

PUEBLO COUNTY EMERGENCY OPERATIONS PLAN

ANNEX X - DAMAGE ASSESSMENT

I. PURPOSE

To provide a timely, comprehensive damage assessment system which will provide an estimate of the community damages/losses soon after a disaster. This system must meet the needs of the community and meet disaster declaration needs consistent with State and Federal criteria.

II. SITUATIONS AND ASSUMPTIONS

A. Situations

A disaster, regardless of hazard, requires an accurate assessment of the actual effect on population and property. Such an assessment defines the severity and magnitude of loss and directs attention to the mobilization of human and material resources necessary to cope with the situation. Additionally, any county or city assistance request must be based on a firm, aggregate community damage/loss estimate.

B. Assumptions

While the initial response to a disaster will come from resources within this community, State and Federal disaster assistance may be required at some time during any given incident.

III. CONCEPT OF OPERATIONS

A. Working as members of a Community Damage Assessment Team, departments and agencies of town, city and county government, as well as special or metropolitan districts, must evaluate the extent and nature of physical damage to public and private facilities immediately following a disaster. Also, they must begin collecting, recording, and reporting information on the utilization of manpower, materials, equipment, and disaster-related costs. If the disaster impacts agricultural resources or products, that damage will be evaluated by agricultural professionals from state and federal agencies including but not limited to those resident in Pueblo County. These agricultural professionals will also be part of

the Community Damage Assessment Team. Information/data gathered by the Team will:

1. Serve as the basis for evaluating the need for disaster declarations at city, county, state and federal levels;
 2. Identify response, relief, and recovery needs; and
 3. Provide the required documentation needed to request State and Federal assistance.
- B. Information/data compiled by all jurisdictions will be reported to the Pueblo County Emergency Operations Center (EOC), which in turn will report information to the State EOC as appropriate. (See Colorado Damage Assessment Handbook for format.)
- C. The four steps to damage assessment are:
1. **Windshield Survey** involves driving, walking or flying over the most severely affected area(s). The assessment will provide local officials with information to determine whether local resources can cope with the problem or if additional assistance is necessary. The information usually provides the basis for the initial disaster situation report.
 2. **Initial Damage Assessment** gives a quick look at the disaster situation. If the disaster area is larger than first anticipated, or if the tasks appear to be beyond the capability of local government, the Preliminary Damage Assessment starts.
 3. **Preliminary Damage Assessment** supports a local government's request for a Governor's Declaration of Disaster and, in some cases, a Federal Presidential Declaration. This assessment supports the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) regional summary, analysis and recommendation to approve or deny the request for federal assistance. It determines program and management requirements for the disaster recovery effort.
 4. **Detailed Damage Assessment** is a detailed description of damage with cost figures for each damaged facility or system. This phase justifies State and Federal relief and recovery assistance.

IV. ORGANIZATION AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- A. The Pueblo County Department of Emergency Management (DEM) will:
 - 1. Designate an individual to serve as the Community Damage Assessment Coordinator, who will be responsible for coordinating all damage assessment activities in Pueblo County for a disaster, including local, state and federal activities. This person will also be responsible for maintaining a central repository of copies of all damage assessment documents developed relative the disaster, laying the foundation for a coordinated recovery effort; and
 - 2. Facilitate briefings between the Community Damage Assessment Team and the Executive Policy Group at each stage of the damage assessment process.

- B. The Pueblo Regional Building Authority will:
 - 1. Conduct damage assessments of residential, commercial and public structures (other than roads and bridges), participating with state and/or federal personnel as needed;
 - 2. Designate an individual to serve as its Agency Damage Assessment Coordinator. This person will be responsible for all record keeping carried out under the Uniform Disaster Plan; maintaining a local duty roster; coordinating damage assessment with the Community Damage Assessment Coordinator; and ensuring that codes are enforced. The Agency Damage Assessment Coordinator will consolidate the information received at each phase of the damage assessment and report the results to the Community Damage Assessment Coordinator as they are developed; and
 - 3. Appoint and maintain a roster of primary/alternate disaster assessment personnel.

