

# Monthly Bulletin

## Parish Disaster Ministries

### Emergency Management

A combination of federal, state, and local groups is necessary to meet the needs of large groups of people. While these systems can often be challenging to understand and navigate, it is not just “bureaucracy for the sake of bureaucracy.” This month, we want to demystify another piece of the disaster recovery system, and encourage you to get involved with your local Emergency Management.

The *Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management* (WVDHSEM) is a state agency which aims “to ensure the protection of life and property by providing coordination, guidance, support and assistance to local emergency managers and first responders.” This statewide coordination houses regional Liaison Teams, which in turn equip the local emergency managers to participate in the cycle of disaster (see the April 2018 Bulletin).

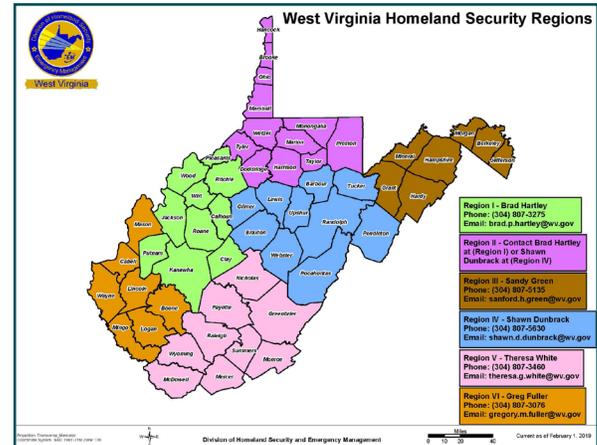
Since disasters are always local (though they sometimes impact larger areas such as multiple counties), WVDHSEM reminds us that, “the vast majority of response resources rest with local government, not with state agencies.” These resources vary from place to place, and likely include funding, people, and expertise.

### Find Your Point of Contact

Each local government is responsible for filling the role of Emergency Manager. Though Catholic Charities WV tries to keep up-to-date on this type of information, your best bet is to contact your county or city officials and/or the WVDHSEM liaison for your region. (Search “[WV emergency management regional liaison](#)” to find your rep for the latter.)

Since it is the Regional Liaison’s job to know the local Emergency Managers, you’ll probably be able to get the information you’re looking for from them fairly quickly. You could also go straight to your local government to get in contact with the Emergency Manager.

Developing a relationship with your local Emergency Manager has at least two important benefits:



### 1. Increased coordination of services

According to FEMA, two of the primary responsibilities of the Emergency Manager is,

- Taking inventory of personnel and material resources to include the private-sector sources that would be available in an emergency.
- Identifying resource deficiencies and working with appropriate officials on measures to resolve them.

Let your Emergency Manager know that your group exists, and can potentially fill a resource deficiency. Find out what other resources are available. There are many needs that surface in the event of a disaster and you have something unique to offer your community. Your Emergency Manager will be glad to have your help.

### 2. Increased communication

FEMA lists another responsibility of the Emergency Manager as:

- Establishing a system to alert officials and the public in an emergency or disaster

It is difficult to *enter* the communication loop when your community is in the midst of a current disaster. Rather, try to enter the flow during “blue sky time”. Make contact with Emergency Management when it’s calm, so that they know to include you in their communication when the next disaster hits.

There are even more benefits of nurturing this relationship. We hope you’ll make this important connection!

Questions? Contact Us!

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