

Annex L: Hurricane Emergency Actions

Nature of the Hazard

The City of South Portland is subject to hurricanes and the effects of these storms. According to the MEMA website, “A hurricane is a tropical cyclone in which winds reach speeds of 74 miles per hour or more and blow in a large spiral around a relatively calm center. It produces measurable damage and destruction from heavy rainfalls, winds and flooding.” Secondary effects include injury, potential loss of life, structural damage to homes, businesses and municipal operations, and may require evacuation of the public in high-risk areas, including campgrounds, trailer parks, flood plains and other areas.

Hurricanes Carol and Edna struck within two weeks of each other in 1954, causing 11 deaths and \$17 million in damage in Maine. Coastal communities in Cumberland and York counties are most susceptible to erosion from storms, as there are more beach areas and less rocky coastline.

Risk Area

The entire city is subject to the effects of hurricanes, because of the coastal nature of the city (located on the Atlantic Ocean and the Fore River). Willard Beach, Southern Maine Community College, and the marinas in South Portland, where hundreds of boats are moored in the boating season, are most at risk from the effects of hurricanes.

Direction and Control

The Emergency Operations Center should be activated in **Monitoring Mode (Mode 2)** to begin planning emergency response actions for a hurricane WATCH with the Emergency Management Leadership Team (EMLT), and should be activated in **Full Activation Mode (Mode 4)** or a hurricane WARNING that may impact the greater Portland/Casco bay area. EOC management room staff should be kept to a minimum so as not to crowd the management area. Additional support and liaison staff should be located in the EOC Operations Support Room when the ICS organization is established to respond to the event. The EOC Manager should assign a support person to serve as EOC Scribe to keep notes and logs. Refer to Table 1 at the end of this Annex to begin staffing the emergency organization.

The EOC management staff should also evaluate options to relocate the EOC, if the primary EOC becomes inoperable due to heavy rains or storm surge.

The Emergency Management Director (City Manager) may designate a senior department head or the EMA Director to manage EOC operations in response to hurricane conditions.

Pre-Hurricane Planning

The recommended approach to managing hurricane preparedness and response is to have the EMLT meet as a **Policy Team**, consisting of the City Manager, the EMA Director, the Finance Director, the Police Chief, the Fire Chief, the PWD Director, Parks, Rec & Waterfront Director, School Superintendent, Water Resources Director, and other senior city staff as deemed

necessary. This policy team will develop overall goals and objectives for the response to and recovery from a hurricane at least 72 hours in advance of the hurricane's ETA. NOTE that the American Red Cross may be invited to these policy discussions.

Hurricane Response

Activate the EOC with a small Policy Team consisting of:

- City Manager
- EMA Director
- Fire Dept. rep
- Police Dept. rep
- Public Works/Parks and Recreation Dept. rep

EOC management functions include obtaining a declaration of emergency from the Mayor, providing liaison with the mayor and council (City Manager), providing liaison with other levels of government (EMA Director), coordinating overall support to the field operations staff, and resolving any city management issues that may arise.

Activate the EOC Support Group area with:

- Logistics Section: for overall coordination of communications, food and supplies, facilities and medical services
- Planning Section: for overall coordination of resources, situational awareness, event response documentation and demobilization planning
- Shelter Section: to coordinate operation of required shelters.
- Finance Section: to coordinate and track emergency expenditures and to authorize emergency expenditures as required.

The EOC Support Group is responsible for providing planning, financial and logistical support to emergency field operations commanders.

Activate a Unified Command structure consisting of:

- Police Chief
- Fire Chief
- PWD Director

Unified Command is responsible for the actual management of field operations before, during and immediately after a hurricane strikes the area. Unified Command oversees the Operations Section staff, provides briefings to and requests additional resources from the EOC.

Create an Operations Section that consists of two area commands:

- Eastern Area Command
- Western Area Command
- NOTE: consider splitting the city at Broadway & Evans for command purposes

Each area command consists of a police supervisor, a fire supervisor, and a public works supervisor to coordinate operational activities (search and rescue, street opening, emergency operations, etc) in their half of the city.

A sample ICS staffing plan is included as Table 1 of this Annex.

Communications

Normal city communications channels will be used to manage response to hurricanes. Such events may overload or damage communications systems. Alternate communications methods, including using county ham radio operators and satellite phones, should be planned for.

Communications mechanisms between local and state Emergency Operations Centers (esp. between So. Portland and Portland, Cumberland County and the State EOC in Augusta) should be tested to ensure availability. Communications Protocols (e.g. start with conference call to link EOCs, followed by radio communications, followed by email, followed by ham radio comms, followed by sat phones) should be established between major partners prior to hurricane arrival.

Warning

The general path of the hurricane should be known for days in advance. The exact location where the eye will cross land may not be known until just hours before actual landfall. In any hurricane warning event, areas of the city that may be in danger will be warned via methods described in the All Hazards Emergency Plan, including use of the EAS system, ***including Code Red***, use of police officers and firefighters using bullhorns and other devices, using the emergency warning system designed for the hard of hearing and other means. The EOC staff will coordinate warning messages and methods, if activated.

