

## Session 5

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**Course Title: Holistic Disaster Recovery: Creating a More Sustainable Future**

**Session 5: Formal and Informal Roles in Recovery**

**Time: 3 hours**

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**Objectives:**

- 5.1 Discuss state and local recovery programs, including their intended purpose and unintended effects**
  - 5.2 Discuss federal recovery programs, including their intended purpose and unintended effects**
  - 5.3 Discuss the legal basis of emergency management across federal, state and local levels of government**
  - 5.4 Discuss the role of social networks in recovery**
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**Scope:**

This session will focus on how the roles of stakeholders in recovery are shaped by formal and informal processes. Formal roles are defined here as those driven by recovery program rules and law. For example, local, state and federal officials responsible for recovery assume roles based in large part on the local, state and federal rules and laws created to guide the recovery process. The roles adopted by other stakeholders involved in recovery are also shaped by these rules.<sup>1</sup> Conversely, informal roles are not typically driven by codified rules, per se. Rather, they may emerge due to the social networks in which stakeholders interact, often in response to a perceived inability to effectively recover by strictly adhering to established rules. Informal networks may become more

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<sup>1</sup> The nature of local and state recovery programs vary across the country, whereas the federal recovery assistance system is codified and relatively uniform. For example, the degree to which local and state governments possess formalized recovery programs addressing local and state-level events and disasters that do not meet federal disaster thresholds range from comprehensive efforts to non-existent.

formalized over time. Thus, formal and informal networks are often closely interrelated. Session 6 will analyze how these roles may change over time as stakeholders adopt new strategies to address recovery.

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### **Readings:**

#### ***Student Reading:***

Federal Emergency Management Agency. *FEMA's Disaster Assistance: A Guide to Recovery Programs* (December, 2000). FEMA 229 (4).

May, Peter. 1985. *Recovering from Catastrophes: Federal Disaster Relief Policy and Politics*. Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press. Chapter 2. Changing Policies, Politics, and Values. Pp.17-47. Chapter 3. Changing Organizations and Priorities. Pp.48-68.

#### ***Instructor Reading:***

Disaster Budgeting, In the Emergency Management Institute Higher Education Project Course: *Political and Policy Basis of Emergency Management*, Session 8, pp. 90-104. <http://training.fema.gov/emiweb/edu/completeCourses.asp>.

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### **Objective 5.1      Discuss state and local recovery programs, including their intended purpose and unintended effects**

Historically, state and local recovery programs have focused on the development of the means to administer federal programs following a federally declared disaster. Staffing and resources were aligned to identify eligible applicants, manage and implement federal programs. State and local emergency management capabilities addressing localized events (that do not meet a federal disaster declaration threshold) have historically focused on immediate response and short-term recovery efforts. This is changing as states and local governments develop long-term recovery plans and programs or modify existing services in the post-disaster environment. In reality, state and local programs exist that can affect a sustainable recovery; it is a matter of effectively coordinating their use.

## State – level recovery programs

The development of state and local recovery programs, specifically designed to offer aid to victims and communities is growing as states are modifying their emergency management enabling legislation. **Specific changes may include:**

- The provision of assistance to victims and communities following events that do not meet a federal disaster declaration threshold;
- The provision of additional assistance above and beyond that offered by Stafford Act programs; and
- The creation of a state disaster fund.

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- An array of state – level programs exist that can be used to facilitate a more sustainable recovery. These programs can be used both during localized events and larger federally-declared disasters. They include:
  - ***State Department of the Environment.*** Specific programs may include those addressing public health and sanitation, coastal management (i.e. post-disaster reconstruction and set back requirements), water quality (i.e. waste water treatment plant construction standards), erosion and sedimentation issues associated with reconstruction, etc.
  - ***State Department of Insurance.*** State insurance rates may be modified to reflect actions taken by homeowners and businesses to reduce the impact of future events.

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- ***State Economic Development.*** This state agency may provide guidance on a more sustainable recovery or serve as the state agency responsible for the administration of the Community Development Block Grant funds that can be used to repair or relocate low to moderate income housing located in identified hazard areas.
- ***State Department of Planning.*** In those states with mandated planning requirements, the Department of Planning may provide background data (e.g. demographic, economic, etc.) or establish state-wide planning objectives that compliment sustainable recovery.

**Examples may include:**

- Public expenditures used to guide development;
- Open space planning, farmland preservation, or riparian buffer initiatives; and
- Historic preservation

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- ***State Budget Office.*** The State Budget Office is tasked with the oversight of the state budget, conducting budgetary analyses and providing information to the Governor's Office and the State Legislature as requested. The ability to describe economic impacts of disasters in the context of existing budgetary constraints can prove to be an important tool for decision makers who must determine how to allocate scarce resources following disasters.
- ***Governor's Office.*** The Governor possesses unique powers granted by state enabling legislation that allows for the distribution of resources and the assignment of state personnel to conduct a range of duties. It also allows for the expenditure of state funds following state and federally-declared disasters.
- A primary challenge associated with the management of state-level programs involves the effective coordination of these programs to achieve defined recovery goals.

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- In order to achieve these aims, the development of a state-level recovery plan and creation of a state disaster fund can facilitate this effort. However, like recovery planning at the local level, the development of a plan may not occur until after an event triggers a call for the coordination of state agencies. In many cases a ***Post-disaster Recovery Task Force*** is established at the request of the Governor and is assigned with the role of developing specific recommendations for action (see Session 12).

- The creation of state-level recovery programs for state-declared events and the provision of aid beyond the Stafford Act, typically require the creation of a state disaster fund, legislative appropriation or a disaster trust fund.
  - ***State Disaster Fund.*** In order to pay for state-level assistance, states have begun to establish state disaster funds. These funds have been used to establish state-level preparedness, response, mitigation and recovery programs. They have also been used to cover non-federal match requirements following federally-declared disasters. Twenty-two states reported that they possessed a disaster fund in 2002 (National Emergency Management Association 2002).
  - ***Legislative Appropriation.*** The appropriation of funds by a state legislature is typically performed following individual disasters. In some cases, state funds are appropriated to pay for pre-established state-level programs and cover non-federal match requirements. In other instances, state funds may be appropriated and programs established based on specific post-disaster needs.
  - ***Disaster Trust Fund.*** The establishment of a disaster trust fund involves the creation of a specific revenue generating source, of which, the funds are held until needed. Examples include a state tax on existing insurance policies or sales receipts.

