

Basic

Gaston County Emergency Operations Plan

Updated: January 2018

I. FOREWORD

The Gaston County Emergency Operations Plan was developed to address multiple hazards that threaten our jurisdiction. Through the use of a functional format, this plan encourages an Integrated Emergency Management System (IEMS) approach to disaster response; and fosters prompt, efficient and coordinated response operations by elements of emergency response organizations. IEMS requires system-wide integration of skills, personnel and resources. IEMS recognizes that plans developed for one type of emergency are extremely useful for other emergency situations and a significant amount of emergency operational capability can be established by addressing broadly applicable functions.

The basic plan serves as a summary document that outlines specific responsibilities of county agencies. The functional annexes define how each function works during emergency situations. Defining the roles of each response agency reduces confusion, chaos and conflict during emergencies and significantly decreases vulnerability of the public and their property to hazardous threats.

This plan meets the requirements of North Carolina planning guidance and the legal responsibilities identified in [North Carolina General Statute 166-A](#). It provides necessary elements to ensure local governments can fulfill their legal responsibilities for emergency preparedness.

THREAT STATUS PLAN

The Gaston County Threat Status Plan (hereafter called the TSP) is to ensure a coordinated and effective response **leading up to any significant hazards that might threaten the county.**

The TSP provides alerting and notification guidance to local government officials, emergency management, and other departments and agencies within Gaston County. Specific responsibilities for County departments and other agencies in the event of a threat or incident are outlined in the Emergency Operations Plan (EOP). The EOP will be the plan followed once an incident starts to or has affected Gaston County.

It is intended that the TSP be used in conjunction with the EOP, as amended, in anticipation of, or in response to a threat impacting Gaston County. In order to avoid duplication, the user is referred to the EOP if a more detailed description is required of agency responsibilities.

The TSP should be used by elected and appointed officials of the county and municipal governments, chief executives and policy officials, emergency response personnel, and other governmental departments and agencies to enhance monitoring, alerting, notification and preparedness status.

ORGANIZATION:

Joint action is recommended by Gaston County and the municipal governments within the County for decision-making and efficient and effective use of resources. For this purpose, a county wide Control Group and an EOC Group should be established to perform the following functions.

Control Group Mission:

To exercise overall direction and control and response operations including decisions to institute county wide increased readiness conditions and other actions necessary to the situation. The Control Group determines major actions to be taken (such as evacuations, curfews, re-entry, etc.) and approves authority for actions not listed on the Readiness Checklist

Composition -

- The Chair of the County Board of Commissioners will serve as County Group Chair and the Clerk to the Commissioners or alternate will be present to serve as a recorder.
- The Mayors of the City and Towns within the bounties of Gaston County.
- The County Manager and Emergency Management Administrator.

Line of Succession - In the event that any of the members of the Control Group are not available, each primary member will be asked to identify an alternate who will have the responsibility and authority of the primary member.

The Control Group will meet in the Emergency Operations Center (EOC), a conference room near the EOC, or another location as necessary or by use of conference call.

EOC Group Mission:

To coordinate the provision of personnel and material resources needed to implement pre-planned actions and as directed by the Control Group; and to provide information and recommendations to the Control Group with respect to future actions.

Composition – Representatives in this group are those listed in the EOP. Responsible for coordination of resources. Other actions for this group are listed on the Readiness Checklist.

Line of Succession - In the event that any of the members of the EOC Group are not available, each primary function will be asked to identify an alternate who will have the responsibility and authority of the primary member.

The EOC Group will be located in the Gaston County Emergency Operations Center (EOC) when activated and reference roles and responsibilities listed in the EOP.

CONCEPT OF OPERATIONS

The Concept of Operations for the Gaston County TSP calls for the following actions:

- The early alerting of officials and concerned agencies throughout the County by the Office of Emergency Management or other respected agency, person or group.
- Constant communications among all management, municipalities, agencies and the Office of Emergency Management before major operations begin.
- Overall direction and decision-making by the Control Group with final approval by the Chair, Board of County Commissioners.
- Media releases from all county employees and municipalities coordinated through the County Public Information Officer (PIO) to minimize confusion to the general public.
- Increased readiness actions taken progressively as the threat approaches and as the threat of

injury and damage increases. (See Appendix 1 and 2.)

- County departments use the five established preparation phases that correspond to the NC Division of Emergency Management levels of activation [See Appendix 2.]
- Local governments request state and/or federal assistance, as necessary, through the Gaston County Emergency Operations Center.

WARNING AND ALERTING SYSTEM:

Notification of County departments and staff will be the responsibility of the County Manager and appropriate department heads.

The preparation phases identified in the Readiness Checklist are as follows:

- Level - 5 – No notable threat issued or known
- Level - 4 - The National Weather Service forecasts or other agency forecasts that Gaston County may feel the effects of a threat or hazard within 72 Hours.
- Level - 3 - The National Weather Service forecasts or other agency forecasts that Gaston County may feel the effects of a threat or hazards within 48 Hours.
- Level - 2 - The National Weather Service forecasts or other agency forecasts that Gaston County may feel the effects of a threat or hazard within 24 Hours.
- Level - 1 The National Weather Service forecasts or other agency forecasts that Gaston County may feel the effects of a threat or hazard imminently.
- Condition Recovery - The threat has passed Gaston County and the effects of the hazards have started to subside.

PUBLIC INFORMATION:

The Public Information Officer (PIO) will provide information to the public via the news media and other means, based upon decisions of the Control Group to include the following:

1. Emergency declarations, curfews and other restrictions.
2. Protective actions recommended for the public.
3. Evacuation instructions.
4. Re-entry instructions.
5. Damage information.
6. Other relevant information, as required.

The PIO will monitor information disseminated to the public by the news media from National Weather Service bulletins, advisories, and other sources in order to determine accuracy & correctness of information disseminated.

APPENDIX 1

Summary of Major Activities Preparation Recommendations

Level 5 - No known threats exists

EM Administrator

- Monitors situations
- Keep County Manager advised

County PIO

- Issues press releases and public preparedness info

Level 4 - Forecast of threat effects within 72 hours

EM Administrator

- Monitors situations
- Keep County Manager advised
- Puts staff on stand-by status

County Manager

- Notifies Board of Commissioners, County Department Heads and members of the Control Group

Control Group membership:

Chairman of Board of Commissioners, County Manager, EM Administrator, Mayors of the cities or towns within the County and or their designees and recorder.

County PIO

- Issues press releases to public regarding emergency preparedness

Level 3 - Forecast of threat effects within 48 hours

EM Administrator

- Partial open EOC or call for EOC Briefing if needed
- Continue monitoring situation and keep County Manager advised.
- Recommends to County Manager that Control Group convenes to discuss situation

County PIO

- Issues press releases to media regarding emergency preparedness

County Manager

- Notifies Board of Commissioners, County Department Heads and members of the Control Group

Control Group

- Review latest information and makes policy decision if needed

Level 2 - Forecast of threat effects within 24 hours

EM Administrator

- Partial EOC activation with plan to go full activation pending threat if needed
- Continue to monitor situations and share information with County Manager

County Manager

- Notifies Board of Commissioners, County Department Heads and members of the Control Group

Control Group

- Convenes to discuss possibility of future decisions with respect to the following:
 - Emergency Declarations
 - Possible early evacuations
 - Curfews and other restrictions
 - EOC activation
 - Shelters activation
 - County Receiving Point activation
 - Activation of local emergency plans

County PIO

- Issues press releases and public preparedness info

Level 1 - Imminently effects of a threat or hazard

Control Group

- Review latest information and makes policy decision if needed. Directs EOC Group to implement decisions taken
- Considers Emergency Declaration that is signed by Chairman of the Board

EM Administrator

- Full EOC activation if needed, maintains contact with WBO, provides Control Group with periodic updates

County PIO

- Issues press releases, notifies backup PIOs to report

Human Resource Director

- Assist with obtaining volunteers or call back employees to report to identified and needed tasks due to incident.

Condition Recovery - The threat has passed or subsided

EM Administrator oversees:

- Maintaining contact with State EM
- Works with Control Group to implement recovery plan
- Provides periodic updates
- Maintains full EOC as needed
- Coordinates damage assessment teams
- Manages the County's Receiving Point

NOTE:

Quick developing weather conditions, such as summer thunderstorms, quick heavy rains, tornado like winds etc may not allow time to implement this plan, but this plan can be used as a reference tool to address items that may need to be done to better place Gaston County in the response mode to any incident.

