



2022

OFFICE OF
EMERGENCY
MANAGEMENT

END OF YEAR REPORT



Gwinnett

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LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR



As we approach the end of the year, I am proud to present the accomplishments and efforts of the Gwinnett County Office of Emergency Management. Throughout the year, we have remained steadfast in upholding the Gwinnett Standard - an expectation of excellence in service, stewardship, and integrity.

Our vision is to encourage and foster a disaster resistant community. To achieve this, we deliberately administer a community-wide comprehensive emergency management program in partnership with all departments, agencies, administration, and neighboring jurisdictions. Our mission is clear: to save lives, protect property, and safeguard the environment.

One of the core aspects of our disaster preparedness efforts is hazard mitigation. This year, Gwinnett County was awarded a mitigation planning grant to support updating the Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan. Public input was collected, including valuable opinions from residents on localized hazard risks.

To ensure a robust emergency response, we continue to focus on planning and training. Several plans were evaluated and revised in 2022, and we have assigned specific responsibilities to address hazards impacting Gwinnett County. Our training programs, tailored to the threats and hazards of the county, were conducted for first responders, non-governmental, and private sector partners.

Exercises play a crucial role in preparedness, and our formal exercise program has been instrumental in familiarizing personnel with roles and responsibilities. We have conducted exercises consistent with the Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Program, meeting or exceeding Georgia's requirement of completing two exercises per year. Notably, a full-scale active shooter exercise with a mass casualty component was held at the Gwinnett Justice and Administration Center, involving multiple law enforcement agencies and Gwinnett Fire and Emergency Services.

The OEM duty officer serves as the primary point-of-contact for major emergencies and disasters in the county. We have witnessed an increase in incidents that require duty officer response, necessitating the activation of the Emergency Operations Center in certain cases. The dedication of our entire OEM staff has been pivotal in managing these events, leading to the successful coordination of disaster response actions and resource support.

In conclusion, I extend my gratitude to the Board of Commissioners for its unwavering support and commitment to the values of integrity, accountability, equity, inclusivity, and innovation. It is through this collaborative effort that OEM has continued to strengthen our disaster-resistant community. As we look toward the future, we will remain dedicated to excellence and steadfast in our mission to protect and serve the residents of Gwinnett County.



MISSION AND VISION

The Gwinnett Standard

The Gwinnett Standard is an expectation of excellence in service, stewardship, and integrity in everything we do. It is a connecting thread that runs throughout County government and is reflected in the excellence of our schools, libraries, businesses, community organizations, and residents.

Vision Statement

The vision of the Gwinnett Office of Emergency Management is to encourage and foster a disaster-resistant community.

Mission Statement

To administer a community-wide comprehensive emergency management program in partnership with all departments, agencies, operating units, administration, and neighboring jurisdictions to save lives, protect property and safeguard the environment.

Board of Commissioners Values Statement

Integrity: We believe in being honest, building trust, and having strong moral principles.

Accountability: We believe in stewardship, transparency, and sustainability.

Equity: We believe in fairness and respect for all.

Inclusivity: We believe in engaging, embracing, and unifying our communities.

Innovation: We believe in continual adaptation of technology, process, and experience.

MITIGATION

Hazard mitigation is any sustainable action that reduces or eliminates long-term risk to people and property from future disasters. Mitigation planning breaks the cycle of disaster damage, reconstruction, and repeated damage. Federal and state funding is occasionally available for specific mitigation efforts for those communities that have a federally approved Hazard Mitigation Plan. Gwinnett County was awarded a mitigation planning grant to support the update of the Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan. Public input regarding the Hazard Mitigation Plan was received through a published survey. The survey was broadcast on several County maintained platforms, but also received support from several municipalities who circulated the survey as well. The survey, and its results, not only satisfy a federal requirement for the plan, but also allow a way to record citizen opinions on localized hazard risks.

New mitigation strategies were identified in 2022, necessitating a plan amendment which was accepted by the Federal Emergency Management Agency in May. OEM continues to provide technical assistance to several departments and municipalities as they seek funding toward identified mitigation projects.

PLANNING

Plans must be in place that describe Gwinnett County's emergency response, continuity of operations, continuity of government, hazard mitigation, and recovery from emergencies or disasters. Specific areas of responsibility need to be assigned for performing functions in response to a disaster, and hazards that impact the county must be addressed. Plan documents are developed, evaluated, and revised on a schedule that is based on the specific requirements of that plan. Some plans require additional approvals, such as local adoption or state and federal approval. In 2022, four plans were evaluated and revised.