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### Local –level recovery programs

Local governments are the least likely to allocate revenues for disaster recovery on an annual basis. While it is local governments that are most directly affected by disasters, they are the most reliant on state and federal assistance following disasters. However, like state governments, local officials possess several tools that can assist in a sustainable recovery. The ability to effectively utilize or modify these tools to achieve the broader aims of a sustainable recovery require a great deal of inter and intra-organizational coordination.<sup>2</sup> **Specific roles and tasks include:**<sup>3</sup>

- ***City Manager.*** The City Manager typically serves as the individual who oversees the overall recovery and reconstruction effort, including the coordination of operations. Duties may include the hiring of contractors to assist in specific aspects of recovery. The City Manager is often responsible for reporting the status of the recovery effort to the general public, the Mayor and City Council.

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<sup>2</sup> See Session 4 Roles in Recovery and Session 7 Shared Governance.

<sup>3</sup> Local roles are copied from Session 4 and modified to reflect objective 5.2.

Requests may be made to the Mayor and City Council to address identified problems that require a change in policy or the input of elected officials. Examples may include seeking a bond referendum to obtain funds needed to cover local recovery costs or the decision to implement a temporary building moratorium.

- **Finance.** The Finance Department typically serves as the entity responsible for tracking disaster-related expenditures. During a state disaster or local emergency, the Finance Department must accurately document expenditures in order to be reimbursed for eligible expenditures by the state government (during a state declared disaster) or track costs incurred by the local government and suggest the means by which they will be paid.<sup>4</sup> The effective tracking of costs allows the City Manager to determine how non-reimbursable costs will be paid. Finance department officials may coordinate the development and financial tracking of grant applications for hazard mitigation and recovery grant programs.
- **Public Works.** In the post-disaster environment, the Public Works Department assesses damages to public infrastructure and identifies the means to repair it. Early recovery efforts involve restoring public water and sewer service. Public works officials may also be involved in the development of Capital Improvement Plans that project the future placement of infrastructure. Prior to and immediately following disasters, public works officials may consider the placement of future infrastructure relative to identified hazard areas, using past disaster damages as a means to emphasize the need to account for known hazards and their impact.
- **Planning.** The Planning Department may be tasked with developing a disaster recovery plan, assisting in the development of post-disaster grant applications and disseminating information regarding post-disaster assistance. Post-disaster reconstruction efforts may require the identification of suitable sites for relocated public facilities and neighborhoods in accordance with the local comprehensive land use plan. Planners can play a key role in the identification of recovery objectives that compliment broader community goals, including the protection of the people and property, sound economic development, the protection of the environment and the provision of adequate recreational opportunities.
- **Police.** The Police Department is typically charged with assisting individuals as needed and protecting private and public property.

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<sup>4</sup> Local governments that repeatedly sustain localized events may maintain a disaster relief fund. This, however, is very uncommon.

- ***Fire.*** The Fire Department may be involved in initial search and rescue activities as needed, suppressing fires that result from the event, and assisting state and local emergency management officials conduct preliminary damage assessments. Police and fire officials should be involved in post-disaster redevelopment decisions, particularly as they affect immediate response times and access to people and property. Additional examples include roofing materials used in areas susceptible to wildland or earthquake induced fire, the adequate placement of fire hydrants and the growing concerns associated with defensible space and terrorist-related vulnerabilities.
- ***Building Inspector's Office.*** Building inspectors are usually tasked with assessing damages to homes and other community property, including the determination of a structure's habitability or whether a home is substantially damaged. The placement of a temporary building moratorium is guided by the access to building permits. Temporary building moratoria can provide communities the time needed to assess next steps. In many instances, this allows government officials to assess the extent of damages and develop a more comprehensive reconstruction strategy that includes the incorporation of sustainable building practices.
- ***Local Floodplain Administrator.*** During a flood-related disaster, the Local Floodplain Administrator may assess the type and degree of damages sustained, assess the accuracy of existing Flood Insurance Rate Maps, notify homeowners located in the floodplain of their options regarding filing flood insurance claims, or the steps that must be followed to rebuild their flood damaged home in conformance with existing building requirements. The provision of flood assistance for those that maintain flood insurance is not based on a federal disaster declaration. Specific benefits include receiving a flood insurance settlement, based on damages sustained and the potential receipt of an Increased Cost of Compliance payment.<sup>5</sup>
- ***Locally Elected Officials.***
  - Locally elected officials are responsible for representing their constituents.
  - A disaster affects people in the most elemental manner, damaging property and causing physical, emotional and economic impacts.
  - Elected officials often become strong advocates for local disaster victims.
  - Decisions must be made that affect the distribution and types of assistance provided to differing segments of the community.

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<sup>5</sup> Increased Cost of Compliance may be used by homeowners who maintain flood insurance to offset the cost to relocate or elevate their flood damaged residence.

- Obtaining recovery assistance is linked, in part, to the access to and use of political power.
  - Locally elected officials can play an important role in publicizing community needs and using political measures to obtain what they believe is needed by their constituency.
  - Less frequently, local officials may not seek an equitable distribution of assistance based on factors such as an individual or groups lack of power, race or class.
  
- **Locally elected officials may include:**
  - Mayor;
  - City or Town Council Members; and
  - County Judge.
  
- **Elected officials typically assume the following responsibilities:**
  - Seek state and local aid;
  - Address public concerns;
  - Organize the response and recovery effort; and
  - Approve or deny proposed municipal or county policy changes.

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### **Unintended Effects of State and Local Government-Driven Recovery**

State and local governments can utilize a range of existing programs to affect recovery. The manner in which they are used can either facilitate or hinder a sustainable recovery. State and local recovery programs will be discussed in the context of those practices that hinder sustainable recovery.

#### ***State Programs***

- The creation of state recovery programs may mirror federal assistance programs. As a result, similar problems arise as described in Objective 5.2, including the repair of at-risk homes and infrastructure to their pre-disaster condition and the development of programs with conflicting objectives.

- Existing state agency programs that frequently aid in recovery may not be fully aware of State Emergency Management objectives. Most states do not maintain a state-level recovery plan, nor are their widely accepted recovery planning standards. Rather, the creation of a State Recovery Task Force often follows a disaster. The creation of a post-disaster plan may limit the establishment of strong inter-agency relationships needed to fully understand how existing programs and resources can be maximized to address sustainable recovery goals. The development of a strong horizontally integrated system frequently requires a long-term, mutually dependent relationship.

### *Local Programs*

- Localized disaster recovery activities are driven by the day to day roles of local stakeholders.
- Since most localized emergencies and disasters do not result in the release of additional funding, existing roles are adapted to local needs or modified based on the requests of management or elected officials.
  - **As a result, recovery is a reflection of the current system of governance and shaped to a large extent by several factors. They include:**
    - ***Saliency.*** Pre-disaster planning and the post-disaster provision of aid is driven to some extent by how elected officials and managers view the importance of investing time and effort into preparing for disasters versus other day-to-day governmental functions. Those who recognize that disaster preparedness, mitigation and recovery concepts and practices should be integrated into all day-to-day activities are more likely to achieve a sustainable recovery when disaster strikes.
    - ***Political Will.*** Achieving a sustainable recovery necessitates a strong political will to alter the status quo following a disaster. In many cases, the unwillingness to alter hazardous reconstruction and land use patterns merely increases the likelihood of future disasters.
    - ***Capacity-Building.*** Local governments must seek ways to establish and maintain a certain level of technical, fiscal and administrative capacity to address recovery needs when they arise. Continued dependence on state and federal government does not work when localized disasters occur and assistance is unavailable.

