THE SITUATION REPORT

The Official Newsletter of Greenville County Emergency Management

COMMUNITY EMERGENCY RESPONSE TEAM

by Rachel Nafziger

The Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) program is a nationally supported, locally implemented initiative that teaches people how to better prepare themselves for hazards that may affect their communities. Greenville County CERT trains the public in basic disaster response skills such as team organization, disaster medical operations, fire safety, and light search and rescue. When citizens can help with these tasks, it enables professional responders to focus their efforts on more complex, essential, and critical tasks.

Due to the pandemic, we will be utilizing an online learning platform. Content will post weekly, but students can work at their own pace. The official kickoff for the spring session will be March 15th, 2021. We are also planning an in-person training day and final exercise in May depending on COVID-19 case rates.

You can register for CERT basic training here.

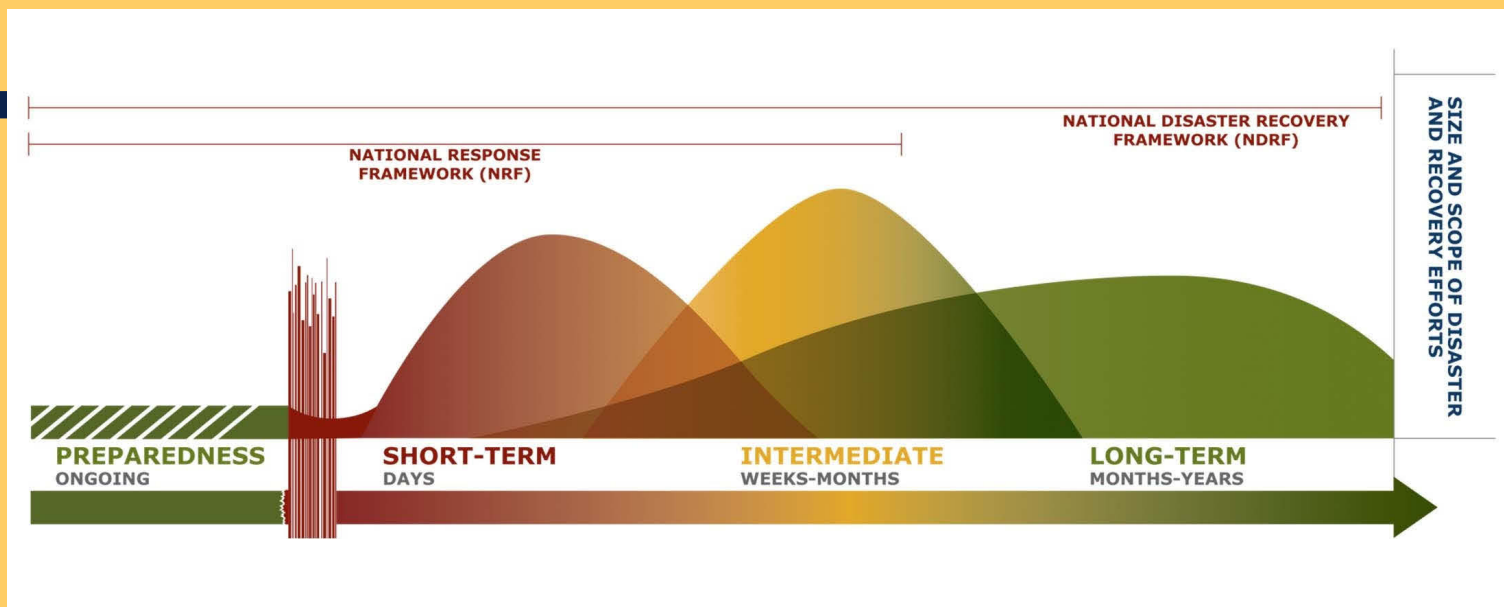

CERT kicks off on March 15th, 2021!

RECOVERING FROM A DISASTER

by Mackenzie Forgacs

Recovering from a disaster means more than rebuilding a home or cleaning up debris. Recovery is a culmination of many activities, some occurring even before a disaster strikes. The Recovery Continuum seen below highlights how recovery efforts begin in the preparedness phase, carry on throughout the response phase, come to fruition after the disaster has occurred, and begin again through mitigation and planning.

In other words, recovery is an ongoing process and is often difficult to define using a timeline. Recovery programs can take time, but a clearer understanding of what these programs are will help individuals, organizations, and the whole community to recover and rebuild stronger than before. The National Disaster Recovery Framework (NDRF) provides guidance to communities on how to establish these effective recovery programs.

Over the course of the next few months, we'll take a closer look at these vital recovery programs. Read on to gain a better understanding of the recovery program known as Public Assistance (PA).

"Recovery focuses on how best to restore, redevelop, and revitalize"

National Disaster Recovery Framework. (2016).