- C. The American Red Cross (ARC) will:
 - 1. Conduct windshield surveys, initial damage assessments and preliminary damage assessments to determine damage to residential structures, using categories of “no damage, minor damage, major damage and destroyed” to determine potential sheltering requirements;

2. Conduct detailed damage assessment to determine damage to the contents of residential structures; and
 3. Designate an individual to serve as its Agency Damage Assessment Coordinator. This person will be responsible for all damage assessment record keeping carried out under the ARC Plan; maintaining a local duty roster; and coordinating damage assessment with the Community Damage Assessment Coordinator. The Agency Damage Assessment Coordinator will consolidate the information received at each phase of the damage assessment and report the results to the Community Damage Assessment Coordinator as they are developed.
- D. The Public Works Departments (City, County, Town and/or Metro District, as appropriate) will:
1. Conduct damage assessment of public roads, bridges and associated facilities within their respective jurisdictions, participating with state and/or federal personnel as needed;
 2. Designate an individual to serve as its Agency Damage Assessment Coordinator. This person will be responsible for all damage assessment record keeping carried out under the department's plan and for coordinating damage assessment with the Community Damage Assessment Coordinator. The Agency Damage Assessment Coordinator will consolidate the information received at each phase of the damage assessment and report the results to the Community Damage Assessment Coordinator as they are developed.
- E. Utilities (communications, energy, water and sanitation) will:
1. Conduct damage assessment of their resources, in coordination with State and Federal personnel as appropriate;
 2. Provide timely damage assessment information to the Pueblo County EOC and the Community Damage Assessment Coordinator, especially as it relates to interruptions of critical services.
- F. The local offices of the USDA Farm Service Agency, USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service and Colorado State University (CSU) Cooperative Extension will;

1. Collectively conduct damage assessment of agricultural resources (land, structures, fences and other improvements) and products, with the USDA Farm Service Agency in the lead;
2. Designate individuals to serve as Agency Damage Assessment Coordinators. These individuals will be responsible for all damage assessment record keeping carried out under their agency's plan and for coordinating damage assessment with the Community Damage Assessment Coordinator. The Agency Damage Assessment Coordinator will consolidate the information received at each phase of the damage assessment and report the results to the Community Damage Assessment Coordinator as they are developed; and
3. Prepare the necessary documents for review and action by local and state agricultural boards, as appropriate.

G. The Pueblo City-County Health Department will:

1. Conduct damage assessment relative to health and environmental impacts of the disaster, e.g., contamination of food and water supplies, vector control and infectious disease;
2. Designate an individual to serve as its Agency Damage Assessment Coordinator. This person will be responsible for all damage assessment record keeping carried out under the department's plan and for coordinating damage assessment with the Community Damage Assessment Coordinator. The Agency Damage Assessment Coordinator will consolidate the information received at each phase of the damage assessment and report the results to the Community Damage Assessment Coordinator as they are developed;
3. Coordinate damage assessment with State and Federal health and environmental officials, as appropriate.

H. The Operations Task Force will:

1. Receive and consolidate initial reports for their departments/agencies with information, as applicable, on:
 - a) Type and location of the disaster;
 - b) Time of onset;
 - c) Number of persons killed, injured, missing, or in danger;
 - d) Special assistance, manpower or equipment needed to save lives;
 - e) Location and means of communications e.g., telephone, radio, for follow-on information reports; and
 - f) Person in charge (department or agency).
2. Maintain updated information throughout the response and recovery phases of the disaster; ensure supporting documentation is safeguarded for the final damage assessment;
3. Assess and report resource availability to the Executive Policy Group for the duration of the disaster;
4. Identify and appoint primary and alternate information collectors; and
5. Ensure the appropriate Operations Task Force representative in the EOC receives timely reports on information/data gathered throughout the "response" and "recovery" phases of the disaster.

I. The Executive Policy Group (EPG) will:

1. Evaluate the incident, resources available to deal with the disaster, and outside assistance required;
2. Continually evaluate the disaster in terms of the need for a disaster declaration; and
3. Declare a local disaster if the operating requirements and/or damage assessment demonstrates that the requirements of responding to or recovering from the disaster exceeds the resources available locally.

V. ADMINISTRATION AND LOGISTICS

Document all actions so that records can be compiled for financial and historical data.

VI. ANNEX DEVELOPMENT and MAINTENANCE

The primary responsibility for development and maintenance of this annex is that of Pueblo County DEM with support from responsible parties. The annex will be reviewed annually unless significant change warrants an earlier revision.

VII. AUTHORITIES AND REFERENCES

- A. Colorado Disaster Emergency Act of 1992.
- B. State of Colorado, State Emergency Operations Plan (Oct. 2007).
- C. Public Law 93-288, Disaster Relief Act of 1974.
- D. Colorado Damage Assessment Handbook
<http://www.cde.state.co.us/artemis/loc6/loc61808AS71992INTERNET.pdf>
- E. Colorado Disaster Emergency Procedures Handbook for Local Governments (2006). Also on website
<http://dola.colorado.gov/dem/publications/DisasterHandbook.pdf>