- ***Past Disaster Experience.*** Communities that have experienced past disasters should learn from past experience and establish new recovery processes or amend current roles assumed by existing stakeholders based on lessons learned.
- ***Recovery Planning.*** Local government officials that have an established planning program can modify and/or expand existing plans to include recovery goals, objectives and action items. Communities that do not possess planners or have limited plan-making expertise may choose to consult with neighboring jurisdictions that have developed and are implementing local plans.

**Objective 5.2                      Discuss federal recovery programs, including their intended purpose and unintended effects**

**Remarks:**

In the United States, disaster recovery following a federally declared disaster is inextricably linked to identifying the funding necessary to address the immediate and long-term needs of the disaster victim and the communities in which they live.<sup>6</sup> Most communities are not equipped to rebuild without significant help from federal and state governments.<sup>7</sup> The commitment of state and local governments to recovery varies widely across the United States. While some state governments have created mitigation or recovery programs, including the procurement of funds to implement them following state and local disasters, local governments rarely allocate such funding in their annual operating budget.

<sup>6</sup> In reality, most events do not reach the level of damages required to trigger a federal disaster declaration. In these cases, federal assistance is not provided and states and local governments must decide how to rebuild their communities without aid from FEMA and other federal agencies.

<sup>7</sup> Ideally, sustainable communities will incorporate effective multi-objective planning into their day to day operations, including the adaptation of comprehensive mitigation measures that are designed to reduce the need for outside assistance should a natural hazard strike their community. The concept of self-reliance, while an important component of sustainability, is frequently ignored by many scholars and practitioners when discussing sustainable disaster recovery.

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**It is important to note that the exclusive reliance on federal mitigation and recovery programs:**

- Limits the scope of recovery, particularly as it relates to achieving the broader goals of multi-objective planning and sustainable redevelopment;
- Does not address the more likely occurrence of localized events and disasters that are not designated a federal disaster; and
- Stifles self-reliance and ultimately make communities more vulnerable to future events.<sup>8</sup>

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**Those communities that aggressively seek out multiple funding sources both pre and post-disaster and couple these efforts with existing and forward thinking recovery strategies are better positioned to meet the preexisting goals of the community, while making the locale more sustainable.**

- The development of a comprehensive disaster recovery plan before the disaster strikes can facilitate this process.
- In most cases, however, local governments use an adaptive, post-disaster planning approach. Recovery planning will be discussed in Sessions 7 and 8.

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<sup>8</sup> The repeated repair of hazard-prone structures by the federal government is one of the factors that ultimately lead to the development of the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program and the growing emphasis on mitigation.

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The current method used to disburse federal disaster funding is a complex maze of programs, whose timing of disbursement and lack of program coordination often has the unintended consequence of hindering the ability to comprehensively reduce risk and optimize recovery.<sup>9</sup> Three key FEMA programs, including Public Assistance, Individual Assistance and the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program programs will be discussed in more detail. A discussion will follow that describes disaster recovery funding triggered by congressional appropriations.

**FEMA Disaster Recovery Programs: Public Assistance, Individual Assistance and the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program**

In the book *Disasters by Design*, Dennis Mileti characterizes disaster recovery as “a set of processes in search of a policy” (1999, p.235). In fact, the recovery process is dominated by the administration of disconnected federal programs. **Two key factors limit recovery programs:**

- In the majority of cases, federal programs are administered without a set of guiding principles, and
- Recovery programs are not designed to compliment one another.

This is particularly evident when viewed in the context of pre and post-disaster community needs versus more narrowly defined program eligibility criteria.

- As a result of this approach, communities are limited in their ability to creatively address localized problems.
- While an “adaptive approach” typically results, some states and local governments have proven adept at using recovery funding to achieve multiple aims, including a more sustainable recovery.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> For a listing of potential mitigation and recovery funding sources, see *Disaster Assistance: A Guide to Recovery Programs* (2000).

<sup>10</sup> It is important to note that hazard events typically result in damages that do not meet a federal disaster declaration threshold. In these cases, federal recovery funds are not available. Therefore, states and local governments, the insurance industry, citizens and business owners must assume the costs of recovery.

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Following a Presidential disaster declaration, in accordance with the Stafford Act, federal assistance is provided to states, local governments and individuals to aid in recovery.

**The three primary aid programs include:**

- Public Assistance;
- Individual Assistance; and
- Hazard Mitigation Grant Program.

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***Public Assistance:***

**Public assistance** can be defined as aid to public (and certain private non-profit) entities for emergency services and the repair or replacement of disaster damaged public facilities (see [fema.gov/rrr/dec\\_guid.shtm](http://fema.gov/rrr/dec_guid.shtm), p.2).

**Public assistance-related activities include:**

- The repair of damaged infrastructure;
- The removal of debris; and
- The provision of “emergency protective measures.”

**Important aspects of Public Assistance programs include:**

- Public assistance activities are usually the most costly elements of disaster recovery.
- State and local governments and some non-profits are potential recipients of public assistance funds.
- States, for example, incur large-scale costs when responding to and recovering from a disaster. Costs may include contract labor or overtime incurred by local staff to complete disaster-related tasks.

- The PA cost-share is typically 75% federal, 25% state. In major events, this ratio can change to a 90/10 split. This change can, in turn, have a dramatic effect on the amount of federal funds available to states and local governments.<sup>11</sup>
- When the state and local governments demonstrate that they cannot respond effectively, FEMA may authorize the use of “direct federal assistance,” wherein some forms of debris removal and “emergency protective measures” are implemented via federal “mission assignments.”
  - This allows FEMA to contract with other federal agencies to conduct this work.<sup>12</sup>
    - For example, in disasters that result in a major accumulation of debris, FEMA may contract with the Corps of Engineers to coordinate the process.

Public Assistance projects, which can be broadly classified as either emergency or permanent work, are further subdivided into seven categories, and assigned the letters A-G.<sup>13</sup>

**Emergency Work includes:**

- Category A (Debris Removal); and
- Category B (Emergency Protective Measures).

**Permanent Work (including repair and reconstruction):**

- Category C (Roads and Bridges);
- D (Water Control Facilities);
- E (Buildings and Equipment);
- F (Utilities); and
- G (Parks, Recreational Facilities, and Other Items).

