Virginia Department of Emergency Management

BEFORE THE STORM

What It Really Takes to Keep Virginia Ready

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HELENE: A TEST YEARS IN THE MAKING

September 2024 | Southwest Virginia



The water rose in 2024.

The preparation began years earlier.

Preparedness Happens Years Before Landfall

The capabilities we count on are built during blue-sky days.

01 PEOPLE
Experienced teams

02 PLANS
Clear procedures

03 SYSTEMS
Connected tools

04 TRAINING
Practiced response

05 CONTRACTS
Resources ready

06 RELATIONSHIPS
Trusted partners

BLUE-SKY DAYS → **PLAN • TRAIN • INVEST** → **READY TO RESPOND**

Preparedness is what lets a community act when the storm gets here.

The Grant Is Not the Capability

Funding helps build and sustain what communities actually need.

PEOPLE

Emergency management staff

COMMUNICATIONS

Interoperable systems

EQUIPMENT

Mission-ready tools

TRAINING

Skills and exercises

OPERATIONS CENTERS

Coordinated decision-making

REGIONAL SUPPORT

Shared response capability

Measure the capability behind the dollars.

Closing the Gap Before the Storm

Unified Readiness + State of Preparedness feasibility study

UNIFIED READINESS

People and partnerships

- Seven regional + statewide summit
- Cross-sector local and state partnerships
- Mutual aid, interoperability and gaps

STATE OF PREPAREDNESS

Chapter 455 (2026) — study

- Earlier resource pre-positioning
- Response below emergency threshold
- Recommendations due November 1, 2026

If the Funding Changed Tomorrow…

NOT ELIMINATED. JUST DELAYED.

What capability would change?

STAFFING
Position stays vacant

TRAINING
Exercise gets postponed

EQUIPMENT
Replacement slips

SYSTEMS
Maintenance is deferred

A risk can be invisible—until the community needs that capability.

ARE WE READY?

01 Know your capability

02 Know your dependency

03 Plan for sustainability

04 Build relationships early

The storm doesn’t care how we funded preparedness.
It only exposes whether we prepared.

Key Questions for CAOs

? Do you know your Emergency Manager?

? Are you familiar with the process for requesting resources?

Resource Request Process

1 Local Request

Localities and Tribes may request support directly from state agencies through established steady-state protocols and existing authorities (e.g., VSP or VDOT). If the need cannot be met through those normal channels, the Local Emergency Coordinator should be notified to initiate the Statewide Resource Request Process.

2 Regional Coordination

VDEM RCC processes and fills the request. If cannot fill within region, the request is sent to State EOC for tasking.

3 State Coordination & Resource Sourcing

State EOC fills request internally. If VEOC cannot fill internally, the request is filled through various external means.

Local ICP (Town / Tribe / City / County)

Direct Coordination

Local EOC (Town / Tribe / City / County)

VDEM Regional Coordination Center (RCC)

Requests are filled at the lowest possible level.

Virginia EOC (VEST)

- **EMAC** — Emergency Management Assistance Compact
- **FEMA** — Federal Emergency Management Agency
- **Commercial Resources / Contracts**
- **State Mutual Aid**

Automatic Aid / Mutual Aid

Statewide Mutual Aid

Facilitation and Awareness

WebEOC — Common operating platform for situational awareness, resource management, and decision support.

24/7 365 VDEM Situational Awareness Unit 804-750-8845

HOW TO REQUEST SUPPORT (CSALTT)

- **C** — **Capability**: what the resource will be doing
- **S** — **Size**: physical descriptor if applicable
- **A** — **Amount**: how many do you need
- **L** — **Location**: physical address of where resource is needed
- **T** — **Type**: FEMA Type or resource description
- **T** — **Time**: how long the resource is needed

LEGEND

- **ICP** – Incident Command Post
- **EOC** – Emergency Operations Center
- **RCC** – Regional Coordination Center
- **EMAC** – Emergency Management Assistance Compact
- **FEMA** – Federal Emergency Management Agency
- **VEST** – Virginia Emergency Support Team
- **VDEM** – Virginia Department of Emergency Management

VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

MUTUAL AID

Requirements & Resource Authority

Requirement / Authority	LMA Local Mutual Aid	NDMA Non-Declared Mutual Aid	SMA Statewide Mutual Aid	IGA Intergovernmental Agreement	EMAC Emergency Management Assistance Compact
Local declaration required			●		
State declaration required					●
MOU with VDEM required				●	●
Locality maintains operational control	●	●	●		
State maintains operational control				●	●
Local resource may be recalled	●	●	●	●	●
Locality retains authority to determine resource availability	●	●	●	●	●

● **Applies** Blank cells indicate no designation in the source table.

“The only thing harder than preparing for a disaster is explaining why you didn’t”

Questions?

Virginia Department of Emergency Management

vaemergency.gov

THANK YOU!

