

TAB F – Public Information

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Introduction This Tab provides some tools and tips to assist with the public information side of recovery. It also discusses interactions with elected officials and managing expectations related to recovery assistance.

Effective dissemination of information to the public, elected officials and other stakeholders does not end after the response is over. There are expectations to be managed and information to share during recovery as well. The State’s Joint Information Center (JIC) is a valuable resource during disasters and can help you frame press releases and develop talking points.

Damage Assessment The damage assessment process is a required action to determine whether or not a disaster exceeds local and state capabilities to recover. However, the damage assessment process does not always result in supplemental financial assistance. Therefore, it is important to be clear with the public and media of the purpose of damage assessment and where it fits in the process of evaluating the impacts of a disaster.

Be mindful of publically using the terminology for the IA degrees of damage. A basement full of water is devastating to a homeowner and the degrees of damage are focused on where FEMA’s financial liability would be if the disaster was federally declared.

The damage assessment conducted by the county EMA teams and/or State/federal personnel is only one type of inspection conducted after an event. Distribute the Building Inspections Chart found in Tab A in the impacted area to try to lessen concerns/confusion.

Assistance Programs Insurance is the best form of protection against all perils.

The FEMA Individual Assistance programs are not intended to make individuals and households whole. They are intended for essential home repairs and replacement of essential household personal property.

Know the application deadlines for the FEMA and SBA assistance programs for all available programs.

Know the locations, dates and time of operation for the FEMA Disaster Recovery Centers (DRCs) or SBA Disaster Loan Outreach Centers (DLOCs), when applicable.

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Debris Management

Publish debris drop off sites and/or schedules for the pickup of debris brought to the road right of way.

Publish the prioritization of when debris will be cleared (e.g. access to hospitals and emergency services before access to local park).

Publish local debris strategy to include sorting, schedules, drop off locations and prioritization of pickups.

Elected Officials

Work with elected officials prior to an event to manage the expectations of what the recovery programs can and cannot do.