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<sup>11</sup> Hazard Mitigation Grant Program funds represent 15% of total federal disaster costs. Therefore, as Public Assistance costs increase, Hazard Mitigation Grant Program funds increase accordingly.

<sup>12</sup> During federally-declared disasters, FEMA serves as the lead federal agency. This designation allows FEMA to task over 28 federal agencies to perform specific actions.

<sup>13</sup> In 1999, FEMA changed the name of the Public Assistance to the Infrastructure Program to better reflect the true intent of the program. Federal officials believed the name Public Assistance may have confused disaster victims and public officials who may have thought the program provided direct assistance to the “public” rather than repairing damaged public infrastructure. However, most federal, state and local government officials still refer to the program as Public Assistance.

## *Emergency Work: Debris Removal and Emergency Protective Measures*

### ***Debris Removal***

Disasters result in significant damages to homes, public facilities, infrastructure and the environment, necessitating the removal of debris and the provision of emergency measures such as the extensive overtime labor associated with initial response and recovery activities. Hurricanes, earthquakes, tornadoes, floods, and ice storms, for example, frequently generate large amounts of debris.

### **Eligible expenses reimbursed under the Public Assistance Program for debris removal include:**

- Trees and woody debris;
- Building wreckage;
- Sand, mud, silt and gravel; and
- Vehicles, and other disaster-related material” (1999, p.45).<sup>14</sup>

### **Measures must:**

- Eliminate threats to lives, public health and safety;
- Eliminate threats of significant damage to improved public or private property; or
- Ensure economic recovery of the affected community to the benefit of the community-at-large” (p.45).

Typically, debris removal from public property is an eligible expense if it meets established public health and safety criteria. For example, road clearance is eligible in most cases as it could impede the movement of emergency vehicles, whereas the removal of downed trees on private property is not an eligible expense.

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<sup>14</sup> Following Hurricanes and coastal storms, large-scale sand removal operations are often necessary along barrier island communities due to storm surge or high waves, which push sand onto public roads and into neighborhoods. In most cases the sand is screened to remove debris and replaced on the beach. This is done in order to save the finite resource which serves to help maintain the beach and protect adjacent property. Public Assistance funds are frequently used to bulldoze sand from the beach to create temporary “protective” berms. In actuality, the creation of artificial dunes provides limited protection to ocean front properties. True dune systems offer greater protection to nearby properties due to several factors. These include the dune profile (height, breadth and shape) the composition of the sand (grain size and shape – ideally from the same beach) and the degree to which the dune is vegetated with native species.

### ***Emergency Protective Measures***

Prior to and following an event, states and local governments incur costs preparing for and responding to disasters. Many of these costs are reimbursable under what is referred to as “emergency protective measures.” Like debris removal, eligible activities must address an immediate threat to life, public health or safety or address a hazard that may affect public or, in some cases, private property. **Specific examples may include:**

- The demolition of buildings posing a public health or safety threat;
- Securing the disaster area to prevent injuries or looting<sup>15</sup>;
- Search and rescue activities;
- The activation of state or local Emergency Operations Centers;
- The construction of temporary housing or the creation of temporary community facilities necessary to provide public services;
- Vector control;
- Animal disposal;
- Establishing public shelters and feeding stations;
- The repair of damaged facilities; and
- The construction of emergency protective structures like levees, sandbagging and pushing of sand onto a beach.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> The looting of homes and businesses is uncommon following disasters. When isolated incidents do happen, the media tends to highlight such behavior, thereby creating a heightened belief that this is a widespread phenomenon. Unfortunately, this may encourage property owners who may have evacuated their homes to return before it is prudent to do so, further taxing local law enforcement officials.

<sup>16</sup> Following hurricanes or floods, the resulting water may cause an increased mosquito population. Spraying pesticides to reduce the threat of mosquito-borne illnesses is an eligible Public Assistance expense. Floods can also prove deadly for livestock. Hurricane Floyd, which struck North Carolina in 1999, resulted in the deaths of thousands of chickens, turkeys, hogs, horses and cattle. Their disposal necessitated the combined use of burial, where appropriate, or incineration. Both techniques were funded under the Public Assistance program.

**Additional types of emergency work may include, under certain circumstances:**

- Emergency communications;
- Public transportation;
- Snow removal; and
- Building inspections.

**The interpretation of the term “immediate threat” is frequently a key point of negotiation between FEMA and state officials in the recovery process. Specific issues subject to interpretation include:**

- Responding to and recovering from disasters results in a significant accumulation of overtime work among local and state officials. These expenses are eligible PA costs up to an established point in time based on the magnitude of the event.
- The demolition of homes acquired under the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program represents another interpretive policy question. In some instances, FEMA may determine that flood-damaged homes slated for acquisition do not represent an imminent health threat to the community. Therefore, PA funds are not available for this purpose, requiring instead the use of HMGP funds.

***Permanent Work***

**The repair of infrastructure and other public facilities damaged by a federally-declared disaster is eligible for reimbursement under the permanent work category. Ineligible costs include:**

- Pre-existing conditions, including damages from past events are not eligible;
- Problems associated with the failure to maintain an existing facility. For example, storm water management projects, like the dredging of waterways, are not eligible unless it can be shown that the locality has regularly maintained the “pre-disaster capacity” of the water body.

### **Eligible projects may include:**

- Specific water control facilities, including the repair of dams and reservoirs, levees, drainage channels, shore protective devices, irrigation and pumping facilities (1999, p.55).
- Damaged public buildings and equipment may be repaired or, if necessary, replaced.<sup>17</sup>
- Interior items damaged by the event may be repaired or replaced.
- Damaged utilities, including waste-water treatment plants and power generation stations are potentially eligible for repair or replacement under Category F.
- Public recreational facilities (playground equipment, swimming pools, bath houses, tennis courts, boat docks piers, picnic tables and golf courses) may be eligible.
- The replacement of beach sand is an eligible permanent repair expense if the beach in question is an “improved beach.” In order to meet this criterion, the beach must be part of a regular re-nourishment process that has a specified beach profile and sand type.

### ***Redesigning the Public Assistance Process***

Like most recovery programs, established policies and guidelines are subject to varied interpretation by FEMA, states, and local governments. This results in regular debates following disasters as to how specific programs should be implemented. Negotiation and other collaborative problem-solving measures have been used with varying degrees of success (see Session 13). FEMA identifies several reasons for the redesign of the Public Assistance program. **They include:**

- An improved level of “customer service”;
- The more timely distribution of Public Assistance funds; and
- A more efficient and consistent delivery of program objectives (Public Assistance Policy Digest 1998).

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<sup>17</sup> Repairs necessary to bring infrastructure up to current code may be eligible for reimbursement.

