



JEFFERSON COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT  
MADISON COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

# Tornado Tabletop Exercise

2013

After Action Report / Improvement Plan





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# 1 HANDLING INSTRUCTIONS

The title of this document is the Jefferson/Madison Tornado Tabletop Exercise (TTX) After Action Report / Improvement Plan (AAR/IP).

Any modification of the AAR/IP content must be approved in advance by Jefferson County/ Madison County Health Departments.

For more information, please consult the following Points of Contact (POC):

## Jefferson County/Madison County Health Departments

### **Margaret Levings**

Public Health Preparedness Coordinator  
Jefferson and Madison County Health Departments

**Jefferson CHD:** 1255 West Washington Street  
Monticello, Florida 32344  
Office: (850) 342-0170, ext. 207  
Cell: (850) 251-5641  
Fax: (850) 342-0314

**Madison CHD:** 218 SW Third Avenue  
Madison, Florida 32340  
Office: (850) 973-5000, ext. 133  
Fax: (850) 973-5006  
[Margaret\\_Levings@doh.state.fl.us](mailto:Margaret_Levings@doh.state.fl.us)

## Disasters, Strategies, and Ideas Group, LLC (DSI)

**Terry L. Schenk**, CEM  
Project Manager / Exercise Director  
Disasters, Strategies, and Ideas Group, LLC  
P.O. Box 12333  
Tallahassee, Florida 32317  
407.761.8939  
[TerrySchenk@me.com](mailto:TerrySchenk@me.com)

## 2 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



On Friday, May 17, 2013, Jefferson County and Madison County Health Departments hosted a tabletop exercise (TTX), titled: “**Jefferson/Madison Tornado Tabletop Exercise**” at the Jefferson County Health Department Annex in Monticello, Florida between the hours of 8:30 am and 2:30 pm, EDT. The exercise was the culmination of planning activities to jointly drill on the major response components of the Jefferson/Madison County Health Departments system as they relate to a county-wide tornado disaster.

While the response to the simulated incident was evaluated, “**Jefferson/Madison Tornado Tabletop Exercise**” was *not* designed to be a *test*. The tabletop exercise scenario and exercise plan were designed as a safe *training opportunity* to implement emergency response plans and procedures during a large-scale simulated emergency. The scenario was designed to help prepare responders by placing them in a controlled environment and allowing them to practice their specific roles and responsibilities in regard to the scenario presented.

These activities, in total, were designed to present circumstances that are out of the ordinary to allow participating agencies and institutions *to practice* large-scale emergency response and to identify strengths and improvement areas within current plans and response procedures. Areas of focus included planning, public health and medical services, and health and social services.

The emergency response procedures of the participating departments were evaluated in simultaneous fashion, including both Jefferson and Madison Health Department personnel as well as the American Red Cross.

The exercise was developed, written, facilitated, and evaluated by the Disasters, Strategies, & Ideas Group, LLC.



### **MAJOR STRENGTHS**

Throughout the exercise, there were a number of good practices noted. The major strengths identified during this exercise are as follows:

- Agency representatives worked in a “proactive” rather than “reactive” mode.
- Exercise participants demonstrated a strong desire not only to gain more knowledge in the area of disaster response but also a genuine interest in completing their assigned roles in an exemplary fashion.
- Participants demonstrated a good knowledge of response procedures and resources and identified good additional steps that will help enhance existing response capabilities.

### **PRIMARY AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT**

Throughout the exercise, several opportunities for improvement, to enhance emergency incident response, were identified. The primary areas for improvement are as follows:

- While good disaster planning initiatives have been made in the Departments, additional dialog and coordination work should be conducted with County Emergency Management and other key response partners.
- To remain current on emergency and disaster operations, personnel should be encouraged to periodically review response procedures and participate in multi-agency disaster exercises.
- There is a need to further develop plans for medical surge, including planning for an Alternate Care Site that can be used for large-scale emergencies or disaster operations.

Overall, the exercise successfully identified areas in which the Jefferson and Madison County Health Departments can enhance their current plans for responding to a county-wide tornado strike.



### **EXERCISE OBJECTIVES**

The following exercise objectives were selected by the Jefferson/Madison Tornado Tabletop Exercise Planning Committee.

Based on the scenario provided, participants in the exercise accomplished the following objectives:

- 1) Achieve further education in County Health Department personnel's roles and responsibilities in large-scale emergency and disaster response.
- 2) Practice emergency operations functions to include roles and responsibilities, decision making, and coordination with other response personnel.
- 3) Identify, discuss, and apply lessons learned from recent tornado strikes (including Hattiesburg, MS and Joplin, MO) that impacted health and medical operations in affected jurisdictions.

### **PARTICIPANTS**

- *Exercise Director.* The Exercise Director moderates the Jefferson/Madison Tornado Tabletop Exercise.
- *Players.* Players are agency personnel who have an active role in responding to the simulated emergency and perform their regular roles and responsibilities during the exercise. Players initiate actions that will respond to and mitigate the simulated emergency.
- *Controllers/Facilitators.* Controllers/Facilitators set up and operate the exercise site; plan and manage exercise play; act in the roles of response individuals and agencies not playing in the exercise. They direct the pace of exercise discussions and routinely include members from the exercise planning team. They provide key data to players and may prompt or initiate certain player actions to ensure exercise continuity.
- *Evaluators.* Evaluators are chosen to evaluate and provide feedback on a designated functional area of the exercise. They are chosen based on their expertise in the functional area(s) they have been assigned to review during the exercise and their familiarity with local emergency response procedures. Evaluators assess and document participants' performance against established emergency plans and exercise evaluation criteria, in accordance with HSEEP standards. They are typically chosen from amongst planning committee members or the agencies/organizations that are participating in the exercise.
- *Scribes.* Scribes will capture and document key issues, thoughts, suggestions, and information that will be incorporated into the development of an After Action Report.