APPENDIX 2

SUGGESTED READINESS CHECKLIST

FOR CONTROL GROUP, EOC GROUP

&

SELECTED COUNTY DEPARTMENTS

It is assumed that each County Department Head will activate their department's internal emergency response plan as directed by the County Manager. These checklists can be modified to fit your agency; these are just suggested checklists.

The following checklists are included in this Appendix as recommendation. They may be modified to meet the changing situation(s):

1. Control Group
2. EOC Group

1. CONTROL GROUP: Provides overall Direction & Control of Response Operations

Membership: Chairman of the Board of County Commissioners, Clerk to the Commissioner (Recorder) or alternate, County Manager, County Emergency Management Administrator, Mayors of the Cities or Towns within County and/or their designees.

Level 5- No threat or hazard is known

- 1. Review the County's Emergency Operations Plan, especially as pertains to the responsibilities of the Control Group.
- 2. Provide Emergency Management staff with updated contact information.

Level 4- 72 hrs.

- 1. Direct that employees of all jurisdictions be alerted as to the need for increased readiness, including review of plans and procedures.
- 2. Conduct initial conference calls with National Weather Service, North Carolina Division of Emergency Management (NCEM), & other relevant agencies.
- 3. Hold at least one meeting of the Control Group to review procedures & responsibilities.

Level 3- 48 hrs. Or Watch

- 1. Direct that employees of all jurisdictions activate response plans for their individual agencies, as appropriate.
- 2. Conduct conference calls with National Weather Service, North Carolina Division of Emergency Management, & other relevant agencies to obtain latest advisories and guidance.
- 3. Conduct preliminary discussions with the Emergency Management Administrator regarding possible evacuations.

Level 2- 24 hrs. Or Warning

- 1. Determine any orders that should be issued, if needed, upon the recommendation of the Emergency Management Administrator.
- 2. Decide when shelters will be opened, if necessary.
- 3. Assure all agencies alert and on standby.
- 4. Coordinate with Western Branch NCEM, other state agencies and adjoining counties with respect to any actions planned.
- 5. Issue instructions to have all county's vehicles to fuel up and keep tank topped off as well as generators

Level 1- Imminently Effects

- 1. Issue orders as necessary.
- 2. Order shelters to be opened if needed.
- 3. Notify Western Branch Office NCEM and adjoining counties of status and planned actions.
- 4. Maintain awareness of all updated reports from Weather Service, media, and other sources.
- 5. Insure that all agencies are in state of action or readiness, as appropriate.
- 6. Monitor the progress of the evacuation.
- 7. Order the immediate start of evacuation should conditions warrant.
- 8. Issue Emergency Declaration & Curfew Order, if necessary.
- 9. Communicate with other members of the Control Group, as necessary, to discuss what Direction & Control actions need to be taken during the Recovery phase.

Condition- Recovery

- 1. Decide when and where Re-Entry should be allowed, based upon reports from Damage Assessment Teams.
- 2. Review Curfews and Restrictions to determine whether they should be cancelled or extended.
- 3. Make key policy decisions relative to the Recovery, as needed.

2. EOC GROUP: Coordinate personnel and material resources to implement pre-planned actions and procure additional resources, if needed; Provide information, data and recommendations to the Control Group; Implement decisions made by the Control Group. The EOC Group is located at the Emergency Operations Center (EOC).

Membership: Designees representing the County Manager, Emergency Management, Cities and towns, Law Enforcement, Fire, Rescue, EMS Medical, Health, Transportation, Public Works, Mass Care, Human Services, Communication, and Finance

Level 5- No threat or hazard is known

- 1. Review the County's Emergency Operations Plan, policies, procedures and all Memoranda of Understanding.
- 2. Obtain updated contact information for staff, EOC representatives, agency heads, and other

necessary organizations.

Level 4- 72 hrs.

- 1. Attend Control Group meetings, as requested.
- 2. Hold at least one meeting of EOC Group to review procedures and responsibilities if needed.
- 3. Determine that shift schedules are in place for EOC operations and that staff are notified of their assignments.

Level 3- 48 hrs. Or Watch

- 1. Test Communications equipment and procedures.
- 2. Review EOC responsibilities and assignments
- 3. Furnish situation reports if needed for use by the Control Group.

Level 2- 24 hrs. Or Warning

- 1. Possible partial or full EOC activation; report to EOC if notified.
- 2. Monitor the pending situation or threat
- 3. Furnish situation reports to Control Group, Western Branch Office NCEM, and surrounding counties.
- 4. Prepare recommendations for Control Group as needed
- 5. Issue instructions to have all county's vehicles to fuel up and keep tank topped off as well as generators

Level 1- Imminently Effects

- 1. Implement orders from the Control Group as decided.
- 2. Implement orders from the Control Group relative to opening shelters if needed.
- 3. Coordinate provision of communications between shelters, traffic control checkpoints, and EOC, as needed.
- 4. Monitor the progress threat.
- 5. Recommend as needed to the Control Group, should conditions warrant.

Condition- Recovery

- 1. Maintain liaison with law enforcement agencies.

- [] 2. Review preliminary damage assessment reports.
- [] 3. Request needed assistance through the Western Branch Office, NCEM.
- [] 4. Document all actions taken in the EOC.
- [] 5. Provide staff to liaison with state and federal officials.

GASTON COUNTY THREAT STATUS LEVELS

LEVEL	FORECAST
5	No notable threat issued or known
4	The National Weather Service forecasts or other agency forecasts that Gaston County may feel the effects of a threat or hazard within 72 Hours
3	The National Weather Service forecasts or other agency forecasts that Gaston County may feel the effects of a threat or hazards within 48 Hours
2	The National Weather Service forecasts or other agency forecasts that Gaston County may feel the effects of a threat or hazard within 24 Hours
1	The National Weather Service forecasts or other agency forecasts that Gaston County may feel the effects of a threat or hazard imminently.
Condition	
Recovery	The threat has passed Gaston County and the effects of the hazards have started to subside.

II. USES

This plan is intended for use by Gaston County emergency response organizations and governmental leaders to maximize the effectiveness of resources in response to emergencies and disasters that could and/or have occurred in the county. The plan is formatted as following:

- Basic Plan: For use by chief executives and policy making officials.
- Annexes: Addresses Common Functions for use by managers of operational functions.
- Guidelines are not contained within this plan, but must be developed by each operational manager and are essential to the implementation of this document. Copies of all Guidelines should be submitted and kept for reference at the emergency operations center to ensure integration of services when two or more agencies work together.

Each section of the plan contains a purpose statement for that section. Individual's assigned responsibilities should be familiar with the entire plan; however added emphasis must be given to those sections for which they are responsible. While all circumstances cannot be addressed, the content of this plan should be used as a guide for those things that do occur but are not specifically addressed herein.

III. PURPOSE

This plan designates actions to be taken by the government agencies and private organizations of Gaston County to reduce the vulnerabilities of people and property to disaster and establish methodologies to respond effectively to the actual occurrence of a disaster.

IV. SITUATION AND ASSUMPTIONS

A. Situation

1. General description of area:

Gaston County is located in North Carolina Emergency Management's Western Branch, Area 13 and Federal Emergency Management Agency Region IV. Its geographic location is the Southern Piedmont section of the State of North Carolina. It is bound on the East by Mecklenburg County, on the South by York County, South Carolina, on the North by Lincoln County, and on the West by Cleveland County. The current population of the County and municipalities within the County is approximately 216,965 (July 2016 estimate).

a. Gaston County provides the following governmental services, which may have expanded duties during a disaster:

- Public Safety Division
 - Emergency Management
 - Fire Marshal
 - Volunteer Fire Departments
 - Emergency Medical Services
 - Rescue Squads
 - Law Enforcement - County Police
 - Animal Control
 - 911 Communications
 - Sheriff's Office
 -

- Public Works
 - Solid Waste Disposal
 - Engineering
- Planning and Code Enforcement
- Building Inspection
- Zoning Enforcement
- Parks and Recreation
- Administrative Services
 - Tax Assessor
 - Property appraisals
 - Social Services (DHHS)
 - Health Department (DHHS)
 - Environmental Health
 - Public Health Clinics
 - Mental Health
 - Education
 - Gaston County Schools
 - Hospital
 - Library
 - ACCESS Transportation

b. The following municipalities provide services that may be expanded during a disaster or their duties may be directly impacted by the hazard:

- City of Belmont - Sanitation and Recycling services are contracted, Fire, Law Enforcement, Water, Sewer, Street Maintenance.
- City of Bessemer City - Fire, Law Enforcement, Sanitation (contracted), Street Maintenance, Water, Sewer, and Natural Gas.
- City of Cherryville - Electrical Services (Electra Cities Member), Water, Sewer, Sanitation, Street Maintenance, Fire Protection and Law Enforcement.
- Town of Cramerton - Law Enforcement, Fire Service, Water, Sewer, Recreation, and Street Department, Sanitation (contracted).
- Town of Dallas - Fire Protection, Sanitation and Recycling Services, Street Maintenance, Water, Sewer, Law Enforcement, and Electrical (Electra Cities Member).
- City of Gastonia - Fire Protection, Law Enforcement, Sanitation, Water and Sewer, Parks and Recreation, Electrical (Electra Cities Member), Building Inspection, Hazardous Materials Team, Traffic Engineering, Street Maintenance, Radio Repair Service (City and County), and Airport Operations.
- Town of High Shoals - Water, Sewer, Sanitation and Recycling Services (contracted), Street Maintenance, Fire Protection (contracted), and Law Enforcement (contracted with county).
- City of Kings Mountain - Water, Sewer, Natural Gas, Fire, Law Enforcement, Parks and Recreation, Street Maintenance, and Animal Control. ****The majority of Kings Mountain is in Cleveland County. The Emergency Management Office of Cleveland County will serve Kings Mountain.**

- City of Lowell - Law Enforcement, Fire Protection, Water, Sewer, Street Maintenance, Sanitation and Recycling (contracted).
- Town of McAdenville - Fire Protection and Law Enforcement (Contracted), Water, Sewer, Street Maintenance, Sanitation and Recycling (contracted).
- City of Mount Holly - Fire Protection, Law Enforcement, Street Maintenance, Water, Sewer, Sanitation and Recycling.
- Town of Ranlo - Fire Protection, Law Enforcement, Water, Sewer, Street Maintenance, Sanitation and Recycling.
- Town of Stanley - Fire Protection, Law Enforcement, Water, Sewer, Street Maintenance, Sanitation and Recycling (contracted) and Recreation.

2. The major traffic arteries are:

U.S. Highway 321, Interstate I-85, U.S. Highway 29-74, N.C. Highway 274, N.C. Highway 277, N.C. Highway 273, N.C. Highway 16, and N.C. Highway 27. ([See Attachment 3 - Gaston County Map](#))

3. Railroads are:

Southern Railway runs through the middle of Gaston County to include the municipalities of Gastonia, Cramerton, Bessemer City, Belmont, McAdenville, Lowell and Ranlo.

CSX Railroad runs through northern Gaston County to include the municipalities of Stanley, Mount Holly, and Cherryville.

Many railway spurs run throughout the county serving business and industry.

The NC Department of Transportation has a rail system that is not routinely used, however is available for use as an alternative transportation route.

4. The County contains the following airports:

The Gastonia Municipal Airport is located on N.C. 274 South at the Gaston Day School Road. This airport is mainly used by smaller private aircraft and some midsize cargo planes.

The Charlotte International Airport, although not in Gaston County, has the potential to cause impact due to its close proximity to the eastern portion of the county. This airport has flights of all types and sizes arriving daily.

5. Gas Lines are:

Three major gas pipelines run through Gaston County from the Cleveland County line southwest to the Lincoln County line northeast. Numerous distribution lines feed into communities throughout the county. Bessemer City and Kings Mountain provide Natural Gas Service to their residents.

Plantation Pipeline carrying liquid hydrocarbons runs through southern Gaston County.

Colonial Pipeline carrying liquid hydrocarbons runs through southern Gaston County.

Transcontinental Pipeline has three large diameter pipelines that run parallel basically through the middle of the county from southwest to northeast.

6. Water Distribution:

The City of Gastonia, Cherryville, Bessemer City, Dallas, Belmont, Mount Holly, and High Shoals provide their own public water treatment and distribution systems. The Towns of Cramerton, Lowell, McAdenville and Ranlo purchase water from Gastonia. Stanley purchase water from Mount Holly. Most towns and cities are interconnected with other municipal water systems that would help to reduce the effect of losing a water plant.

7. The County is exposed to many hazards, all of which have the potential to disrupt the community, cause damage, and create casualties. Potential hazards (natural, technological and national security) for Gaston County are:

a. Potential Hazards

- [Earthquakes](#)
- [Fixed Nuclear Facility Incident](#) (Ten Mile Emergency Planning Zone for Duke Energy McGuire and Catawba Nuclear Plants)
- [Railway Accident](#)
- [Flooding](#)
- [Dam Failure](#)
- [Mass Casualty Accident/Mass Fatality](#)
- [Civil Disorder](#) (Evacuation/ Re-entry)
- [Severe Weather](#)
- [Hazardous Materials Release](#)
- [Major Fires](#) (Forest, [Industrial](#), or Multi-Family)
- [Power Failure](#)
- [Large Aircraft Crash](#)

b. The County has experienced many hazards, all of which have at some particular time caused disruption to communities, great amounts of damage and in some cases even created casualties. These hazards being natural, technological and civil are:

Historical Hazards

- Major Fires
 - [Large Structural](#)
 - [Forest or Grassland](#) (Urban Interface)
 - [Landfill](#)
- [Flooding](#)
- Severe Weather
 - [Tornadoes](#)
 - [Winter Storms](#)
 - [Cold Weather](#)
 - [Hurricanes](#) (Latent Effects)

- [Severe Thunderstorms](#)
- [Drought](#)
- [Hazardous Materials](#)
 - Transportation Accidents
 - Fixed Facility
 - Unknowns
 - Underground Water Contamination
- [Aircraft Crashes](#)
- [Civil Disorder/Rioting](#)
- [Pipeline Breaks](#)
- [Railway Accidents](#)

B. Assumptions

1. The occurrence of any one or more of the disaster events previously listed could impact Gaston County severely and include several of the following possibilities.
 - Loss of electric power
 - Failure of the water distribution system
 - Severance of road/highway network
 - Necessity for mass care and feeding operations
 - Evacuation of people from the county
 - Need for debris clearance and removal
 - Multiple injuries and fatalities
 - Drastic increase in media attention
 - Damage to the emergency communications network
 - Damage to the telephone network
 - Economic impact
 - Increased number of vermin/vectors
 - Need for official public information and rumor control
 - Need for State and Federal assistance
 - Re-entry of essential personnel and equipment
 - Re-entry of the public
 - Damage to vital records
 - Need for damage assessment
 - Need for auxiliary power
 - Need for coordination of donated goods
 - Contamination of private wells
 - Over taxing local resources
 - Depth of staffing problems
 - Loss of facilities vital to maintaining essential services
 - Environmental impact/wildlife, natural resources, and agricultural
 - Management of reconstruction
 - Coordination of staged resources
 - Isolation of populations
2. The occurrence of one or more than one of the previously listed hazards could result in a true catastrophic disaster situation, which would grossly overwhelm local and state resources.
3. It is necessary for Gaston County to plan for and to carry out disaster response and recovery operations utilizing local resources; however, it is likely that outside assistance would be needed

and available in most major disaster situations affecting the county.

4. Officials of Gaston County are aware of the possible occurrence of an emergency or major disaster and their responsibilities in the execution of this plan and will fill these responsibilities as needed.

V. CONCEPT OF OPERATIONS

- A. As required by [General Statutes 166A-2](#), it is the responsibility of Gaston County Government to organize and plan for the protection of life and property from the effects of emergency/disaster.
- B. Gaston County utilizes the four phases of Comprehensive Emergency Management in designing and implementing the emergency services program. These phases are:
 1. [Mitigation](#) - Through the planning departments, the building and the fire inspection programs, county and municipal governments use codes, standards, and ordinances to prevent industry from impacting on residential areas and also prevents sub-standard building construction and construction in flood prone areas. Education of the private business sector and the public about potential disaster effects also prevents injury and death from disasters.
 2. Preparedness - Through disaster planning and recognition of hazards likely to affect the area, the county and municipal agencies prepare for potential disasters. County agencies are offered training and equipment in preparation for a disaster and each department is responsible for seeing that their responders have adequate training to carry out assigned functions. Many other programs are offered to the business community and residents of Gaston County to help them be prepared. Gaston County encourages businesses to plan for potential disastrous events.
 3. Response - When a disaster occurs the county and municipal agencies respond either as direct assistance to the disaster area or as a support agency to the first responders on-scene. The response agencies should act within their scope of training and can call upon outside resources as needed to mitigate further damages. The Response Phase may last several hours to many days depending on the type of disaster. Many times the recovery process will begin while many agencies are still responding.
 4. Recovery - After the immediate short term emergency needs of an area are controlled, the county and municipal governments begin a recovery process that may take several days to many months or years. Response agencies will determine what impacts have been made on the community and what will need to be done to put the community back to pre-disaster conditions. Many times this effort will overwhelm the jurisdiction and assistance from State and Federal Government will be needed.
- C. Gaston County provides many emergency services to the citizens of the county on a daily basis. Some of the services overlap into city/town government jurisdictions. While the cities/towns within the county provide many services to their citizens, they also depend on Gaston County for services such as emergency medical, social services, mental health, sheltering of evacuees, and emergency management.
- D. Each city/town government in Gaston County will maintain its own operations in the event of a disaster. However, if a municipal government's resources prove to be inadequate during an emergency event, requests for county resources may be needed to keep the city/town governments normal operations functional. There are municipal governments in the county that will be able to remain completely functional without outside resources, but some towns may become totally dependent on the county resources.