## *Public Assistance and Mitigation*

**A significant change in the Public Assistance program involves the attempt to integrate mitigation measures into the repair of damaged infrastructure. Key factors to consider include:**

- The magnitude of this change has major policy implications due to the long-standing opposition of FEMA public assistance personnel to carry out this practice and rules that make it difficult to implement mitigation measures when identified opportunities exist.
- With the passage of the Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000, local governments are expected to identify potential mitigation measures that could be incorporated into the repair of damaged facilities following a federally declared disaster “to the best extent practicable” in order to be eligible for pre and post-disaster mitigation funding.
- Historically, most damaged infrastructure is replaced to “pre-disaster conditions.” For example, if a culvert is undermined following a flood, it is replaced as it was prior to the event. While this may seem to be logical, it frequently represents a short-term solution. An alternative involves the incorporation of specific mitigation measures into the new design, thereby reducing the likelihood that the culvert, bridge, or other structure would be damaged during the next event. This type of activity is eligible under section 406 of the Stafford Act, and is commonly referred to as **406 mitigation**.

**Examples of Public Assistance mitigation measures include, but are not limited to:**

- Increasing the culvert size to allow for an increased flow of water;
- Strengthening bridge supports to better withstand increased lateral forces associated with earthquakes; and
- Relocating or retrofitting flood damaged infrastructure, such as waste water treatment plants or pump stations.

**Specific factors limiting the adoption of 406 mitigation measures include:**

- Until recently, FEMA Public Assistance staff has been reluctant to implement these measures, in part, due to a long-standing tradition of making quick repairs to damaged infrastructure, rather than addressing the more time consuming issues associated with incorporating risk reduction measures into the repair process.
- Historically an organizational culture has permeated the infrastructure program that views mitigation as an activity that is not part of their job.

- Prior to the passage of the Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000, most states did not aggressively pursue available 406 opportunities, due in large part to a lack of adequate training and difficulties associated with getting projects approved by FEMA. A primary hurdle facing the approval of 406 projects involves conducting benefit cost analysis.<sup>18</sup>
- In addition to the challenges associated with conducting the analysis (which is traditionally done by FEMA or state emergency management staff), many local governments may not pursue this option due to a lack of knowledge or the concern over the length of time it would take to make improvements versus the rapid repair of damaged infrastructure.
- Without a recovery plan in place prior to the disaster, most local governments seek to rebuild public facilities and infrastructure back to the pre-disaster condition as rapidly as possible, rather than look for ways to incorporate mitigation into the recovery process.
- Under the Stafford Act, the Public Assistance Program has no pre-disaster limitations on eligible expenditures.
  - This contrasts, for example, with the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program, which has a funding cap based on a percentage of total disaster costs.
  - Those charged with Public Assistance project oversight at the Federal level have focused on short term cost containment as opposed to spending more in the short run, even though losses avoided via the implementation of mitigation measures frequently pay for themselves over time.

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<sup>18</sup> Benefit cost analysis is a tool commonly used to determine federal program effectiveness. Benefit cost analysis measures the costs associated with the implementation of a given action and compares these costs with expected monetized benefits. If it can be determined that the benefits exceed the costs, the action is deemed cost effective. Typically this is defined as a ratio, where, benefits are divisible by the costs. A ration of greater than 1 equates with a cost-effective analysis.

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### *Individual Assistance*

Individual Assistance programs are intended to aid individuals and families. In the majority of cases, aid is tied to returning the individual, structure or one's living status to their pre-disaster condition.<sup>19</sup> In all cases, potential recipients must register with FEMA as part of the first step in determining eligibility. In most cases, registration is done over the phone via a toll-free tele-registration procedure.

#### **Individual Assistance Programs include:**

- Temporary Housing Assistance;
- Individual and Family Grants;
- Small Business Administration Disaster Loans;
- Disaster Unemployment Assistance;
- Legal Services;
- Special Tax Considerations; and
- Crisis Counseling.

#### *Temporary Housing Assistance*

The Temporary Housing Assistance Program provides the means for those who have sustained damages to their homes to live in a safe and sanitary location until repairs are completed. **Specific aid programs include:**

- Home repair assistance;
- Rental assistance;
- Mortgage and rental assistance;
- Lodging reimbursement and;
- Referrals to other housing programs.

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<sup>19</sup> Limited mitigation measures such as the elevation or strapping of a water heater to reduce the likelihood of flood or earthquake-related damages is an eligible expense but one that is rarely undertaken.

Home Repair Assistance funds are based on the amount of structural damage as determined by a FEMA inspector. Rental Assistance typically involves the provision of funds needed to rent a unit that is comparable to that damaged during the event (based on the fair market value of units found in the area). In the case of major disasters where a large portion of available housing units have been impacted, a mobile home or travel trailer may be provided. Mortgage and Rental Assistance is available to disaster victims who are facing imminent eviction or foreclosure. The recipient must prove that the disaster resulted in lost income or employment leading to the receipt of a written notice of eviction or foreclosure.

### *Individual and Family Grants*

The Individual and Family Grant Program (IFG) is intended for those disaster victims who cannot afford to take on additional debt. In fact, low-income recipients of IFG funds are those deemed ineligible for the disaster loan program available under the Small Business Administration or whose needs are not met by insurance or voluntary agency assistance. As of 2002, individuals and families could receive a maximum of 14,800 dollars. However, grant amounts tend to range between 2,000 and 4,000 dollars.

#### **Eligible costs include:**

- The provision of housing;
- Medical and dental assistance;
- Funeral expenses;
- Necessary transportation; and
- Required flood insurance premiums.<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> Recipients of Individual Assistance are required to maintain flood insurance if the funds awarded are used to repair a home that is located in the floodplain. FEMA pays the premiums for the first three years. From that point forward it is the responsibility of the homeowner. However, there are limited enforcement mechanisms in place to make sure that flood insurance is maintained.

### *Small Business Administration Disaster Loans*

The Small Business Administration (SBA) provides loans to business owners, homeowners and renters. **Loan programs include:**

- Home Disaster Loans - assistance to homeowners and renters to repair or replace disaster-related damages to the structure or personal property;
- Business Disaster Loans - funding to aid business owners repair or replace damaged property, including inventory and supplies; and
- Economic Injury Loans – assistance to small businesses and agricultural cooperatives.

### *Disaster Unemployment Assistance*

Disaster Unemployment Assistance is available to individuals who have become unemployed as a result of the disaster. Potential recipients must first register with the state unemployment service. If it is determined they are eligible for assistance, benefits may run for 26 weeks.

### *Legal Services*

Free legal assistance is provided to disaster victims following federal disaster declarations when cases are not fee generating. **Examples of assistance include:**

- Assistance with insurance claims;
- Counseling on landlord/tenant problems;
- Consumer protection and;
- The replacement of wills or other legal documents destroyed in a disaster.

