
LARIMER COUNTY OFFICE OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT



www.larimer.gov/emergency



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Message from OEM Director, Lori Hodges

This document has been developed to highlight some of the key features of the Larimer County Office of Emergency Management, which provides emergency and disaster coordination throughout the county. Our office was formed following the 2012 High Park Wildfire and the 2013 Flood. Since that time, we have strived to build an emergency management office that encompasses all phases of disaster while also working to build resiliency in every area of the county. We encourage self-responsibility and community building to help us all respond and recover from disasters. We also understand that our role is to help those who most need assistance, through access to information and/or resources. I hope that you find this guide helpful as one of those resources in your disaster toolkit.



Larimer Emergency Management Doing the Most Good for Those Who Need it Most

The Larimer County Office of Emergency Management strives to create sustainable communities and to protect life and property by empowering all who live, work, and visit the County to prevent, mitigate, prepare for, respond to and recover from all types of emergencies and disasters.

Core Principles:

Authentic: Intentionally have the best interests for the community we serve, partners, and colleagues.

Innovative: Continuously engage in forums to learn, adapt, implement best practices, and improve how we prepare for, respond to, recover from, and mitigate for disasters.

Community-Centered: Take a whole community approach to coordinated management of disaster incidents so that impacts on people, property and public services are minimized and community conditions can be restored as quickly as possible.

Collaborative: Prioritize strengthening partnerships and building relationships while providing quality customer service to deliver the highest value emergency management.

CORE AREAS FOR LARIMER OEM PROGRAM

- ***Preparedness & Resilience***
- ***Mitigation / Climate Adaptation***
- ***Operational Coordination***
- ***Recovery & Disaster Financial Management***
- ***Community Inclusion & Engagement***

Our Role in each area

- **Preparedness & Resilience** – Provides programs, activities, and technical expertise for resilience-related activities within OEM. Manages the Larimer Connects Program to increase social capital throughout the county and works to engage with community partners to build community connections. Develops and maintains the community education programs within OEM.
- **Mitigation/Climate Adaptation** – Working to decrease or eliminate the overall threat from hazards, adapt to a changing climate, and decrease cascading impacts.
- **Operational Coordination** – Working to improve overall response efforts, improve emergency services coordination, and provide support to the whole community during disasters.
- **Recovery & Disaster Financial Management** – Working to effectively recover from large-scale disasters and facilitate coordination of community recovery programs. Management of disaster grants and state/federal disaster funding.
- **Community Inclusion & Engagement** – Provides public information management and maintains access and functional needs coordination. This area also builds relationships with under-resourced communities and performs Spanish interpretation and translation services for Larimer OEM.

PREPAREDNESS & RESILIENCE

This core function develops and maintains community disaster education programs for Larimer County, including training and exercises that will lead to better overall outcomes following an event. This function also leads and identifies solutions and strategies for incorporating resilience and forward progress in Larimer County and in the emergency management program through community-building, partnerships, and networks. Camille Millard is the Preparedness and Resilience Coordinator for Larimer OEM. Camille provides resilience-related programs, activities, and technical expertise for OEM such as the managing of the Larimer Connects program, and developing the community education program within OEM.



The Larimer Connects program seeks to foster a partnership between Emergency Management and Larimer County communities to cultivate grassroots-led social connectivity, increased levels of trust and relationship-building, and self-sustainability, which ultimately leads to a higher level of community resilience countywide.

Resilience Metrics

The Larimer County Office of Emergency Management understands the value of resilience in our community and seeks to establish resilience metrics that will be evaluated annually to determine the effectiveness of emergency management programs.

These metrics have an emergency management focus. The metrics are used to either:

Inform the Office of Emergency Management on performance of programs and policies,

or

Inform the Office of Emergency Management about community culture and demographics to ensure programs are designed to positively impact the community.

Resilience Dimensions

Social / Cultural - Encompasses resilience related to the community, social capital, connectedness, community culture, bonding, community leadership, engagement, and trust.

Physical - Encompasses resilience related to the built environment, critical infrastructure, lifelines, utilities, transportation routes, shelters, and reunification centers.