Per Fire Department procedure, the following stages of hurricane preparation are included in this plan:

- 72 hours before gale force or higher winds: awareness level
- 48-72 hours before gale force or higher winds: stand by level (all departments)
- 24-48 hours before gale force or higher winds: response level (activate EOC)

Emergency Public Information

Emergency Public Information (EPI) will be issued as necessary by the EOC staff, through the Public Information Officer (PIO). Methods of EPI dissemination include using the TV camera mounted in the Joint Information Center (JIC). This JIC camera is connected to the SPC TV broadcast studio at City Hall, allowing emergency instructions to be broadcast through SPC TV to about 12,000 households in South Portland and Cape Elizabeth

News releases will be developed as needed by the PIO, ***coordinated with other key partners, including the Portland EOC and the state of Maine EOC***, approved by the EOC Manager and Unified Command, and then disseminated to the public through Portland area radio, TV and print media outlets as well as city website and social media sites.

Evacuation

EOC staff would determine, based on current storm conditions, forecast conditions, road conditions, and other factors, if evacuation of the public were necessary. Appropriate evacuation routes would be developed in the EOC, approved by the EOC Manager, and then broadcast to the public via the EPI system described above. A combination of police officers, firefighters, public works staff, and appropriate barricades and other traffic control devices would be employed to effect the evacuation in an orderly and timely manner. EOC management staff should establish wind speed and weather condition limits that, if achieved, would require the recall of all public safety people currently helping with the evacuation process and other outdoor activities. If evacuation were appropriate as a protective action for expected hurricane conditions, then appropriate transportation measures would be implemented (perhaps buses, or borrowing 4-wheel drive vehicles from local car dealers) to ensure a safe and expedient evacuation.

Mass Care

EOC staff will determine if mass care facilities should be opened and manned. The primary mass care facility in South Portland is the Community Center on Nelson Street, behind the South Portland High School. Approximately 500 evacuees can be processed in this mass care facility. Other city facilities, including the High School can be used as mass care shelters. The Shelter Officer has a procedure book that includes copies of all shelter agreements and shelter surveys completed by the American Red Cross. The creation of shelters should be planned for: mass shelter for the general public, using the Community Center; special needs shelter for handicapped, hard of hearing, the blind and other community members; and a shelter for city emergency worker families, overseen by a fire department staff person.

Health and Medical Concerns

Local medical resources are deemed to be adequate to deal with hurricane victims, who may suffer from storm related injuries.

Resource Management

Local resources are considered adequate to deal initially with hurricane events. If additional resources are needed, *the State EOC in Augusta* will be contacted by the South Portland EOC and requested to facilitate the procurement of additional needed resources. Once storm conditions have abated, resources from South Portland will be deployed to conduct preliminary damage assessment and assess the condition of transportation routes, neighborhoods, public utilities such as the water system and the electrical distribution system and other city infrastructure components. *Requests for state resources and other important storm related information (e.g. damage assessment, status of emergency response actions) will be transmitted to the Cumberland County EOC as necessary.*

References:

After Action Report from Hurricane TTX with Portland and South Portland (exercise # 2005-04), conducted on 8/31/05.

After Action Report from Hurricane TTX with Portland, South Portland and the US Coast Guard conducted on July 25, 2006

Specific Actions and Considerations for Hurricanes

Fire Department Actions

- Implement Hurricanes and Severe Thunderstorms SOG.
- Respond as requested by the Unified Command and the Operations Section Chief.
- Review and Implement Structural Collapse SOG, if storm damage causes building collapse.
- Assist with functions such as staffing city shelters, notifications, access controls, checking generators, etc.
- Assist critical infrastructure facilities, including the oil terminals, the Maine Mall, Diodes, Texas Instruments, Hannaford, local marinas, etc. with implementing their emergency plans.

Police Department Actions

- Work with the Fire Department to assist other city agencies and critical infrastructure facilities with storm preparations.
- Test all communications methods and evaluate options (e.g. satellite phone leasing) for alternate communications methods.
- Control access to danger areas as needed.
- Implement actions as dictated by the Unified Command and the Operations Section Chief.

Public Works Actions

- Evaluate equipment and material (e.g. trucks, barricades, sand, sandbags, etc) available for a major storm event and obtain additional equipment as needed through local vendors.
- Implement actions as directed by the Unified Command and the Operations Section Chief.
- Develop plans for road clearance measures, using city crews and contract crews from Lucas Tree and other tree/debris removal vendors.
- Obtain and stock extra tires for police vehicles, fire vehicles, public works vehicles and buses.
- Develop debris removal plans that include a separate landfill if available. Try and separate debris by category (e.g. green debris from trees, shrubs, etc., appliances, roofing shingles that can be recycled, construction debris, etc) and make sure plans call for handling debris as few times as possible.