### *Special Tax Considerations*

Taxpayers who experience a casualty loss as a result of a federally-declared disaster can deduct the loss from their income tax return for the year in which it occurred. The amount must exceed ten percent of the adjusted gross income for that year. The Internal Revenue Service can expedite refunds in a federally declared disaster area.

### *Crisis Counseling*

Federal funds are available to states in order to provide short-term counseling for people affected by a federally-declared disaster. Assistance may include immediate or regular program services. **Immediate services are designed to assist the state quickly provide needed assistance in the form of:**

- Screening;
- Diagnostic; and
- Counseling services.

**Additional aid may include:**

- Outreach;
- Public information dissemination; and
- Community networking.

**The regular program is intended to provide:**

- Up to nine months of crisis counseling;
- Community outreach;
- Consultation and educational services for those impacted by a disaster.

(Slide 5-14)

### ***Hazard Mitigation Grant Program***

Historically, the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program has represented the primary funding mechanism used by federal, state and local governments to incorporate mitigation into the recovery process.<sup>21</sup> The broad objectives of the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program are to reduce future loss of life and damage to structures in areas at risk to natural hazards.

**Activities may include:**

- The acquisition or elevation of flood-prone homes;
- The retrofitting of structures to better withstand the forces associated with earthquakes, hurricane or tornadoes;
- Public education efforts, or
- The development of hazard mitigation plans.<sup>22</sup>

**Key programmatic aspects of the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program include:**

- Following a federally-declared disaster, Hazard Mitigation Grant Program funds are made available to the State by FEMA.
- The cost share requirements include a 75 percent federal and 25 percent non-federal match, which can be in the form of in-kind services or cash.
- Non-federal match rules vary from state to state regarding who pays. In some cases, states pay the non-federal share. In others states it may be a 50-50 state/local split, or entirely a local responsibility.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> The Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000, including the creation of the Pre-Disaster Mitigation grant program, represents a shift in emphasis to the identification and implementation of mitigation projects prior to a disaster.

<sup>22</sup> Hazard Mitigation Grant Program funds include a 5 percent set aside for projects that may not pass the more rigorous benefit-cost analysis criterion. Five percent projects may include mitigation planning, education and outreach or mitigation-related research.

<sup>23</sup> The degree to which local governments participate in non-federal cost share requirements represents an indicator of local commitment to mitigation. Begun in 1989, the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program initially required a 50 percent non-federal cost share. Today, a 25 percent non-federal cost share is required.

**(Slide 5-15)**

**Eligible applicants may include:**

- State and local governments;
- Certain private non-profits, and
- Indian tribes recognized by the federal government.

**(Slide 5-16)**

**The administration of the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program involves the following steps:**

- The state provides FEMA a copy of their Hazard Mitigation Grant Program Administrative (404) Plan, which states how projects will be chosen and the overall grant program managed. In most cases, the Administrative Plan is approved prior to the onset of disaster.
- The state develops a Management Cost Report that identifies the staff, equipment and facilities necessary to implement the disaster-specific tasks associated with administering the federal funds.
- The state then develops a list of prioritized project types. In most cases, the prioritized list is drawn from the existing 404 Plan. However, the state may choose to amend the plan to address disaster-specific impacts or in response to local needs and identified mitigation opportunities.
- The state must conduct public meetings describing the program and application deadlines. In many cases, states request pre-applications in order to assess the number, type and estimated budgets of potential projects submitted relative to the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program funds available.<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> Since the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program budget is based on federal disaster costs, the total funds may increase or decrease over time as more accurate costs are compiled. It is important to identify the eventual Hazard Mitigation Grant Program budget in order to determine which eligible projects can be funded. Therefore a budgetary “lock-in” is established after a set period of time. In most cases, the lock-in is established 6 months after a disaster declaration. In larger events, the lock-in may occur later as disaster costs are still being tabulated.

- The state reviews applications to determine project eligibility. Key eligibility factors include:
  - Technical feasibility;
  - Cost effectiveness; and
  - Environmental impact.<sup>25</sup>
- Once reviewed by the state, applications are chosen for submittal to FEMA for final approval. If approved, a grant agreement is signed between the state and the local government and the process of implementation begins.

**(Slide 5-17)**

Given the technical complexities associated with the administration of the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program, and the current design of the program, it is unsuited to be a source of rapid aid to victims following a disaster.

- Disaster victims are not concerned with the program's design. Rather, they are concerned with seeking aid to recover as quickly as possible.
- Since the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program is triggered by a federal disaster declaration, funds are made available after a disaster has occurred.
- Other recovery assistance programs, including Individual Assistance, Small Business Administration housing repair loans, homeowners insurance and National Flood Insurance claims, are processed much faster than the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program.
- Disaster Victims, many of whom want to get their lives back to normal as soon as possible must decide which programs to consider.
- The fact that Hazard Mitigation Grant Program funds are available following a disaster provides an important means to encourage local governments and individual homeowners to participate.
- After a disaster, potential grant recipients are more likely to consider more drastic measures such as the relocation or elevation of their home following a flood.

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<sup>25</sup> The implementation of Hazard Mitigation Grant Program projects is a complex process. Eligibility determinations require holding public meetings, conducting benefit cost analysis, identifying the location of the structure relative to the floodplain or other identified hazard, assessing the level of damages sustained, and conducting necessary environmental assessments and historic property recordation procedures.

**(Slide 5-18)**

**Supplemental Consideration:** The instructor should lead a discussion that addresses the benefits and costs associated with repairing homes to their pre-disaster condition versus relocating or retrofitting housing that faces repeated hazard impacts.<sup>26</sup> The instructor may choose to revisit these questions at the end of the later sessions. **The following questions may be used:**

- In the case of housing acquisition and relocation projects, how should communities balance the maintenance of established neighborhoods versus reducing community vulnerability?
- Should public funds be used to repeatedly repair at-risk private property?
- What impact should the repair of historic properties or minority neighborhoods have on decisions associated with relocation or retrofitting?

**(Slide 5-19)**

**Supplemental Consideration:** The instructor should ask the class to compare and contrast the two largest single-event Hazard Mitigation Grant Program housing acquisition programs: the Midwest Floods in 1993 and Hurricane Floyd in 1999. **Specific areas of comparison may include:**

- The number of homes acquired;
- The differing funding sources used, above and beyond the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program;
- A demographic analysis of those who participated in the buyout, including a comparison to other victims who did not participate;
- A description of the project sites;
- A description of what was done with the land once it was acquired; and
- The length of time it took to complete the projects.

In order to conduct this exercise, students will be required to research the two cases and present their findings orally or in writing as assigned by the instructor.