- E. As requests for resources become overwhelming, the Gaston County Office of Emergency Management will coordinate with adjoining counties for additional available assistance. Emergency Management will also work with the North Carolina Division of Emergency Management to utilize state resources when county capabilities become exhausted.
- F. When needed the Gaston County Commissioners can [declare a "State of Emergency"](#), as directed by [General Statute 166A-8](#), to assist the local emergency response agencies in carrying out their duties and for the protection of the citizens and property within the disaster area. Municipalities can independently declare a "State of Emergency" in the event of a disaster or by resolution they can accept a County "State of Emergency" when declared.
- G. When a disaster overwhelms the capability of state and local governments, resources of federal departments and agencies may be needed.
- H. Local governments will use their normal channel for [requesting assistance and/or resources](#), through the Gaston County Office of Emergency Management to the State Emergency Operations Center. If state resources have been exhausted, the State will arrange to provide the needed resource(s) using the Emergency Support Functions as described in the National Response Framework.
- I. The [National Response Framework](#) establishes the basis for fulfilling the Federal government's role in providing response and recovery assistance to a state and its' affected local governments impacted by any significant disaster requiring Federal response.
- J. Under the National Response Framework, departments and agencies having various authorities and resources have been assigned primary and support agency responsibilities for various Emergency Support Functions. These Emergency Support Functions will work in concert with state agencies to provide the needed resource(s).
- K. Adoption of the National Incident Management System ([NIMS](#))

On October 28, 2004 the Gaston County Commissioners [adopted by Resolution](#) the National Incident Management System (NIMS) as the jurisdiction's official all-hazards, incident response system. NIMS is a comprehensive national approach to incident management. NIMS is defined as a consistent nationwide approach for federal, state, tribal and local governments to work effectively and efficiently together to prepare for, prevent, respond to, and recover from domestic incidents, regardless of cause, size or complexity.

NIMS outline a standard incident management organization called the Incident Command System (ICS) that established five functional areas: command, operations, planning, logistics and finance/administration for management of all major incidents. This is reflected in our [direction and control annex](#) and in our [EOC procedure](#).

- L. Under the provisions of the [Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act](#), a Federal Coordinating Officer will be appointed as the President's representative to coordinate overall delivery of Federal assistance. Federal departments and agencies have been assigned missions to provide assistance directly to the state, under the overall direction of the Federal Coordinating Officer. Gaston County will appoint a Local Coordinating Officer to act as the contact for State and Federal Coordinating Officers, usually the Emergency Management Administrator.

M. State Role and Support:

Requests for state resources will be made through the Gaston County Emergency Management Administrator to the NC Division of Emergency Management State Emergency Operation Center (800-858-0368). The State Emergency Response Team (SERT) will be fully or partially activated as necessary to support the County's requests.

Additionally, it is expected SERT will have a role in most, if not all disasters. The Division of Emergency Management will provide support to the Gaston County [Emergency Management Administrator](#). This support includes, but is not limited to:

- *On scene response by the Area Coordinator or designee.*
- *Assistance with dissemination of emergency public information.*
- *Relay of information from State and Federal Agencies.*
- *Coordination of State agencies during events.*
- *Transmittal and tracking of resource requests.*
- *Assistance with planning, training and recovery operations.*

VI. ORGANIZATION AND ASSIGNMENT OF RESPONSIBILITIES

A. Organization: Most of the departments within local government have emergency functions in addition to their normal duties. Each department is responsible for developing and maintaining their standard operating procedures and notification/recall rosters. Specific responsibilities are outlined below under the section entitled "Responsibilities". Responsibilities for certain organizations that are not a part of local government are also presented.

B. Responsibilities

1. Chairman, County Commissioners / Mayors of Cities or Towns

- Carry out appropriate provisions of North Carolina [General Statutes](#), in addition to [local ordinances relating to emergencies](#).
- [Declare a State of Emergency](#) at the County/Municipal level and assume [direction and control](#) of emergency operations within the designated jurisdiction.
- Request assistance from State government through the Gaston County Office of Emergency Management, as needed, to control an emergency.
- Ensure that information, [damage assessment](#) and other reports are forwarded through the NC Emergency Management, Western Branch Office to the State Division of Emergency Management regarding an emergency.
- Be familiar with the National Incident Management System (NIMS [IS700](#) and [IS800B](#)), [Incident Command System](#) and [incident guidance](#).
- Nominate the Local Emergency Planning Committee, as identified by Title III of SARA, for appointment by the State Emergency Response Commission.

- Perform other functions necessary to mitigate loss of life and property.

2. County Manager / City or Town Manager

- Ensure County/City/Town agencies develop and continually update emergency plans and guidelines to respond to emergencies.
- Ensure that exercises and tests of the emergency systems are conducted on a periodic basis through the Emergency Management Administrator.
- Ensure that representatives for [Emergency Operations Center](#) (EOC) staff are designated to report to the EOC upon activation to assist with providing direction and control.
- The County Manager, when directed, acts on behalf of the Chairman of the County Commissioners in the control of emergency operations and implementation of emergency policies/[ordinances](#) as appropriate in conjunction with the Emergency Management Administrator.
- The City/Town Managers, when directed, act on behalf of the Mayor and Council/Alderman in control of emergency operations for the municipality, implementing policies/ordinances as needed.
- Ensure that financial records of expenditures, including [federal documentation](#), are kept during emergencies.
- Function as the Official County spokesperson and [Public Information Officer](#) or assure that a qualified trained PIO is in place.
- Be familiar with the National Incident Management System (NIMS [IS700](#) and [IS800B](#)), [Incident Command System](#) and [incident guidance](#).
- Ensure, through the Chairman of the LEPC, that facilities within Gaston County having hazardous materials are reporting as required.

3. Emergency Management Administrator (also see County's Ordinances Chapter 5)

[Gaston County's Ordinances - Chapter 5](#)

The Administrator shall be responsible to the governing bodies of the cities and the county in regard to all phases of emergency management activity. The Administrator shall be responsible for the planning, coordination and operation of the emergency management activities in the county. The Administrator shall maintain liaison with the State and Federal authorities and the authorities of nearby political subdivisions so as to insure the most effective operation of the emergency management plans. The Administrator's duties shall include, but not be limited to, the following:

- Coordinating the recruitment of volunteer personnel and agencies to augment the personnel and facilities of the cities and the county for emergency management purposes.
- Development and coordinating of plans for the immediate use of all facilities, equipment,

manpower and other resources of the cities and county for the purpose of minimizing or preventing damage to persons and property; and protecting and restoring to usefulness governmental services and public utilities necessary for the public health, safety and welfare.