Plans Evaluated & Revised

- Strategic Plan
- Commodity Distribution Annex
- County Hazard Mitigation Plan
- Training & Exercise Plan

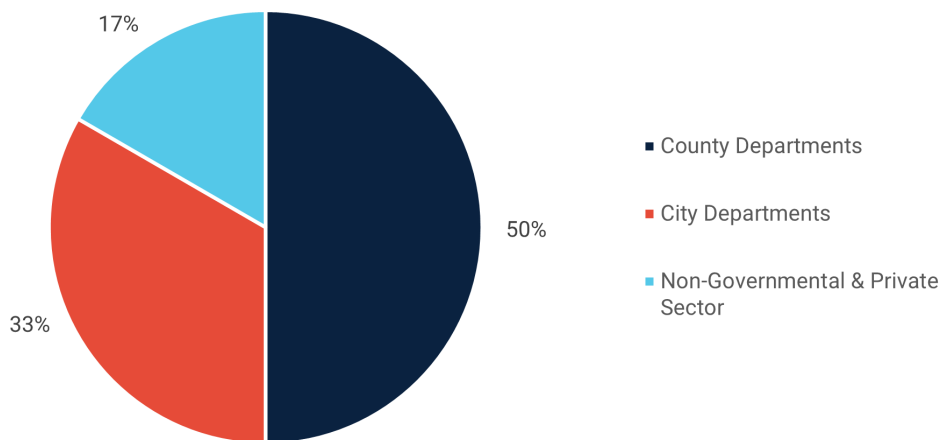


TRAINING AND EXERCISES

Training

OEM administers a formal training program that begins with a needs assessment to address internal and external requirements. Participants in the assessment process include county departments, city departments, and non-governmental and private sector partners.

Training Needs Assessment Participants



Training is regularly scheduled and specialized to the threats and hazards of the county. Courses were conducted in the subject areas listed below. Target audiences may include key public officials, first responders, non-governmental and private sector partners, and the general public.

| Course Title | Number of Offerings |
|---|---------------------|
| Incident Command System / Emergency Operations Center Interface | 1 |
| Intermediate Incident Command for Expanding Incidents | 1 |
| Advanced Incident Command | 1 |
| Continuity of Operations | 1 |
| WebEOC Incident Management Software | 6 |
| Basic Emergency Operations Center Processes | 3 |
| Search for Missing Persons | 3 |
| Total Training Courses | 16 |



Exercises

Exercises play a vital role in preparedness. A formal exercise program provides a low-risk and controlled environment to familiarize personnel with roles and responsibilities, foster meaningful interaction, and enhance communication. Exercises also assess and validate plans, policies, procedures, capabilities, and identify strengths and areas for improvement. Exercises are conducted and documented consistent with the Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Program. The State of Georgia requires two exercises per year are completed by local emergency management programs.

A full-scale active shooter exercise with a mass casualty component was conducted at the Gwinnett Justice and Administration Center. This exercise validated existing plans, procedures, and equipment to address this type of threat and provide immediate medical care. Multiple law enforcement agencies and Gwinnett Fire and Emergency Services participated. Two additional table-top exercises were conducted. One exercise addressed continuity of operations and the other focused on the capabilities surrounding disaster debris management. In total, these three exercises included participation of 13 departments and over 150 individuals.

DISASTER RESPONSE

The Georgia Emergency Management Act of 1981 (O.C.G.A. 38-3-27) requires the local director, or their designee be available or on-call at all times beyond normal working hours.

The OEM duty officer serves as the primary emergency point-of-contact for the alert, notification, and initiation of a preliminary response to major emergencies and disaster events occurring in Gwinnett County. Incidents that require a duty officer response continue to rise in both quantity and complexity. Whether responding to a request for resources, coordinating disaster response actions, or leading the search for a missing person, the OEM duty officers are responsible for putting the county’s emergency plans into action. Consideration will be given to activating the Emergency Operations Center when the duty officer becomes aware of an incident and anticipates a need for coordination and/or resource support from the EOC. Management of these major emergencies and disasters requires the support of the entire OEM staff. Scheduled planning, training, and exercise activities are put on hold during the response and recovery to these non-scheduled events.

As part of normal operations, OEM duty officers responded to a large number of and variety of incidents, resulting in 988 staff hours directly related to response and recovery actions.





Gwinnett

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