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<sup>26</sup> The relocation of a house involves physically lifting the structure, placing it on a truck, and moving it to an alternate location. Homes may also be acquired and demolished on site. In both cases, the land is deeded to the jurisdiction with restrictions specifying that it must remain as open space in perpetuity. The retrofitting of a home may include elevating it to or above the 100 - year flood height, or strengthening structural aspects of the home to better withstand the impacts associated with high winds or earthquake, for example.

(Slide 5-20)

### **Beyond the Stafford Act: Seeking Congressional Aid**

- Following major disasters, states frequently pursue recovery funds beyond that deemed eligible under Stafford Act programs such as the Public Assistance, Individual Assistance and Hazard Mitigation Grant Programs.
- Seeking Congressionally-appropriated aid has become increasingly common. Rutherford Platt, in his book *Democracy and Disaster*, has documented this trend and has made the argument that attempts to garner additional Congressional funding represent a form of pork-barrel politics (1999).
- The post-disaster timeframe is seen by many as a time to obtain all resources possible when Congress is willing to disperse assistance to a state and those that are suffering.
- In order to determine what is needed, damage estimates are typically requested. The attempt to rapidly assess disaster losses by states frequently result in inaccurate estimates, yet it is these estimates that drive disaster funding requests, particularly in the case of congressionally-appropriated aid.
- Congress may, in turn, claim that the estimates were purposeful attempts to “feed at the trough” during the initial post-disaster phase when the media images are still fresh in the minds of those in Washington.
- This frequently results in policy disputes between states and those tasked with the oversight of appropriations. Not surprisingly, Congressional representatives enthusiastically seek aid for their constituents.
- It is important, however, to understand the broader decision-making environment in which states and local governments must operate, using limited information to assert their needs within the time constraints established by the duration of congressional sessions.
- At the same time, states recognize that Stafford Act programs and the array of other federal sources of assistance that are typically available post-disaster will not address all of the problems confronted by local governments and disaster victims.
- State leaders can seek additional assistance, rely on existing federal programs that are, by law, limited in their scope, develop new programs, or seek a combination of the above.

(Slide 5-21)

**Supplemental Consideration:**

**The instructor should assign student teams to critically evaluate one or all of the following programs, noting their strengths and weaknesses:**

- Individual Assistance;
- Public Assistance;
- Hazard Mitigation Grant Program.

**Questions may include:**

- To what extent do the stated objectives of the program being evaluated relate to the concepts of sustainable recovery? Provide examples that exemplify and contradict the concepts discussed in Session II.
- Are there specific changes that could be made in the program being evaluated that would improve the degree to which it addressed the concepts of sustainable recovery? Provide specific examples.
- *Bonus Question.* Discuss ways that existing programs could be integrated to achieve a sustainable recovery. What, if any, changes would be necessary in existing programmatic or regulatory frameworks? This question may be revisited later in the course.

(Slide 5-22)

**Supplemental Consideration:**

**Option #1:** The instructor should assign students to investigate specific examples of where funding streams can be linked to create more sustainable communities. **Specific examples may include:**

- Programs that reduce hazard vulnerability (e.g. Community Development Block Grant Program – elevation or acquisition of damaged housing; Hazard Mitigation Grant Program – elevation or acquisition of damaged housing; Housing and Urban Development Disaster Recovery Initiative – repair, elevation or acquisition of damaged housing);
- Programs that result in a more sustainable economy (Small Business Administration – repair of damaged businesses and housing, Economic Development Administration – repair of damaged infrastructure, Community Development Block Grant Program – repair of damaged infrastructure);
- Programs that result in an improved environment (Hazard Mitigation Grant Program – acquisition of structures in the floodplain); and
- Programs that improve the condition of local housing (Hazard Mitigation Grant Program – elevation; Community Development Block Grant Program – rehabilitation).

**Option #2:** The instructor should ask students to discuss the apparent contradiction in federal programs, some of which can encourage or discourage sustainable recovery. These topics should be revisited later in the course and used as potential essay questions on a mid-term or final exam.

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**Objective 5.3            Discuss the legal basis of emergency management across federal, state and local levels of government**

**(Slide 5-23)**

The legal basis of the emergency management system is comprised of federal laws, executive orders, state enabling legislation and local laws governing the authority of governments to act prior to, during and after emergencies and disasters.

- For a more detailed description of federal laws governing emergency management refer to the Emergency Management Institute Higher Education Course: *Political and Policy Basis of Emergency Management, Session 7, pp.76-89.*
- **Key federal laws include:**
  - Early Disaster Relief Efforts and Assistance;
  - The Civil Defense Act of 1950;
  - Disaster Relief Act of 1950;
  - Disaster Relief Act of 1974; and
  - Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act, P.L 93-288 as Amended.

**(Slide 5-24)**

**It is important to note that federal law is not intended to supplant state law.**

- Over time, however, the array of federal laws have provided increasing levels of federal assistance to states, local governments and individual disaster victims.
- State emergency management law tends to focus on enabling legislation that provides the Governor emergency powers that are not enacted in “peace time.” These powers are described in Session 4.
- The brief history of federal legislation associated with emergency management and disaster recovery that follows highlights the fact that Congress is constantly trying to adjust and reformulate new ways to address large problems, including how to respond to and recover from disasters.

- In addition to this continual shifting of resources, programs and personnel, Congress continues to pass legislation following major disasters in reaction to differing events, much like early efforts pre-dating the passage of the Federal Disaster Act of 1950.
  - Following a large fire in Portsmouth, New Hampshire in 1803, Congress passed legislation that provided federal assistance to a state and a local government following a disaster for the first time.
  - As part of Franklin Roosevelt's New Deal, additional federal assistance was made available to states and local governments following disaster, including granting authority to the Reconstruction Finance Corporation to provide loans to repair public facilities damaged by earthquakes and later, other hazards.
    - The Bureau of Public Roads was given the authority to provide grants in order to repair federal-aid highways and bridges damaged by natural hazards.
    - The Flood Control Act of 1936 was established in order to construct protective measures that included dams, levees, dikes and other structure to protect property from flood-related losses.

**(Slide 5-25)**

- The Federal Disaster Act of 1950 established permanent legislation providing disaster relief to states and local governments and began to codify and standardize relief across existing federal agencies and programs.
  - Prior to that time, Congress passed new legislation following each specific disaster.
- A number of disasters, including the Alaska earthquake of 1964, Hurricanes Betsy (1965) and Camille (1969), Tropical Storm Agnes (1972) and the San Fernando earthquake (1971) resulted in the passage of legislation based on the impacts of a disaster and perceived needs - reminiscent of Congressional actions prior to the passage of the Federal Disaster Act of 1950.