- Negotiating and concluding agreements with owners or persons in control of building or other property for the use of such building or other property for the emergency management purposes and designating suitable buildings as public shelters.
- Through public informational programs, educating the populace as to actions necessary and required for the protection of their persons and property in case of enemy attack or disaster as defined herein, either impending or present.
- Conducting public practice alerts to insure the efficient operation of the emergency management forces and to familiarize residents with emergency management regulations, procedures and operations.
- Coordinating the activity of all other public and private agencies engaged in any emergency management activities.
- Perform assigned duties according to [State statutes](#) and [local ordinances](#).
- Establish, equip, and ensure readiness of the primary and back-up County [Emergency Operations Center](#) (EOC) to include communications equipment, status boards and other display devices and provide for operations on a continuous basis, as needed, by providing food, water and other supplies for an effective operation.
- Alert and activate, as required, the County [Emergency Operations Center](#) and the County Emergency Management organization when informed of an emergency within the county.
- Develop procedures for notifying key officials and activating the [Emergency Alerting System](#).
- Serve as the Community Emergency Coordinator as defined by [Title III of SARA](#) supporting the LEPC in maintaining liaison with the Facility Emergency Coordinators.
- Along with Red Cross, designate and activate reception and [shelter](#) areas within the county to receive evacuees and coordinate with adjoining counties as needed for shelter services.
- Identify and arrange for survey of potential shelter locations within Gaston County that will house special needs and institutionalized populations as well as the general population.
- Develop and maintain, with the [Public Information Officer](#) (PIO), a [public information](#) and education program and disseminate information through the PIO during an emergency.
- Serve as the lead county emergency agency to receive emergency notification for incidents involving the [McGuire Nuclear Plant or Catawba Nuclear Plant](#) and inform appropriate officials.
- Maintain contact with the North Carolina Emergency Management during [Fixed Nuclear Facility Incidents](#) to receive status reports and other information and prepare to activate the EOC should the incident escalate.
- Develop a response plan in regards to the Catawba and McGuire Nuclear Station and have trained radiological monitors for radiological operations within the County.
- Carry out other functions and duties found in the various [annexes and procedures](#) that are part of this plan.

Within the National Response Framework, emergency management is an Emergency Support Function ([ESF-5](#)) which provides coordination of incident management and response efforts. This includes issuance of mission assignments, incident action planning, resource capital and financial management.

4. Public Information Officer (Assistant County Manager or City/Town Official)

- Prepare [procedures for conducting public information](#) services during disasters to include the use of the Emergency Alerting System and verification/authentication of all received sources of information.
- Establish and maintain current inventories and agreements for [public information resources](#) and keep a working relationship with the media.
- Coordinate all [media releases](#) pertaining to emergency planning and operations and clear all information with appropriate agencies.
- Provide for public rumor control (Information to dispel rumors) and establish a phone bank for providing emergency information, contacts for those with missing relatives, information on restricted areas and locations for emergency care.
- Develop media advisories for the public and assist in the preparation and review of emergency public information materials for [hazards affecting the county](#).
- Provide emergency public information materials for the special populations including [non-English speaking groups](#) and visually impaired.
- During an incident involving fixed nuclear facilities maintain contact with the Joint Information Center to provide information for news releases and review any news releases concerning the county for accuracy of county related information.
- Carry out other functions and duties found in the various [annexes and procedures](#) that are part of this plan.

5. Gaston County Police

- Plan for conducting traffic control/movement of evacuees to [shelter](#) and other [law enforcement operations](#) throughout the county during disasters.
- Develop and maintain mutual aid agreements with surrounding law enforcement agencies.
- Provide [security for the EOC](#), evacuated areas and as needed during the disaster period.
- Serve as the lead agency for direction and control during civil disturbance and other law

enforcement activities coordinating with City/Town law enforcement agencies as appropriate.

- Provide security and control access/reentry to the damaged area(s) and [vital facilities](#).
- Provide, as available, transportation resources for the movement of critical personnel and equipment.
- Assist in [warning and notifying](#) affected populations of existing or impending emergencies.
- Provide county emergency communications and 911 systems (primary and backup) through the [Communications Director](#).
- Provide a representative to the EOC to assist with decision making and law enforcement coordination.
- Carry out other functions and duties found in the various [annexes and procedures](#) that are part of this plan.
- The Gaston County Police or local municipal police department will serve as the lead investigative agency on missing persons to eliminate any potential foul play. Other county agencies will serve as support to the search operations as needed and requested. Resources needed from outside the County will be coordinated through the Office of Emergency Management along with logistical support as needed.

6. **Gaston County Sheriff**

- Develop and maintain procedures for the relocation and housing of prisoners.
- Provide, as available, transportation resources for the movement of critical personnel and equipment.
- Lead in [warning and notifying](#) affected populations of existing or impending emergencies.
- Develop and maintain mutual aid agreements with surrounding law enforcement agencies.
- Provide for security and preservation of courthouse records and facilities.
- Assist with security of evacuated areas and [shelters](#) and reception centers and traffic control.
- Provide a representative to the [EOC](#) to assist with decision making and law enforcement coordination.
- Carry out other functions and duties found in the various [annexes and procedures](#) that are part of this plan.

7. Municipal Law Enforcement Agencies

- Plan for conducting traffic control/movement of evacuees to shelter and other [law enforcement operations](#) throughout the municipality during disasters.
- Develop and maintain mutual aid agreements with surrounding law enforcement agencies.
- Provide security and control access/reentry to the damaged area(s) and [vital facilities](#).
- Assist in [warning and notifying](#) affected populations of an existing or impending emergency.
- Coordinate municipal law enforcement activities with other city, county, and state agencies.
- Carry out other functions and duties found in the various [annexes and procedures](#) that are part of this plan.
- Local municipal police department will serve as the lead investigative agency in their city on missing persons to eliminate any potential foul play. Other county agencies will serve as support to the search operations as needed and requested. Resources needed from outside the County will be coordinated through the Office of Emergency Management along with logistical support as needed.

8. Gaston County Fire Marshal

- Analyze fire potential and plan for coordination of structural and wildland [fire fighting operations](#) throughout the county.
- Develop mutual aid agreements with county fire departments.
- Prepare inventories of fire equipment and personnel and coordinate with the City of Gastonia to provide trained personnel, protective equipment, instruments and clothing to perform assigned tasks for incidents involving hazardous materials.
- Provide personnel to assist with staffing [EOC](#) operations.
- Provide coordination of county fire department operations and mutual aid from surrounding counties or municipalities.
- Serve as a technological advisor to county agencies and decision-makers for potential hazards associated with hazardous materials and fire.
- Provide support for decontamination and monitoring of [hazardous materials](#), including documenting exposures of personnel and the public.
- Coordinate support personnel to assist in traffic control and [damage assessment operations](#).

- Conduct fire inspections, to include [shelter operations](#), during the recovery period.
- In conjunction with law enforcement, fire service agencies, and the [Transportation Coordinator](#), establish staging areas for incoming resources from outside the county.
- Coordinate local fire departments to provide equipment for possible decontamination, as needed.
- Provide personnel for EOC management.
- Carry out other functions and duties found in the various [annexes and procedures](#) that are part of this plan.

9. Gaston County Emergency Medical Services Chief

- Plan and develop [procedures](#) for dispatch and coordination of emergency medical/rescue activities, using an [Incident Command System](#), throughout the county during disasters and mass casualty incidents.
- Develop mutual aid agreements to supplement emergency medical services.
- Coordinate with the hospital disaster coordinator on use of other medical facilities within the county for mass casualty incidents and expansion of the Emergency Medical system.
- Provide for the initial decontamination and treatment of patients contaminated by hazardous materials.
- Maintain liaison with [American Red Cross](#) and other volunteer agencies to support first aid and to supplement emergency medical resources.
- Establish a system along, with the Health Department and Department of Social Services (DHHS), to check on residents with [special medical needs](#) during recovery.
- Assist with the transport of medical supplies, oxygen, etc. to medical facilities and special needs patients.
- Develop procedures for activation of a Critical Incident Stress Debriefing (CISD) Team to assist emergency workers and victims of the disaster.
- Provide a support role to Red Cross or Department of Social Services (DHHS) for [shelter operations](#) and to the County Medical Examiner during a mass fatality incident.
- Assist, support and/or provide [rescue](#) in coordination with [rescue squads](#) and fire departments.
- Assist, support, and/or provide hazmat medical decontamination.
- Serve as the [lead agency](#) for field command and activation of searches and underwater diving operations and USAR.

- Carry out other functions and duties found in the various [annexes and procedures](#) that are part of this plan.

10. Fire Departments (County)

- Assist in [warning and notifying](#) the affected population of an existing or impending emergency.
- Deploy fire personnel and equipment as needed during emergencies.
- Designate staging areas for mutual aid and volunteer forces responding from other areas.
- Assist, support, and/or provide [rescue](#) operations in coordination with rescue squads and GEMS.
- Provide hazardous material decontamination support.
- Maintain fire security in evacuated areas.
- Assist in debris clearance for emergency access in the disaster area.
- Gaston County Fire Association will provide a liaison to the [Emergency Operation Center](#) when it is activated.
- Develop and maintain [guidelines](#) and Resource Manuals.
- Carry out other functions and duties found in the various [annexes and procedures](#) that are part of this plan.

