

Hurricane Preparedness and COVID Response



Gabriela Stermolle, MS

Division Chief, Preparedness

Texas Division of Emergency Management

Disasters in Texas

- The Lone Star State has recorded 99 **Major Disasters** in 66 years.
- 1 EVERY 8.1 MONTHS
- The state's large and growing population compounds disaster numbers.



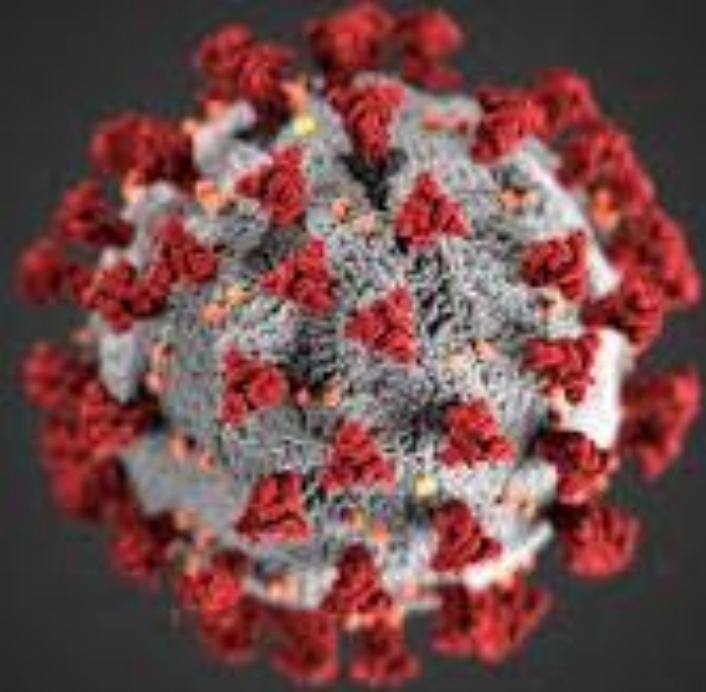
Incident Management in Texas

- Incidents begin and end locally, and are managed on a daily basis at the *closest possible* geographical, organizational, and jurisdictional level



Preparedness During COVID

- State Plans/Training/Exercise
- COVID Preparedness
 - Sheltering
 - Evacuation
 - Transportation
 - Logistics, supply chain



Sheltering and Evacuation

- Non-congregate
- Contract de-conflation
- Lack of available space
- Wrap around services
- Social distancing



Transportation and Logistics

- Medical/General Population
- Contract de-confliction
- Lack of available assets
- Social distancing
- PPE



Texas – Strong Partners in Disaster Response

- Local jurisdictions
- Regional Organizations (RACs)
- Voluntary Organizations
- Special Response Teams (Emergency Medical Task Force [EMTF], Texas Task Force 1, Public Works Response Team [PWRT])
- Local volunteer special response teams (Search One, TEXSAR, TCSAR, AASAR)
- Private Sector
- State Government (TDEM and the Emergency Management Council)
- Federal Government (FEMA, USGS, NWS)
- Media (TV, Print, Social)



Importance of Private Sector

- Private sector partners have the financial capacity to provide resources at the onset of a disaster and promptly help survivors
- An estimated **25 percent** of businesses don't open again after a major disaster, according to the Institute for Business and Home Safety.
- Re-opening businesses helps to stabilize the local economy after a disaster



Private Sector Preparedness

- Build a culture of preparedness
- Conduct hazard vulnerability assessments
- Develop an emergency response plan
- Implement the emergency response plan
- Help your community prepare



How do Texans Support Each Other?

- DO:
 - Build relationships before a disaster
 - Conduct combined planning, training and exercises
- DON'T:
 - Wait until a disaster happens
 - Self-deploy



Personal Responsibility

- Are you ready?
- Is your family prepared?
- Does your workplace have a plan?
- Does your church, place of worship or civic organization have a plan?
- Does your neighborhood have a plan?



The Four Challenges

- Be the **expert**
- Stay in your **lane**
- **Collaborate** at all costs
- **Make a decision!**



