities, and services at all levels.



COOP planning also is a continuous process of reviewing and revising plans. Although these plans are not required by statute to be reviewed every two years like the EOP, each community still needs to regularly evaluate those plans to ensure they are up to date. The COVID-19 response provided a real-world opportunity for communities to evaluate the information in their plans, and JEMS staff have also developed scenario-based exercises for a municipality to evaluate how well their COOP will serve them in an emergency.

Training

While the COVID-19 pandemic caused the cancellation of some of our scheduled training, there were several courses that were sponsored or delivered by JEMS over the past year. Some highlights included:

- EOC Position-Specific Training
- G-191 ICS/EOC Interface
- ICS All Hazards Operations Section Chief
- ICS All Hazards Logistics Section Chief
- ICS All Hazards Finance Section Chief



Training provides responders and EOC personnel with the knowledge, skills and abilities required to perform key necessary tasks during various types of emergency responses and disasters. Training offerings are based on needs identified by the member communities during the annual Integrated Planning Preparedness Workshop.

Exercises

Exercises are tools we use to test our systems and evaluate how well our plans work in practice. We had the unusual opportunity this year to use a real-world incident to exercise our plans. The response to the COVID-19 pandemic required our communities to use their Continuity of Operations Plans, as well as some portions of their Emergency Operation Plans. As the response phase of this event wound down, JEMS staff met with key personnel from the communities to capture lessons learned throughout the incident. After-Action Reports / Improvement Plans were developed from these meetings, detailing what worked well, and what areas within the plans need to be improved upon. We also had the opportunity to conduct a few “normal” exercises throughout the year as well, including:

- Streamwood Active Threat Table-top Exercise (TTX), February, 2020
- Palatine Hazardous Materials / Fire TTX, February, 2020
- Streamwood Active Shooter Drill, August, 2020

COVID-19 Response

The response to the COVID-19 pandemic was a major part of the activities in 2020. As with many agencies, this event required the JEMS staff to adopt a non-traditional remote operation in order to serve the needs of the communities. At the onset of the pandemic, JEMS worked to bring local and county stakeholders together to determine the best course of action on how all partners would coordinate as the situation developed. The JEMS staff initially worked on developing and maintaining situational awareness across all of our municipalities, as well as providing regional, state, national and international reports from partner emergency management authorities at those levels.



We developed reporting forms and tools to monitor, track and share the collective situation status information so that all of our partners were aware of what was happening in neighboring communities, reported on best practices as they were being developed, and put together a spreadsheet of resources that communities would be able to share. This is the first incident where all ten of the member agency's emergency operations center structures were functioning simultaneously. As the situation stabilized, JEMS staff also worked with the staff from the member communities to document lessons learned and develop After-Action Reports and Improvement Plans to build on the best practices that came out of this incident.

Recovery Process

Response and recovery funding was granted by the Federal Emergency Management Agency from the Public Assistance program and through the Department of Treasury from the Corona Virus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act. The two funding streams came with varying requirements for documentation and each had specific activities that qualified as eligible expenses for this incident. The JEMS staff played a role in communicating new information on the programs and providing support to the member communities to assist in applying for those funds or working through documentation issues. As guidance on each funding stream would change or as new information was available, our office



organized virtual meetings for municipal finance personnel to ask questions and share information on their experiences so that everyone could benefit from those lessons learned.





Looking Forward

The next year promises to bring additional coordination efforts for all partners. Under the Joint Emergency Management Agreement, partners will be engaged in all five mission areas: prevention, mitigation, preparedness, response and recovery. Some projects slated for the year include:

- Exploring accreditation through the Emergency Management Accreditation Program (EMAP).
- Development of a JEMS strategic plan.
- Implementation of a shared EOC personnel database.
- Rebuilding the Incident Resource Inventory System (IRIS).
- Emergency Operations Plan Revisions.
- Continuity of Operations Plan Revisions.
- Continuity of Operations Training.
- Review and revision of shelter site agreements.
- Emergency Operations Center Section Specific Training.
- Expanded training offerings for emergency management courses.
- Cooperative Emergency Operations Center Exercises.

Staying Prepared

Remember to help all of our emergency management professionals by preparing yourself and your family for an emergency or disaster. You can find information on the various programs

- <http://www.redcross.org/get-help/how-to-prepare-for-emergencies>
- www.citizen-alert.org
- www.ready.gov
- www.ready.illinois.gov
- www.weather.gov/safety/
- <https://www.weather.gov/wrn/>



<http://www.nwcds.org/jems.html>

Joint Emergency Management System · 1975 E. Davis St., · Arlington Heights, IL 60005 · (847) 590-3459