



North Carolina Emergency Management 2010 Annual Report

Dear North Carolinians:

Earthquakes. Oil spills. Forest fires. Tornadoes. Blizzards. Hurricanes. Tsunamis. Disease outbreak. Incidents at nuclear power plants. Floods. Droughts. The number and severity of disasters across the globe seem to have escalated significantly in the past year.

We know emergencies and disasters will continue to happen regardless of what we do, or fail to do, to prepare. And when they do happen, how we have prepared as families, as communities and as a state, will help determine how quickly we recover.

Hurricane Floyd, which claimed 52 lives and caused significant damage to more than half the state, remains North Carolina's worst and costliest storm on record. More than \$837 million was appropriated in state funds during an emergency session to help the state recover from the massive devastation. (And that was in addition to the estimated \$2.6 billion we received in federal grants and loans.)

We made a commitment at that time to invest in our state. And we did. We have increased our response capability by expanding and strengthening our search and rescue program, adding equipment and training teams to respond to hazardous materials incidents. We have worked with counties, long-term care facilities, animal response teams, volunteers and faith-based agencies to help protect all our populations during times of crisis.

As a result, we are better prepared today for such large disasters.

Despite the several significant statewide snowstorms, severe flooding in much of the east, and tornadoes that wrecked havoc in the central part of the state, 2010 was relatively disaster-free. But we know we will not always be as fortunate. Our challenge is to ensure that we are ready – at the local and state levels – when those disasters happen.

That is our job.

Doug Hoell
Director
N.C. Division of Emergency Management



Responding to the Call

Supporting Local Responders, Offering State Resources



Seven hazardous materials Regional Response Teams responded to 74 requests for assistance in 2010.



Search and Rescue Teams helped more than 250 people escape from their houses and cars as floodwaters rose from Tropical Storm Nicole.



During emergencies North Carolina Division of Emergency Management staff work side-by-side with local communities to respond to the event, deploy state resources as needed or facilitate mutual aid from neighboring counties. For those communities with few or limited resources, such on-scene expertise and quick response can be invaluable.

The state's seven hazmat **Regional Response Teams** responded to 74 requests for assistance last year including:

- an unknown explosive that was exposed as a cargo ship was unloaded at the Morehead City port. Officials evacuated and secured a two-mile radius as more than a dozen local, state and federal agencies responded. (Carteret County)
- an overturned gasoline tanker caught in downed power lines that prompted evacuation of nearby homes (Montgomery County)
- a blueberry processing plant where more than 50 employees complained of respiratory illness (Bladen County)
- A massive structure fire at a petroleum storage tank farm that closed Interstates 40 and 85 for several hours (Guilford County)

North Carolina has one of the most robust **Search and Rescue programs** in the country. The multi-faceted state resource includes dozens of highly-skilled rescue technicians trained to search for victims stranded in the wilderness, trapped by rising floodwaters, swept away by raging rivers, or injured on a mountain cliff. Last year, the teams:

- helped more than 250 residents escape from their houses and cars when floodwaters rose as Tropical Storm Nicole moved through the state (Bertie, Beaufort, Craven, Hertford and Pender counties).
- located and rescued a lost and injured woman who was reported missing (Transylvania Co.)
- rescued an injured climber dangling 260 feet above the ground (Burke Co.)
- Rescued two hikers who were stranded on an island by rising flood waters (Burke Co.)

When blizzards, ice storms, hurricanes, tornadoes and floods strike North Carolina, 18 area coordinators and field staff **provide on-scene support in response to natural disasters** by coordinating assets and interfacing with state and federal agencies to provide operational support to local emergency managers and rescue workers.

- A significant snow storm January 29-30 covered the entire state with measurable snow - up to 15 inches in some places. The governor declared a state of emergency.
- There were 26 confirmed tornadoes in North Carolina during 2010 causing significant property damage to residences and businesses in six counties.