11. Rescue Squads (County)

- Provide a support role for emergency operations as needed for [public warning](#) and traffic control.
- Deploy rescue personnel and equipment as needed in an emergency.
- Support the [evacuation](#) of special institutions and handicapped or disabled individuals.
- Support search and rescue services for lost individuals and for individuals unable to evacuate due to injury.
- Assist, support and or provide rescue in coordination with fire departments and GEMS.
- Assist in debris clearance for emergency access in the disaster area.
- Provide services to the County Emergency Medical Service to include off-road vehicles to reach isolated areas.
- Support [shelter operations](#) by providing medical and transportation resources.

- Carry out other functions and duties found in the various [annexes and procedures](#) that are part of this plan.

12. Gaston County Social Services Division Director (DHHS)

- Plan for coordination of Social Services operations during disaster.
- Coordinate with medical/health care facilities (i.e. nursing homes, rest homes, etc.) to ensure development of emergency/evacuation procedures in conjunction with the Fire Marshal and Emergency Management Administrator.
- Coordinate agreements with other agencies for supplemental support of DHHS activities.
- Coordinate emergency activities during response and recovery with American Red Cross, Salvation Army, Council on Aging, and other volunteer organizations to include [sheltering](#), mass care, and clothing.
- Provide trained personnel for the staffing, operation and support of [DHHS or Red Cross Shelters](#). DHHS has primary responsibility in providing shelter for persons with special needs who cannot be accommodated in a general population shelter.
- Report to the [Emergency Operations Center](#) upon activation to provide coordination and decision making support for DHHS services.
- Provide emergency benefits within the resources of the Department of Social Services (DHHS).
- Coordinate with the Health Department (DHHS) and Mental Health Agencies to provide support personnel and services during disasters.
- Carry out other functions and duties found in the various [annexes and procedures](#) that are part of this plan.

13. Gaston County 911 Communications Director

- Plan and develop procedures for direction of [communications](#) and [warning systems](#), including two-way radio systems throughout the county, describing methods of communications between EOC, field forces, shelter facilities, adjacent jurisdictions and area/State EOC.
- Receive and disseminate warning information and ensure information related to emergency/disaster situations is provided to emergency workers, key officials, special locations such as schools, hospitals, nursing homes, etc. and alerting the [Emergency Operations Center](#).
- Provide a back-up communications capability.
- Develop guidelines for obtaining and restoring telephone and 911 services during

emergencies.

- Develop agreements for radio repair and maintenance under emergency conditions.
- Coordinate communications net with surrounding counties and state agencies.
- Carry out other functions and duties found in the various [annexes and procedures](#) that are part of this plan.

14. Gaston County Public Works

- Plan for emergency repair of [vital county facilities](#) to include providing emergency power, water, and sanitation during disasters.
- Assist Red Cross and DHHS with shelter marking and upgrading.
- Assist with [debris clearance and removal](#) at county facilities and shelters.
- Develop mutual aid agreements with the municipalities and adjoining counties to provide auxiliary heavy equipment if needed.
- Provide County [Public Works](#) resources to assist with emergency incidents in the county.
- Provide representation to the [EOC](#) for coordination of public works activities and assistance with [damage assessment information](#).
- Provide for acceptance of debris at the county landfill and provide for chipping operations as needed.
- Provide for 24-hour fixed and mobile maintenance and repair of emergency equipment during the disaster period.
- Work with the [Emergency Operations Center](#) to provide officials with recommendations on solid waste disposal.
- Provide technical engineering support and advice.
- Carry out other functions and duties found in the various [annexes and procedures](#) that are part of this plan.

15. Gaston County Public Health Division Director (DHHS)

- Develop procedures for emergency [public health](#) operations including agreements with surrounding counties for assistance.
- Plan for inspection of food, water, and sanitation in [shelters](#) and public eating areas during disasters.

- Provide nursing staff capabilities within public and [special needs shelter](#) to assist with medical and medication needs.
- Implement emergency health awareness and public information programs through the Health Department and County [Public Information Officer](#).
- Respond to the [EOC](#) for coordination of Health Department activities to evaluate, detect, prevent and control communicable disease, waste disposal and vector/vermin control.
- Provide for laboratory facilities to assist with evaluation of potential contamination.
- Assist with recommendations for determining hazardous chemical or radiological exposure levels for emergency workers and the public, providing for exposure inhibiting or mitigating drugs and vaccines.
- Coordinate with mental health agencies to provide for identified needs.
- Provide DHHS facilities for use as temporary emergency care centers for minor injuries.
- Provide information and personnel, upon request, to assist state agencies with monitoring and the gathering of samples from food handlers and processors during a hazardous materials or radiological incident.
- Carry out other functions and duties found in the various [annexes and procedures](#) that are part of this plan.

16. Medical Examiner

- Respond to notifications of fatalities from local authorities, identify needed [resource equipment](#) and establish an adequate morgue system for mass fatalities.
- Supervise the relocation and transportation of the remains of the deceased.
- Develop procedures for the recovery, registration, identification and cause of death of the deceased utilizing the State Medical Examiner's Office as a support agency when needed.
- Issue death certificates, notify next-of-kin and release the remains and personal effects to proper representatives.
- Issue press releases in conjunction with the [Public Information Officer](#).
- Coordinate with funeral directors, pathologists, American Red Cross, dentists, x-ray technicians and law enforcement agencies for assistance.
- Carry out other functions and duties found in the various [annexes and procedures](#) that are part of this plan.

17. Superintendent of Schools

- Support [transportation operations](#) during evacuations or return of evacuees.
- Report to the [Emergency Operations Center](#) or designate a schools representative to coordinate school functions and emergency operations and serve as an advisor.
- Provide support personnel (school counselors, bus drivers, and cafeteria staff) to support disaster operations.
- Provide for the use of school buses ([NCGS 115C-242\(6\)](#)) and other transportation resources as required or requested.
- Coordinate letters of agreement to provide school facilities to be used as [shelters for mass care](#) and feeding, temporary medical facilities, and Disaster Application Centers.
- Provide school system fuel vehicles to support emergency operations.
- Direct and plan for the [notification/warning](#) and [evacuation](#) of school populations.
- Provide the facility(s) for the preparation of meals for shelter and emergency workers as needed and provide school staff to assist emergency shelter and emergency workers in the supervision and/or operation of such facilities and equipment as needed during mass feedings.
- Carry out other functions and duties found in the various [annexes and procedures](#) that are part of this plan.

18. Radiological Officer (Not a paid full time County position)

- Develop a Radiological Protection System and procedures for the county in accordance with Federal and State laws and guidelines.
- Establish a system to obtain radiation exposure and contamination rates using a network of reporting sources.
- Provide radiological support to hazardous materials response teams.
- Coordinate with the [Public Information Officer](#) to prepare information for radiological emergencies.
- Establish a distribution system for radiological protection equipment.
- Coordinate with the emergency service's chiefs to ensure annual [training](#) of key personnel involved with radiological monitoring or response.
- Carry out functions and [duties assigned](#) within the McGuire and Catawba Nuclear Stations emergency response plan.
- Carry out other functions and duties found in the various [annexes and procedures](#) that are part of this plan.

19. Finance Officer (County/Municipal)

- Plan for assisting in the acquisition of [available resources](#) for emergency purposes.
- Develop financial accounting record procedures for county/city/town agencies to report their emergency expenses.
- Be familiar with [Federal Public Assistance documentation](#) and the [FEMA Equipment Allowable Cost schedule](#).
- Develop procedures for the procurement and delivery of essential resources and supplies.
- Ensure that response agencies initiate documentation of all costs incurred subsequent to the disaster.
- Carry out other functions and duties found in the various [annexes and procedures](#) that are part of this plan.

20. Damage Assessment Officer (County/City Inspections and Tax Departments)

- Develop and train personnel for the purpose of conducting [damage assessment](#) within appropriate jurisdictions.
- Report to the [Emergency Operations Center](#) to organize and deploy damage assessment teams and provide for a system to collect data and prepare damage assessment reports for County and State Officials.
- Along with the Emergency Management Administrator develop, review, and annually update procedures for damage assessment reporting and accounting.
- As damage assessment reports are compiled, identify, maintain and distribute to the appropriate agencies a list of [vital facilities](#) requiring priority repairs.
- Carry out other functions and duties found in the various [annexes and procedures](#) that are part of this plan.