Human - Encompasses resilience related to the health and well-being of the community, the adaptive capacity of the community, access to education, equity, diversity, and inclusion, resource availability at the community level, and emergency preparedness.

Environmental - Encompasses resilience related to hazard mitigation, climate adaptation, disaster recovery and restoration, land use planning, code development, and building back better.

Organizational - Encompasses resilience related to the emergency management capacity, partner engagement, resource availability, supply chain management, and systems adaptability.

MITIGATION/CLIMATE ADAPTATION

Hazard mitigation aims to decrease or eliminate the threat from extreme events. Hazard mitigation work often includes elements of climate adaptation to account for changing climate conditions to better prepare for future adverse impacts. In addition, due to the high risk from floods and wildfires in Larimer County, hazard mitigation and adaptation efforts are especially important. Hazard mitigation results in more resilient forests, watersheds, and infrastructure. According to the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), for every \$1 spent on hazard mitigation, \$6 in savings is realized. Hazard Mitigation is an area where public involvement, ownership, and engagement are critical.

Stephen Decatur is the Mitigation and Restoration Coordinator for the Office of Emergency Management. He focuses on collaborative mitigation and post-disaster restoration projects in the County. Many of the projects involve non-profit partners and surrounding community groups. His work often involves connecting projects to funding sources and bringing the right people to the table to ensure a successful project.



Mitigation Partnerships and Programs:

In 2022, Larimer OEM started the Community Mitigation Grant Program. This annual program empowers community members to perform mitigation projects and encourages the public to reduce the impact of natural hazards as a community and drive long-term resilience with small grants from Larimer County.



Photo Credit: Larimer County Conservation Corps

Additional Mitigation Projects and Programs:

- Post-Fire Flooding Sandbags
- Long-Term Recovery Group & Larimer County Conservation Corps Partnership
- Post-Fire Recovery Project
- Partnership with Watershed Coalitions and the Northern Colorado Fireshed Collaborative
- Colorado Strategic Wildfire Action Program (COSWAP) Grant Project
- FEMA Hazard Mitigation Grant Program Projects

OPERATIONAL COORDINATION

Larimer OEM provides coordination and assistance to our emergency services providers countywide before, during and after emergencies and disasters. This may include activities such as training and exercises, emergency planning, situational awareness, resource support, technical assistance, policy direction, and financial support. These efforts help to improve overall response efforts, improve emergency services coordination and provide support to the whole community during disasters.

Kohl Parrott oversees the Operations Program within Larimer County OEM and is the current Operations Section Chief in the Emergency Operations Center (EOC). Kohl is also a certified EOC Logistics Section Chief through the Colorado Emergency Management Association.



Operational Coordination involves multiple plans, programs and processes. A few key areas of focus include:

- EOC Readiness – Establishing the technology, facilities, and staff readiness to operate and manage the Emergency Operations Center, which provides incident support, resource management, public information management, and situational awareness during emergencies.
- Consequence Management Planning – Developing future planning documents indicating possible cascading events or unintended consequences for critical infrastructure failures or community impacts. This helps OEM plan for contingencies and avoid cascading failures in all aspects of the disaster management cycle (Preparedness, Mitigation, Response, and Recovery).



Operational Readiness – Establishing partnerships with critical infrastructure partners, emergency services agencies, and critical lifelines (energy, fuel, medical, etc.) to decrease the impacts from disruption throughout a disaster. It also involves coordinating with both the public and private sector partners on planning considerations, training and exercise needs and technical assistance.

Photo Credit: David Wolf, Chief
Estes Valley Fire Protection District

RECOVERY & DISASTER FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

This core function works with local, state, and federal partners on recovery programs and funding to help with community recovery. This involves working with multiple county departments, such as Engineering and Road and Bridge, on construction projects, working with our non-profit and volunteer partners on community-led programs and managing the complexities of marrying multiple funding streams for the biggest benefit to the community post-disaster.



Loren Barnes is the Business Operations Coordinator for the Larimer County Office of Emergency Management. She oversees a wide range of financial management functions for disaster work and administrative duties as part of the OEM.