- The Disaster Relief Act of 1970, intended to reduce the fragmentation of relief programs, met with significant criticism.
  - The Disaster Relief Act of 1974 followed, which provided funding for disaster preparedness activities, authorized disaster assistance and established the Federal Disaster Assistance Administration, which ultimately evolved into the Federal Emergency Management Agency.<sup>27</sup>
- In 1988, Congress passed the Stafford Act, which refocused FEMA's mission to include a greater emphasis on hazard mitigation and the improved coordination of post disaster recovery programs.
  - Among the grant sources established included the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program, which provides funds to states and local governments to initiate loss reduction initiatives following federally-declared disasters.
- Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000 established specific requirements for hazard mitigation planning, including incentives for States and local governments that develop compliant plans and penalties for those who failed to do so.
  - In addition, the Pre-Disaster Mitigation grant program was codified, allowing states and local governments to apply for mitigation funds pre-disaster.
- Following the terrorist attack on the World Trade Center on September 11<sup>th</sup>, 2001, Congress passed the Homeland Security Act which established the Department of Homeland Security. This reorganization of federal agencies represents one of the largest efforts of its kind since the Great Depression.

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<sup>27</sup> The Federal Emergency Management Agency was created by President Jimmy Carter in 1979 through the use of two executive orders which consolidated a range of federal programs and personnel.

**Supplemental Consideration:** The instructor should pose the following question - How should the current provision of federal, state and local disaster assistance be modified to better reflect the steps necessary to facilitate a sustainable recovery? Students should base their answer on the class lecture and readings up to this point in the course.

Specific actions facilitating a more sustainable recovery should be noted and evaluated relative to the points raised by Peter May in *Recovering From Catastrophes: Federal Disaster Relief Policy and Politics* (Chapter 2: Changing Policies, Politics and Values and Chapter 3: Changing Organizations and Priorities).

**Option # 1:** The question should be posed during class and students should work as a group to:

- Identify specific changes to current recovery programs;
- Evaluate proposed changes relative to the political context posed by Peter May; and
- Present their findings to the instructor as part of a group presentation.

**Option # 2:** The question should be posed during class and students expected to write an essay, not to exceed 5 pages in length, addressing the topic. Papers should be turned in during the following course session.

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**Objective 5.4          Discuss the role of social networks in recovery**

**(Slide 5-26)**

In order to understand recovery, one must first recognize that it is a social process and pre-existing social networks can play an important role.

- **Social Networks** can be defined as groups that interact regularly, conveying information as part of long-standing social ties associated with familial, group, or organizational relationships. **Specific examples may include:**
  - Religious organizations;
  - Social or professional organizations;
  - Kinship ties; or
  - Charity groups.

- Social networks differ from emergent groups discussed in Session 4. Emergent groups are formed as a result of a precipitating event (e.g. disaster) while social networks represent a series of relationships that are the result of established ties.

**(Slide 5-27)**

- **Social networks and emergent groups share several similar traits. They include:**
  - Both groups often fill a gap in the disaster recovery process, disseminating information and identifying the needs of groups who may be missed by other recovery organizations.
  - Recovery typically occurs within the same social context as that which existed in a community before the disaster.
    - Social networks may be adept at understanding and describing social standing at community and neighborhood levels.
    - Sociological factors such as class, race and institutions all play a role in the manner in which recovery happens.
    - Disasters frequently have a tendency to clarify existing issues of equity and access to power.
    - Social networks may cross class, race and institutional levels.
    - Social networks that cut across class, race and institutional levels may prove well suited to bring these groups together to address problems during a time of crisis;
    - In other cases, historically under-represented classes may be represented, and therefore, empowered by class or race-based groups.
    - Church and non-profit groups provide a powerful example of social networks that are often active in recovery.
    - Existing social networks, including class or race-based groups or church leadership may be the most effective way to reach out to under-represented stakeholder groups.

(Slide 5-28)

- The recovery process is complex, involving multiple parties with frequently conflicting beliefs. Belief systems can be tested under the most difficult of circumstances during recovery.
  - Social networks provide a venue to express these conflicting views. Sharing these views with the media can provide a public vehicle to express dissatisfaction with recovery processes and more readily gain the attention of those charged with recovery.
  
- **Social networks can more effectively enhance the recovery process if the following steps are taken:**
  - ***Identify social networks before a disaster and involve them in the pre-disaster recovery planning process.*** Pre-disaster planning that includes social networks provides the means to address several organizational characteristics of the current recovery process practiced in the United States.
    - ***Participatory Planning.*** The participation of social networks provides an important vehicle to enhance participatory planning – a key aspect of sustainable recovery.
    - ***Localism.*** While the state and federal governments may provide key resources following a disaster, it is the responsibility of local government to provide for public safety. Social networks can provide an important link between local government agencies and disaster victims.
    - ***Standardization.*** Local governments provide similar basic services. However, the means by which they accomplish these tasks vary based on the size and region of the locality. Social networks can fill localized niche needs based, in part, on the type of government services provided, and the unique capabilities of governmental agencies found in the area.
    - ***Diversity.*** The collection of agencies and personnel addressing recovery needs varies in terms of size, structure and decision-making style. Social networks can fill roles based on the makeup of agencies and personnel tasked with recovery.

- **Fragmentation.** Due in large part to the large number of existing agencies and organizations in American society, a high level of fragmentation, both horizontally and vertically (refer to Session 7 – shared governance), exists. This is particularly true following disasters.
  - **High levels of fragmentation can lead to:**
    - Poor communication;
    - Poor decision-making; and
    - Poor control.

*Information modified from: Social Dimensions of Disaster. Emergency Management Institute Higher Education Course. Thomas Drabek 1996. p. 21-10.*

**(Slide 5-29)**

- **Involve social networks as described in the recovery plan.**
  - Inviting stakeholders to the table is only part of the process. The roles assigned in the recovery plan must be implemented if those responsible for administering the plan hope to maintain trust among those who have committed to assist.
  - Otherwise, social networks may become frustrated and choose to take actions that run counter to the objectives outlined in the plan. **Specific examples may include:**
    - **Sharing inaccurate information:**
      - Aid program requirements or deadlines;
      - Estimated damages or loss of life;
      - Housing decontamination techniques (following a flood); and
      - Shelter rules and locations.
    - Initiating the reconstruction of damaged housing without proper permits or prior to the end of a temporary post-disaster building moratorium; and

- Re-entering neighborhoods following an evacuation prior to the time established by local authorities.
- *Invite members of social networks to basic emergency management training courses.*
- *Share information with social networks on a regular basis, both pre and post-disaster. Specific examples of information sharing may include:*
  - Disaster preparedness tips;
  - The means of distributing post-disaster assistance; and
  - The findings of a local hazard identification and risk assessment study.

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