NCEM staff worked side-by-side with local emergency management services to respond to the disaster, provide immediate shelter for those displaced and begin the recovery process.

- Hurricane Earl prompted evacuations of portions of six counties as the storm headed toward North Carolina just before Labor Day weekend. While the storm brushed the coast leaving minor road damage and a few power outages, NCEM staff were co-located with local first responders to provide immediate resources if needed.
- Tropical Storm Nicole moved through in late September saturating much of eastern North Carolina with 5 to 24 inches of rain. Fifteen counties saw significant flooding as eight people lost their lives and hundreds of homes and businesses were damaged or destroyed. Again, NCEM co-located with local first responders to provide immediate resources such as staff support and search crews.
- A Christmas storm dumped snow across the entire state, triggering a state of emergency declaration as traffic disruptions and scattered power outages plagued the hardest hit areas. The governor declared a state of emergency while NCEM coordinated with other state agencies and deployed state assets to keep roads clear and provide emergency services to shut-in residents.



Tornadoes damaged more than 550 residences and dozens of businesses in 2010. NCEM worked with local agencies to immediately respond and help people begin to rebuild their lives and homes.

The same field staff also provide **on-scene support in response to man-made disasters** by coordinating mutual aid, deploying state personnel and equipment or providing operational support during incidents.

- A passenger train crashed into a bulldozer in Mebane, injuring 11 people. NCEM supported local emergency responders by coordinating state assets.
- Potential dam failures in Cumberland and Richmond counties prompted immediate response by state and local emergency managers. NCEM staff worked with local officials to relieve pressure on one dam using pipes stored at the state warehouse.
- Several detergent suicides across the state threatened the safety of law enforcement and rescuers who responded to the potentially deadly scene. NCEM provided on-scene support and secured regional response teams to help with air monitoring and decontamination.

The NCEM **24-hour operations center** serves as the state's repository for all types of emergency notifications such as hazmat spills, severe weather threats, water contamination, structure collapse, sewage leaks, petroleum spills, bomb threats, forest fires and numerous other threats. Emergency management officers are available at all hours to respond to resource requests and notify other impacted agencies. In 2010, the operations center answered 3,257 calls.

Calls into State EOC

Bomb threat	17
Complaint	68
Fire	62
Hazmat	885
Other	158
SAR	172
Transportation	66
Wastewater	467
Weather	1,362
Total	3,257

Helping Residents Recover

Rebuilding Homes and Communities



NCEM staff worked in 15 flood-damaged counties for two months to help residents and communities recover from Tropical Storm Nicole.

When disaster does strike, NCEM works with local communities to help their residents and businesses recover as quickly as possible. **Damage assessment teams** from the county, state and sometimes federal governments inventory the destruction to determine what financial assistance may be available to help the disaster survivors.

Following more severe storms, NCEM staff temporarily move into the impacted community. They visit with survivors and open **disaster recovery centers** to provide one-on-one guidance regarding the often-complicated recovery process.

In 2010, NCEM helped residents and businesses recover from tornados in Davidson, Guilford, Lincoln, Catawba and Stokes counties, a mudslide in Haywood County, hurricanes and related flooding in the 15 coastal counties, and winter storms that brought heavy ice and snow accumulations throughout the mountains.

Working closely with the Small Business Administration and/or the Federal Emergency Management Agency, NCEM staff help families, business owners and communities **secure much needed grants and loans** to begin rebuilding their homes and lives.

The following is a snapshot of the assistance that NCEM provided in 2010.

March **tornadoes in Davidson and Guilford** counties

- Inspected more than 65 damaged homes and businesses
- Operated two disaster recovery centers
- Provided \$232,400 in state grants and \$286,100 in Small Business Administration loans



Emergency Management staff inspected dozens of homes and businesses following tornadoes in Davidson and Guilford counties.