Larimer County has a long history of large-scale disasters. The last ten years have been especially difficult with multiple disasters, including the 2012 High Park Wildfire, 2013 Flood, 2015 Berthoud Tornado, the 2020 COVID-19 Pandemic and the multiple large wildfires of 2020 that have led to flooding and debris flows in our mountainous communities. Larimer OEM continues the recovery efforts from the 2013 Flood to this day by working with FEMA to get reimbursed for all eligible disaster-related costs.

Additionally, Larimer County continues efforts on equity, diversity, and inclusion that began during the COVID-19 recovery and continues collaborating with the U.S. Forest Service, municipalities, non-profit partners and multiple other organizations on wildfire recovery efforts, that will continue for many years.

One of Larimer County's Guiding Principles is to be good stewards of public funding. We take this seriously in disaster recovery, working hard to seek funding where eligible to supplement county funding.

This is an area where Larimer OEM has become well-versed. The office is asked to speak regarding recovery efforts and works regularly with state and federal officials on improvements to policy and legislation to improve recovery outcomes in the future.



COMMUNITY INCLUSION & ENGAGEMENT

This core function provides public information management services for OEM, develops public-facing materials in English and Spanish and works as the Public Information Officer when the Emergency Operations Center is activated. This area of focus also works heavily on equity, diversity, and inclusion in emergency management, including relationship building with under-resourced populations, translation and interpretation services, access and functional needs coordination, and data analytics to support OEM operations.

Ricardo Perez is the Communications and Community Engagement Coordinator for the Office of Emergency Management. He provides bilingual, English, and Spanish public information for Larimer OEM while finding ways to communicate and engage with the diverse populations in Larimer County. Ricardo also specializes in community inclusion and engagement work, ensuring that all who live, work, and visit the County have a voice in emergency management.



Community Inclusion & Engagement Initiatives

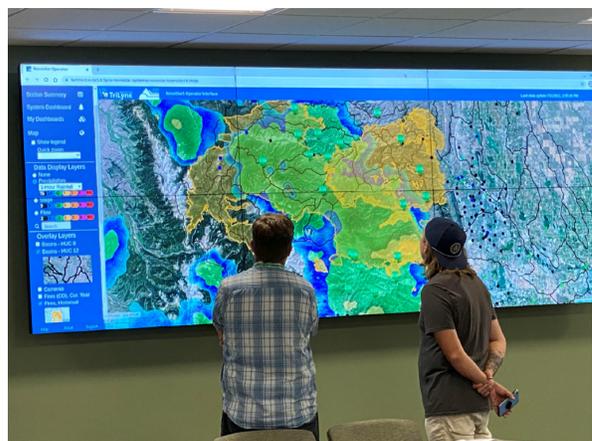


- Access and Functional Needs Coordination
- Translation and Interpretation Services for OEM Operations
 - Emergency Preparedness Guide (English and Spanish)
 - Flood Ready Emergency Preparedness Guide (English and Spanish)
 - Emergency Preparedness 101 - Video Series (English and Spanish)
- Relationship Building with Under-Resourced Populations
 - Participation in Emergency Preparedness Fairs
 - Informational booths at community events throughout Larimer County
 - Liaison and facilitate equity, diversity, and inclusion advisory initiatives at the county
 - Coordination for data, outreach, and engagement and communications channels
 - Promoting LETA's Reachwell application for emergency notification translation. Reachwell allows community members to receive emergency alerts in the language they choose.

LARIMER COUNTY EMERGENCY OPERATIONS CENTER

The Larimer Emergency Operations Center (EOC) is a joint effort between Larimer County, City of Loveland, and Loveland Fire Rescue Authority. It provides a central location where public, private, non-profit, and volunteer organizations are able to come together to coordinate during emergencies and disasters.

Key functions of the EOC include resource coordination, policy direction, providing situational awareness to our partners, and technical assistance for a variety of needs.



SUMMARY

The Larimer County Office of Emergency Management continues to develop inclusive and sustainable practices to protect life and property and empower all who live, work, and visit the County to prevent, mitigate, prepare for, respond to, and recover from emergencies and disasters.

Thank for you taking the time to learn about the Larimer County Office of Emergency Management. Please feel free to contact us with any questions you may have.

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