

# THE LIFECYCLE OF A DISASTER

**PREPAREDNESS:** Continued efforts to anticipate, respond to and recover from possible disasters.

Preparedness activities should be ongoing.

**IMPACT:** An event (natural or man-made) occurs that outstrips the capacity of the local community to respond.

**RESCUE:** Rescue is the period of time right after a disaster where first responders, e.g. local fire, police and emergency medical services, attempt to contain or minimize damage and save lives.

Power is often out. Utility companies may cut power to ensure safety.

Debris is visible. If possible, road crews begin to remove debris.

Local community members, including churches, community agencies and others, provide emergency food and housing. Affected individuals may move to emergency shelters.

The National Guard may be called up to assist.

Most schools and businesses are closed.

**RELIEF:** During relief, people create temporary solutions to meet immediate needs, such as shelters and mass feeding programs.

Local road crews and utility workers continue their work.

Additional workers from around the country arrive to begin to clean up and restore power.

Red Cross and other organizations open shelters and distribute food.

Schools and many businesses remain closed.

Insurance Adjustors are on site and people begin applying for insurance claims.

People may apply for government funding through FEMA to help pay for rebuilding.

Churches often act individually to meet immediate needs such as meals, phone and computer charging, spiritual and emotional support, housing and other needs.

**SHORT TERM RECOVERY:** Individuals and communities work to find more permanent solutions to disaster damage and begin rebuilding.

Roads have been cleared, and power and utilities have been restored to residents whose homes weren't damaged.

People in shelters are transitioned to motels and apartments.

Undamaged schools and businesses reopen.

Some people begin to receive insurance, loans and government aid.

Donations continue to pour in, but the contributions are not always what is needed.

Relief groups are leaving and local long term recovery groups begin to form.

**LONG TERM RECOVERY:** People begin to find their "new normal." Disaster recovery may take many years.

Residents begin to transition to FEMA-funded temporary housing, some may return to their homes. Others move away.

Prolonged job loss from closed businesses combined with increased housing costs prompts an increased need for social services.

Some people are hiring contractors and rebuilding their homes using insurance, FEMA funds, loans and savings.

Individuals may need continued outside help, disaster case management and/or continue to have unmet needs.

Outside volunteers arrive to help repair and rebuild homes.

Mental health issues may surface for some, particularly around anniversary events.

Churches and organizations begin to work together to form more coordinated disaster responses.

RESPONSE

RECOVERY