21. American Red Cross

- Serve as lead agency for providing [shelter/mass care operations](#) with the Department of Health and Human Services and the Salvation Army.
- Assist Health Department with personnel to help organize and operate [special needs shelters](#).
- Coordinate [damage assessment](#) activities with the [County Damage Assessment Officer](#).

- Provide [shelter managers](#) and supplies for shelter operations.
- Provide for training of managers and staff for shelter operations.
- Coordinate with the Salvation Army to provide mobile feeding operations of emergency workers.
- Provide for [unmet needs](#) of disaster victims and establish Assistance Centers when Presidential Declarations are unlikely.
- Carry out other functions and duties found in the various [annexes and procedures](#) that are part of this plan.

22. Cooperative Extension Service

- Operate out of the County [Emergency Operations Center](#) during a disaster or nuclear power incident to serve as technical advisor on agriculture and liaison to the agricultural community.
- Assist State sampling teams operating in the county as requested during [fixed nuclear facility incidents](#).
- Maintain contact with the N. C. State University Cooperative Extension Service representative at the State Emergency Operations Center.
- Coordinate [public information](#) distribution (Family Preparedness, Consumer Issues, and Food Preparation) with the Health Department and the County Public Information Officer.
- Assist the EOC in identifying and coordinating assistance for agricultural needs within the county.
- Coordinate agricultural [damage assessment](#) teams with the [County Damage Assessment Officer](#).
- Provide assistance to the Health Department with water sampling.
- Assist with activities for youth and adult financial counseling during emergency operations.
- Assist with CAMET operations at pet-friendly shelter
- Carry out other functions and duties found in the various [annexes and procedures](#) that are part of this plan.

Within the National Response Framework, agriculture and natural resources is an Emergency Support Function ([ESF-11](#)) and incorporates nutrition assistance, animal and plant disease and pest response, food safety and security. Additionally, this ESF provides cultural resources and historic properties protections and restoration.

23. Animal Control

- Is lead during [shelter operations](#) for CAMET operations to provide for the use of Animal Control personnel and equipment to assist persons evacuating with domestic animals.
- Plan for [animal control and protection](#) during emergencies/disasters.
- Provide vehicles and staff to assist with transportation of vital personnel and equipment during emergency operations.
- Provide for continuation of animal and rabies control during the disaster period.
- Assist livestock owners in arranging for housing of large animals (farm animals).
- Provide personnel to reenter hazardous areas to provide for feeding and care of animals inadvertently left behind during evacuations.
- Carry out other functions and duties found in the various [annexes and procedures](#) that are part of this plan.

24. Transportation Coordinator (ACCESS - Central Transportation Director)

- Assist in coordination of emergency transportation services, including [evacuations](#).
- Develop procedures for activation of Central Transportation facilities to support emergency operations and evacuations.
- Provide radio-equipped buses and vans, including handicapped accessible vehicles, to assist with transport of [special needs populations](#) and other evacuees.
- Provide shuttle services as needed for key emergency workers during the disaster period.
- Coordinate with law enforcement and emergency management to identify and designate transportation routes.
- Coordinate with the Superintendent of Schools or their designee for [use of school buses](#) and other transportation resources.
- Carry out other functions and duties found in the various [annexes and procedures](#) that are part of this plan.

25. Mental Health (Gaston-Lincoln Mental Health)

- Contact the [Emergency Operations Center](#) to coordinate mental health activities and services.

- Provide councilors as needed to work in the disaster area or [shelters](#).
- Take referrals as a result of Critical Incident Stress Debriefings for emergency workers.
- Provide facilities as needed for critically affected disaster victims.
- Carry out other functions and duties found in the various [annexes and procedures](#) that are part of this plan.

26. **Salvation Army**

- Coordinate with the [Emergency Operations Center](#) and the American Red Cross to provide disaster assistance and relief during a disaster.
- Support disaster operations with Salvation Army facilities and mobile feeding units.
- Serve as the lead agency and develop procedures for receipt and [management of donated goods](#) and services within Gaston County.
- Support Mental Health with counseling services.

27. **United Way**

- Coordinate roles among the Red Cross, Salvation Army and other volunteer human services agencies.
- [Donations Management](#)
- To be first call station for citizens not knowing where to go.
- To provide mental stamina.
- Provide for [unmet needs](#) within the scope of provider agencies.

VII. CONTINUITY OF GOVERNMENT

A. General

The possibility that emergency and disaster occurrences could result in disruption of government functions necessitates that all levels of local government and their departments develop and maintain procedures to ensure continuity of government. These procedures will name who will be the decision-makers if an elected official or department head is not available.

B. Line of Succession

1. The line of succession of the County Board of Commissioners proceeds from the Chairman to the members of the board in accordance with County policy.

2. Lines of succession for the Emergency Management Administrator will be selected by management or the Board of Commissioners in the absence of the Administrator. Other department/agency heads with emergency responsibilities are shown in the appropriate annexes.
3. Municipal government lines of succession will be dependent on the type of management systems used in the thirteen cities/towns within Gaston County. These lines of succession should be reflected within the local jurisdictions Emergency Operating Procedures.

C. Preservation of Vital Records

1. It is the responsibility of the elected officials to ensure that all legal documents of both a public and private nature recorded by designated officials be protected and preserved in accordance with existing laws, statutes, and ordinances.
2. Each department/agency is responsible for the preservation of essential records to ensure continued operational capabilities.

D. Relocation of Government

1. The County provides for the relocation of the governing body to the [Emergency Operations Center](#) (EOC) during times of emergency if necessary. ([NCGS 162B](#))
2. If the primary EOC is determined inoperable, the governing body will relocate to an alternate EOC facility as needed. Use of County facilities will be first considered such as the Admin. Building's conference rooms, DSS conference room or Health Department's conference room.

VIII. ADMINISTRATION AND LOGISTICS

A. General

1. The primary emergency services communications center operates continuously 24 hours per day and is administered by the Gaston County Police Department. The Cities of Cherryville, Mount Holly and Dallas provide various levels of 24 hour dispatching services to their citizens.
2. The operational readiness of the EOC is the responsibility of the Emergency Management Administrator.

B. Records and Reports

1. County government must maintain records of expenditures and obligations made during emergency operations.
2. Narratives and operational journals of response actions will be kept.

C. Consumer Protection

1. Consumer complaints pertaining to alleged unfair or illegal business practices during emergencies will be referred to the State Attorney General's Consumer Protection Division.

D. Non-Discrimination

1. There will be no discrimination on grounds of race, color, religion, nationality, sex, age, or economic status in the execution of disaster preparedness or disaster relief and assistance functions.
2. This policy applies equally to all levels of government, contractors, and labor unions.