Eastern North Carolina flooding from Tropical Storm Nicole

- Inspected more than 3,300 damaged homes and businesses
- Operated a Joint Field Office with FEMA for one month
- Operated 14 disaster recovery centers over several weeks, providing one-on-one guidance for more than 2,900 residents.
- Contacted more than 5,400 individuals, business owners, community- and faith-based organizations to discuss recovery process.
- Provided \$5.1 million in federal and state grants or loans and \$2.5 million in SBA loans

October tornadoes in Lincoln County

- Inspected more than 25 damaged homes and businesses
- Operated a disaster recovery center
- Provided \$49,000 in state grants and \$150,800 in SBA loans

During international disasters, the state may be called upon to **provide relief for evacuees** from the impacted area. After 300,000 Haitians were injured and more than 1.5 million left homeless following the catastrophic earthquake January 12, North Carolina Emergency Management prepared to activate its emergency repatriation plan. In late January, four severely injured Haitian refugees and their family members arrived in North Carolina for treatment. NCEM coordinated with local and state human service and transportation agencies in the plan.



Fifteen counties in eastern North Carolina experienced flooding in September and October. NCEM and FEMA staff helped homeowners apply for financial assistance.

Emergency Management staff inspected more than 3,300 homes and businesses following Tropical Storm Nicole.



Preparing Our Partners

Providing Training, Exercising What's Been Learned



First responders tested their capabilities in hostage negotiation, search and rescue and emergency response in a week-long county-wide exercise



NC HART teams routinely train to test their abilities to rescue people stranded by rising floodwaters or isolated in mountainous areas.

A vital part of any emergency management program is training employees and volunteers how to respond during any given disaster, then putting that training to the test through carefully developed exercises. NCEM sponsored more than 200 classes that trained more than 3,500 fire, rescue, law enforcement and emergency management personnel and community leaders **how to respond to various types of crisis**. Courses included: disaster response and recovery, mass shootings response, managing people in disasters, hazardous chemical response, managing debris after a disaster, the incident command system, handling mass fatalities, assessing damages from disasters, and managing mass care for communities.

Additionally, NCEM employees planned, coordinated, and implement dozens of local or regional training exercises to give local and state agencies the opportunity to test their communication, coordination and response skills before an incident occurs. Some of the more notable exercises included:

Governor's terrorism exercise – The Governor, elected and appointed leaders from the Cabinet, Governor's Office, three universities and several major area hospitals spent a day discussing and the roles and responsibilities of their respective organizations in preparing for, responding to and recovering from a planned and coordinated terrorist attack on several local college campuses. It was the first-ever such exercise conducted in the state.

Hurricane exercise – State Emergency Response Team and emergency management staff from dozens of eastern counties trained together to review and rehearse their responsibilities to respond to a significant hurricane strike on the state. Several months later, many of those counties would use what they learned to prepare for Hurricane Earl and respond to flooding from Tropical Storm Nicole.

Helo-Aquatic Rescue Team training – Dozens of first responder, law enforcement and medical agencies trained with N.C. National Guard airmen to practice their ability to rescue victims by extracting them from severely flooded or isolated mountainous areas via helicopter. The teams used those skills several months later to extract several lost and/or injured hikers in the mountains.



State port safety – Eight law enforcement and emergency management agencies rehearsed coordinated response to a terrorist event at the state port in Morehead City.

Nuclear power plant exercises — Emergency management, police, fire, rescue, sheriff, highway patrol, school officials and others from the state and counties practiced their ability to notify and protect the public during an incident at one of four nuclear power plants that impact the state.

Community Emergency Response Teams training – The CERT program expanded to include six teenage programs. More than 70 teenagers are now trained in the basics of disaster response so they can help their neighbors in the early minutes and hours following a disaster.

Hazardous materials response training – More than 200 first responders and emergency management staff from four different metropolitan areas trained with Norfolk Southern and CSX to respond to hazmat incidents involving major freight shipping corridors.