EOC Actions

Preparedness actions

- Meet as a Policy Team at least 72 hours prior to any storm that may produce **gale force** or higher winds in the Portland harbor area and develop response and resource plans.

- Plan for 24 hours a day EOC and field operations. Develop pre-plan goals for the ICS team to implement that include the following:
- Plan for alternate EOC locations, such as the Portland EOC, the Western Avenue Fire Station, or using the MCU as a temporary EOC if needed.
- Plan for evacuation routing, and shelter operations, with up to four shelters.
- Plan for food and water for emergency workers and evacuees for 7 days, using supplies from Hannaford's Distribution Center or other sources.
- Plan for emergency deliveries of fuel for emergency generators at public works, city hall, the public safety complex, and arrange for a 150kw or larger generator to be placed at the Community Center.
- Plan for emergency staffing, allowing half the emergency team to leave and tend to their families and homes, and then allow the other half to do the same when the first half returns to work. Plan for 5 day shifts of at least 12 hours a day.
- Staff the EOC 24 to 12 hours prior to the arrival of any major storm event that could produce gale force or higher winds. Keep EOC management staff to a minimum. Other important staff can function in the EOC Operations Support Room. Appoint a Scribe to take careful notes of discussions, decisions, maintain an EOC master log, etc.
- Referring to storm surge prediction maps (SLOSH maps) in the EOC, ensure the city is prepared for the onslaught of a hurricane. Make sure additional food and water supplies are available, generators are topped off, make sure the city shelters are staffed and operational as needed 12 hours prior to the storms arrival.
- Notify school officials and coordinate necessary school closures and bus schedules.
- Inventory available shelter space, including available hotel rooms, cruise ships in the Port, etc.
- **Ensure adequate supplies are available in the EOC. Consider food, water, toiletries, cots, ICS forms, flashlights and other potential emergency needs.**
- **Develop a staffing plan, to include plenty of support staff to operate phones, copying machines, maintain status boards, work the radios (using trained Incident Dispatchers where available), log emergency response information on WebEOC, and make sure key EOC staff have developed a 24/7 staffing plan for themselves.**
- **Consider creating and staffing a Community Information Team comprised of library and other staff, who can serve as a clearing house for community information concerns (which shelters are open, which modes of transportation are available to which areas of town, which ATM machines, gas stations, stores, are open).**

Response Actions

- Determine when it is appropriate to pull emergency workers and vehicles off the street (e.g. when winds reach **65 mph**). Determine, with Portland EOC staff, when it is appropriate to close down the Casco Bay Bridge and the Veterans Memorial Bridge.
- Coordinate closely with CCEMA and with MEMA. Assign a liaison officer to serve at the Cumberland County EOC in Windham (the bunker) to work closely with county staff, and private industry staff from Fairpoint, PWD, Verizon, CMP, etc.
- Ensure the city has the proper equipment, manpower and other resources to manage emergency response to a hurricane.

- Continue to provide emergency public information to residents and visitors prior to, during and after the storm.
- Use ICS forms available in the EOC to track manpower assignments, resource requests, ICS organization, incident objectives and other important incident planning and response information.

Recovery Actions

- Conduct damage assessment once the storm passes and work with CCEMA officials to complete damage assessment forms for the city. Consider working with the USCG to use CG helicopters to do initial damage assessment from the air.
- Coordinate recovery resources with Portland and other harbor communities. Resources include tree removal services, CMP crews, harbor resources, Red Cross shelter managers, etc.
- Develop recovery plans that address public safety first, restoration of public utilities and other essential services second, and restoration of business functions and city functions third.
- Make plans to clear lifelines first (major routes that ambulances and other public safety and utility vehicles must travel).

TABLE 1 Hurricane Preparedness Staffing Pattern		
POSITION/FUNCTION	WHO	RESPONSIBLE FOR:

EOC	<p>City Manager</p> <p>EMA Director</p> <p>FD Rep.</p> <p>PD Rep.</p> <p>PWD Rep.</p>	<p>Declare a local emergency</p> <p>Overall event oversight</p> <p>Liaison with council</p> <p>Liaison with outside agencies</p> <p>Overall financial decisions</p> <p>Public and emergency information coordination</p>
Unified Command		Overall management of event response by the operations staff
EOC: Emergency Support Function Groups		Develop plans, provide logistical support and financial support to operations staff and EOC management.

Planning Section Chief		
Resources Unit Leader		
Situation Unit Leader		
Documentation Unit Leader		
Demob Planning Leader		
Logistics Section Chief		
Comms Unit Leader		
Food and Supplies Unit Leader		
Facilities Unit Leader		
Ground Support Unit Leader		
Medical Unit Leader		

Finance/Admin Section Chief		
Procurement Unit Leader		
Purchasing Unit Leader		
Operations Section		
East End Area Command		
LE supervisor		
FD Supervisor		
PWD Supervisor		

West End Area Command		
LE Supervisor		
FD Supervisor		
PWD Supervisor		
Shelter Command		
Community Information Team		