E. Agreements and Understandings

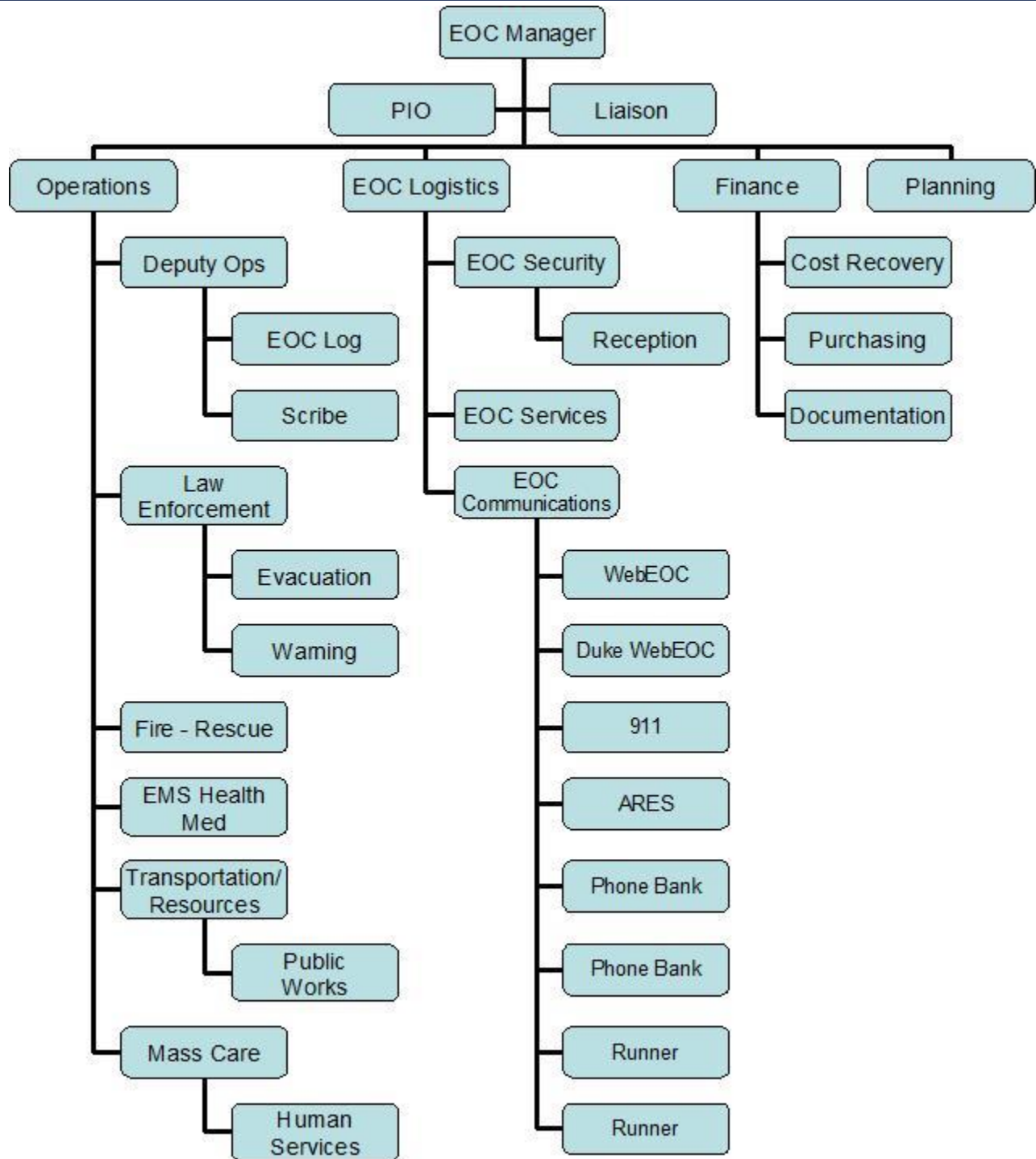
1. Agreements and understandings must be entered into by duly authorized officials and should be formalized in writing whenever possible prior to emergency situations.
2. Should local government resources prove to be inadequate during emergency operations, requests for assistance will be made to other jurisdictions, higher levels of government, and other agencies in accordance with existing or emergency negotiated [mutual-aid agreements](#) and understandings. Requests for State and Federal resources must be made through the local Emergency Management Administrator to State EOC.
3. Organizations tasked with responsibilities in the implementation of this plan are responsible for providing their own administrative and logistical needs and for the preparation and maintenance of a resource list for use in carrying out their emergency responsibilities.

IX. PLAN DEVELOPMENT AND MAINTENANCE

- A. The County Manager through the Emergency Management Administrator ensures all officials involved conduct annual review of this plan and that appropriate revision efforts are taken. That shall include review of those portions of the plan actually implemented during an emergency.
- B. Updates, changes, modifications, additions, deletions and/or corrections to this plan may be determined to be administrative in nature and may not require approval of the Gaston County Board of Commissioners or the re-approval or promulgation of the entire plan. Decisions regarding such shall be made by the Emergency Management Administrator in coordination and consultation with the County Manager. If the County Manager feels the updates, changes, modifications, additions, deletions and/or corrections to this plan are of such significance that Board action is advised, the Emergency Management Administrator shall prepare appropriate documentation and submit the documentation, through normal channels, to the Board of Commissioners for consideration.

Emergency updates, changes, modifications, additions, deletions and/or corrections to this plan and/or any policy, procedure or annex that is part of this plan, may be made as an interim measure with approval of Chairman of the Board of Commissioners without prior consent or approval of the entire Board sitting in either regular or emergency session.

- C. This plan shall be exercised in accordance with the State and/or Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) exercise program to ensure a readiness posture for those who have an emergency responsibility. At the least, this plan or portions of this plan will be exercised at least annually. Exercise of the plan includes, but is not limited to drills, training and actual events.



Attachment 2
Functional Responsibility Matrix

	D i r e c t i o n / C o n t r o l	C o m m u n i c a t i o n s	N o t i f i c a t i o n	V a r n i n g	P u b l i c I n f o r m a t i o n	L a w E n f o r c e m e n t	F i r e C o n t r o l	R e s c u e	P u b l i c W o r k s	P u b l i c H e a l t h	E m e r g e n c y M e d i c a l	I D / M o r t u a r y	E v a c u a t i o n	T r a n s p o r t a t i o n	S h e l t e r / M a s s C a r e	S p e c i a l M e d i c a l S h e l t e r	D a n a g e A s s e s s m e n t	R a d i o l o g i c a l P r o t e c t i o n	R e s o u r c e M a n a g e m e n t	A n i m a l C o n t r o l	D o n a t i o n s M a n a g e m e n t	M i t i g a t i o n	C o u n t y R e c e i v i n g P o i n t	W M D R e s p o n s e			
County Commissioners	P																	S					S	S			
County Manager	S				P														S				S	S			
Emergency Management	S		S	S	S		S	S			S		S	S	S	S	S	P	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S
Police Department	S	P	S	S	S	P						S	P		S	S		S					S			P	
Communications		S	P	P	S																						S
Public Works					S				P						S	S	S		S	S	S	S	S	P			
School Superintendent													S	P	S	S											
Health Director										P		S			S	S		S									
Medical Examiner							S			S	S	P															
Red Cross															P	S	S			S	S						
Rescue Squads				S			P		S	S		S	S							S	S						
Fire Departments		S	S	S		P	S			S	S		S	S					S							S	
Social Services										S			S	S	P					S	S						
Radiological Officer																		P								S	
Cooperative Extension					S					S								S	S		S	S	S				
Animal Control															S	S					P						
GEMS				S			S		S	P		S	S													S	
Salvation Army																					P					S	
Code Enforcement								S									P							P			
Red Cross																				P							
United Way																				P					S		



(click on the image above for a larger view)

Attachment 4 Authorities and References


The following authorities and references are listed for reference purposes only and are not included in the planning document. A support document with some of the referenced items will be distributed to certain key individuals. Anyone who needs access to these references that does not have a copy of the support document should contact the Gaston County Office of Emergency Management.

Federal / National:

- [Public Law 93-288 as amended by Public Law 100-707](#) (Stafford Act)
- [OSHA \(29 CFR 1910.120\)](#)
- [Community Right-to-Know Act \(SARA TITLE III\)](#)
- [Federal Communications Commission \(FCC\) rules and regulations](#)
- [Emergency Alert System - Code of Federal Regulations \(47 CFR Part 11\)](#)
- [National Security Decision Directive #259](#)
- [Homeland Security Presidential Directive 5](#)
- [Homeland Security Presidential Directive 8](#)
- [Local Government Emergency Planning](#) (SLG 101)
- [Handbook for Applicants Pursuant to P.L. 93-288, DR & R1 FEMA, 3-81](#)
- [Nuclear Attack Planning Base 1990 \(NAPB 90\)](#), April 1987 [*historical document*]
- [National Incident Management System](#) (NIMS)
- [National Response Framework](#) [*formerly National Response Plan*]
- FEMA Regulations and Guides for Radiation Protection and Response (REP-5)
- American Red Cross Disaster Program (3000 Series)

State:

- [Emergency Management Act of 1977, N.C. General Statutes 166-A.](#)
- [N.C.G.S. 162B Continuity of Government](#)
- [N.C.G.S. 143-215 Oil Spill Act](#)
- [N.C.G.S. 14-288 Riots and Civil Disorder](#)
- [N.C.G.S. 132-1.7 Public Record](#)
- [N.C.G.S. 104E Radiation Protection Act](#)
- [N.C.G.S. 115C-242\(6\) Use of School Buses in Declared Emergency](#)
- [The Hazardous Chemical Right to Know Act, Article \(18\), Chapter 95 of N.C. General Statutes](#)
- [Executive Order 43](#) (Citizen Corps Council)

- [Statewide Mutual Aid Agreement](#) 
- Disaster Recovery Manual, N.C. Department of Crime Control and Public Safety, Division of Emergency Management
- Statement of Understanding between the State of North Carolina and the American Red Cross

Gaston County:

- [Gaston County Code of Ordinances](#)
- [Proclamation of a local state of emergency](#)
- [Proclamation terminating a local state of emergency](#)
- Local Mutual Aid Agreements and Understandings