WHAT IS PUBLIC ASSISTANCE?

by Mackenzie Forgacs

FEMA's Public Assistance (PA) program is a financial reimbursement program that offers assistance to state, tribal, territorial, or local governments and qualifying private nonprofit organizations.

Program Overview

Declaration Process
Public Assistance begins with the Declaration Process when an area has received a Presidential declaration of an emergency or major disaster.

Project Timeline
Once a disaster has been declared, an incident period is established. All eligible costs associated with the disaster that occur within the incident period can be included in an application.

Cost Share
This federal program will cover at least 75% of the total eligible costs.

Eligible Types of Work

Emergency Work (Must be completed within 6 months)
- Category A: Debris Removal
- Category B: Emergency Protective Measures

Permanent Work (Must be completed within 18 months)
- Category C: Roads and Bridges
- Category D: Water Control Facilities
- Category E: Public Buildings and Contents
- Category F: Public Utilities
- Category G: Parks, Recreational, and Other Facilities

March 13, 2020
President Trump approves a Major Disaster Declaration for all 50 states, the District of Columbia, 5 territories, and 32 tribes.

March 25, 2020
GCEM submits a Request for Public Assistance.

June 13, 2020
Testing at the Greenville Convention Center is concluded.

October 16, 2020
GCEM submits a PA Application for $213,206.82 of reimbursable expenses.

Documentation begins. Document hours worked, equipment used, resources bought, emergency measures taken, and work that has been completed.

March 30, 2020
GCEM assists in the opening of a first-responder testing site at the Greenville Convention Center. This site will be eligible for reimbursement.

All documentation for eligible expenses are compiled. This includes PPE purchased and overtime hours worked in response to COVID-19.

PA IN PRACTICE: COVID-19 ASSISTANCE

by Mackenzie Forgacs

Submitting an application for Public Assistance can be a time-consuming project. One of the most beneficial pieces of advice that can make this process easier is to document everything. When a disaster becomes evident, it is essential to start documenting all costs associated with response and recovery efforts. This documentation should continue until the end of the incident period. For COVID-19, the incident period remains ongoing so documentation of all COVID-related expenses should continue to be recorded. Proper documentation for any event will increase the speed at which an organization will be able to complete their application and, in turn, could increase the speed that they will potentially receive their reimbursement.

Reviewing the COVID-19 Public Assistance process can give insight into what may be needed for future events. The following is a list of documentation that was requested by FEMA for the GCEM COVID-19 Application for reimbursement:

- Timesheets from March 30th - June 13th at the Convention Center
- Receipts from all meals purchased for response personnel
- Invoices for all PPE purchased for COVID operations

- Log of all emergency vehicles used for COVID operations, including the daily cost to operate these vehicles and the number of hours used

SEVERE WEATHER AND FLOOD SAFETY WEEK

by Jessica Stumpf

South Carolina Severe Weather and Flood Safety Week is March 8 – March 14, 2021. During this week, we'll be posting information on our social media accounts regarding how to prepare for severe weather and flooding. This includes how to receive severe weather warnings, the difference between watches and warnings, emergency plans, and emergency kits.

On Wednesday, March 11th at 9AM, there will be a statewide tornado drill. NOAA weather radios will sound with a test warning. This is a good opportunity to practice what to do when a tornado warning is issued, whether at home or in the office. If there is inclement weather that day, the backup date for the statewide tornado drill is Friday, March 13th at 9AM.

SC Emergency Manager App is free and can be found in the App Store and on Google Play. More info: https://scemd.org/stay-informed/mobile-applications/

You can sign up for severe weather notifications and emergency alerts on CodeRED or use the QR Code here:

Did you know that Greenville County is a StormReady Community?

Details on the NWS StormReady Program can be found here.

UPCOMING EVENTS

by Mackenzie Forgacs

March 2 - G271: Hazardous Weather and Flood Preparedness

March 15 - ICS 400: Advanced ICS 400

March 15 - CERT Kickoff

March 22 - L101: Foundations of Emergency Management

March 31 - AWR 209: Dealing with the Media

April 6 - G288: Local Volunteer and Donations Management

April 26 - L102/L103, Basic Academy Week 2: Science of Disaster and Planning- Emergency Operations

April 28 (estimate) - NWS will be implementing **Impact-Based (IB) Severe Thunderstorm Warnings**

Need to register for a training? Visit the South Carolina Emergency Management Division Training Registration System.

NWS Statement:

Similar to Tornado and Flash Flood Warnings, this will add details to "tags" located at the bottom of our Severe Thunderstorm Warnings to discriminate more significant events. The added tags will be "CONSIDERABLE" and "DESTRUCTIVE":

Considerable: 1.75" hail and/or 70mph thunderstorm winds
Destructive: 2.75" hail and/or 80mph thunderstorm winds

The NWS has worked with FEMA, and with this implementation, a Wireless Emergency Alert (WEA) will be activated for any "DESTRUCTIVE" tag.

More detailed information can be found in the Service Change Notice.