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Texas Cooperative Extension's Role in Emergency Management

Janie L. Harris, Texas A&M University, College Station, TX

Texas Cooperative Extension's (TCE) Emergency Management Program focuses on an "All Hazards" approach. An agency-wide steering committee has been developed to work with administration to facilitate the process. The agency has developed an internal structure in order to respond to disasters. TCE has petitioned the Governor's Division of Emergency Management for a seat at the State Operations Center, trained County faculty on their role in Emergency Management, developed an agency output plan, developed a disaster related website, and organized Incident Resource Teams (IRTs) to provide resources to support hazardous incidents that affect Texas. The incident focused resources and outreach efforts focus on:

1. Mitigation - to eliminate hazards, reduce the probability of their occurrence or their effects
2. Preparedness - to make ready beforehand, to know how to respond
3. Response - to react appropriately in order to resolve the situation (activating emergency facilities; mobilizing, deploying and employing personnel, equipment and supplies to resolve the emergency situation)
4. Recovery - to regain normalcy

Short-term recovery is to restore vital services; long-term recovery focuses on restoring communities to a normal state

During 2005, TCE personnel responded to hurricanes, floods, droughts, wildfires and tornadoes. In recent years, the state has experienced the shuttle explosion, severe winter ice storms that resulted in power outages for 5-7 days, and hazardous materials incidents.

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