All-hazard response training – More than 90 Yancey County emergency management and first responders trained together in the county's largest-ever emergency response exercise. The week-long drill tested their capabilities in hostage negotiation, search and rescue, fire suppression and emergency medical response.

Emergency medical response training – A medical support drill tested coordination and response between the emergency management and medical communities in Wake County.

Search and rescue training – More than 300 people from 50 local and state agencies trained together in a large-scale search and rescue exercise to find people who are lost, hurt or stranded in wilderness or mountainous terrain.

Pharmaceutical exercise - Multiple county response agencies participated in a day-long exercise with Campbell University pharmacy students to rehearse distributing medicine in response to a biological event.



First responders from four major metropolitan areas trained together to prepare for hazmat events.



Local, county and state emergency management officials and first responders practiced their ability to respond to a nuclear incident.

Planning for the Future

Developing New Programs, Equipment and Initiatives

As the state's population grows and industries change, emergency managers must constantly look ahead to develop new capabilities or initiatives that can **mitigate threats or improve disaster response**. NCEM improves the state's disaster readiness posture through deliberate and coordinated planning amongst several key governmental and private agencies. The division also has led the country in identifying and mitigating a host of natural risks, so that individuals can accurately assess their own vulnerability in a variety of areas. In 2010, NCEM:

- Continued working to develop an **Integrated Risk Management** system using detailed information collected about each building and structure. Footprint information was collected for 5.5 million buildings providing 100 percent coverage of structures over 1,000 square feet. The information is used to assess the level of risk and probability that each facility has for being impacted by flood, tornado, hurricane or other such natural disaster. Community leaders and state officials can then plan ways to minimize risks and potential service disruptions.
- Developed a **template plan for licensed care facilities** to help the long-term care industry prepare their residents and staff for any type of disaster or emergency. The plan helps facilities ensure that the appropriate nutrition, medication and staffing are in place should they need to evacuate or shelter indoors in an emergency.
- Developed a **template plan to help counties recover** faster after disasters by outlining agency responsibilities and defining roles in 16 different areas to improve efficiency and eliminate confusion between various public and private responders.
- Updated the state's 20-year-old **oil spill plan**. Developed a tactical oil spill response plan to address potential impacts to the state from the unprecedented oil leak from the Deepwater Horizon oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico.

The state oil spill response plan was updated to prepare for potential impacts from the Gulf Oil Spill to North Carolina's fragile coastline.



- Added **pet scanner and microchip capabilities** for 40 Companion Animal Mobile Equipment Trailers to help owners track and recover their lost pets faster if separated during an emergency.
- **Expanded capabilities of NC SPARTA** (State Preparedness and Resource Tracking Application), the state's primary data management system used during emergencies, to: enable counties to identify vulnerable populations before disaster strikes; collect preliminary damage assessment information in real time; monitor fuel supplies; and incorporate airport, bridges, dams, armories and other critical infrastructure information.

- Closed out **115 hazard mitigation projects** to minimize damage from any future natural disasters.
- Developed a **commodities distribution system** that can easily disseminate massive quantities of essential commodities such as water and food following a disaster. The system's online tracking allows NCEM to instantly calculate the amount of meals and water required to stock any distribution site with one day's supply. NCEM purchased the necessary support equipment and trained groups to operate the distribution sites.
- Purchased and trained staff on **Salamander incident management system** to more efficiently organize and track resources during disaster response.
- Launched **TERMS, a web-based registration system** for students who want easier access to training courses offered through the division and, for the first time, access to their personal training records.
- Developed a web-based resource database that provides a more robust and dependable logistics management system for local emergency managers.
- Developed the **Coastal Region Evacuation and Sheltering field operating guide** to provide state and local emergency managers with a convenient pocket guide to manage evacuations and sheltering operations during disasters.



NCEM trained community groups on the points of distribution program that can disseminate food, water and other critical goods following a disaster.

North Carolina Emergency Management
www.nccrimecontrol.org/ncem