### 3 EXERCISE OVERVIEW

#### EXERCISE DETAILS

<i>Exercise Name</i>	<b>Jefferson/Madison Tornado Tabletop Exercise</b>
<i>Type of Exercise</i>	<b>Tabletop Exercise</b>
<i>Exercise Date</i>	<b>May 17, 2013</b>
<i>Duration</i>	<b>6 Hours 8:30am - 2:30pm</b>
<i>Location</i>	<b>Jefferson County Health Department Annex</b>
<i>Sponsor</i>	<b>Jefferson County Health Department Madison County Health Department</b>
<i>Focus</i>	<b>Planning Public Health and Medical Services Health and Social Services</b>
<i>Scenario Type</i>	<b>Tornado Strike</b>

#### NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS

<i>Number of Players</i>	<b>13</b>
<i>Number of Observers</i>	<b>1</b>
<i>Number of Facilitators</i>	<b>2</b>
<i>Number of Evaluators</i>	<b>2</b>
<i>Total</i>	<b>18</b>



## EXERCISE PLANNING TEAM

<b>Margaret Levings</b>	<i>Jefferson/Madison County Health Department</i>
<b>Kim Allbritton</b>	<i>Jefferson/Madison County Health Department</i>
<b>Mark Positano</b>	<i>Jefferson/Madison County Health Department</i>
<b>Mike Gordon</b>	<i>Jefferson/Madison County Health Department</i>
<b>Terry L. Schenk</b>	<i>Disasters, Strategies, and Ideas Group</i>
<b>Cooper Maddox</b>	<i>Disasters, Strategies, and Ideas Group</i>





## 4 EXERCISE DESIGN SUMMARY

### **BACKGROUND**

Florida is susceptible to a wide variety of natural and manmade hazards. As such it is important for County Health Department personnel to be ready to immediately transition from normal “every day” operations to emergency or “disaster” operations. It takes a variety of response agencies to handle large-scale emergencies or disasters and one of the key components is the “health and medical” response. Holding exercises, such as the Jefferson/Madison Tornado Tabletop Exercise, helps to prepare responders by placing them in a realistic scenario and allowing them to practice their roles and responsibilities in a controlled environment. Using a tornado strike scenario allowed those who will be called upon to fill key positions the opportunity to rehearse their roles. Additionally, while a tornado strike was used as an exercise scenario, lessons learned were applicable to “all hazard” situations.

### **PURPOSE**

The purpose of this exercise was to:

- Provide participants with additional education in large-scale emergency and disaster response.
- Provide an opportunity for participants to work, under controlled conditions, in their various CHD emergency roles.
- Utilize a tornado scenario-based TTX to provide participants with guided discussion on the planning, response, and initial recovery actions that would be needed for response to a large-scale emergency or disaster.

### **EXERCISE SCOPE**

- The Jefferson/Madison Tornado Tabletop Exercise was a partnership between the Florida Department of Health and Jefferson County/Madison County Health Departments.
- Participants included County Health Department employees within Jefferson County/Madison County who would be called upon during a significant emergency incident to staff key positions.
- Planning and plans were predicated on locally-developed objectives to ensure that the local community needs were met.

### **EXERCISE MATERIALS**

- Situation Manual (SitMan)
- Exercise Injects
- Public Health Preparedness Handbook
- Reference Materials including SNS Guidelines



## SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

8:30 am	Registration and Check-in
9:00 am	Welcome / Introductions
9:05 am	Exercise Overview / Materials
9:10 am	Module 1 - Large-Scale Emergency/Disaster Response Review
10:30 am	Module 2 -Tornado Response Operations
11:30 am	Status Briefing
11:45 am	Lunch
12:30 pm	Joplin, MO Tornado Case Study Review
12:45 pm	Module 3 Overview - Tornado Response and Recovery Operations
2:00 pm	Status Briefing
2:15 pm	Hotwash of Exercise
2:00 pm	Review of Next Steps
2:30 pm	Close

## EXERCISE STRUCTURE

This tabletop exercise (TTX) was a multimedia, facilitated exercise. Players participated in the following three modules related to tornado response:

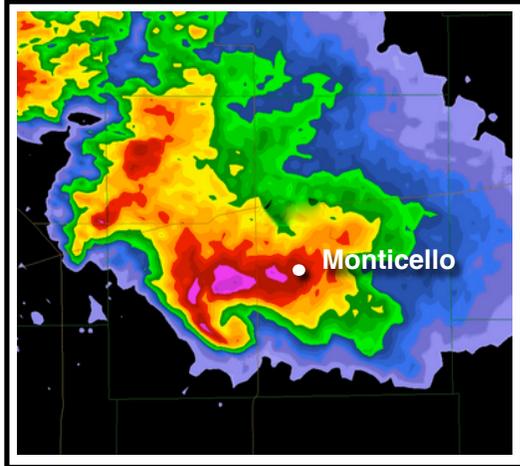
- Module 1: Large-Scale Emergency / Disaster Response Review
- Module 2: Tornado Response Operations
- Module 3: Tornado Response and Recovery Operations

The tabletop exercise started with a familiarization session that focused on the Incident Command System, personnel roles and responsibilities, case studies of recent tornadoes, alternate care site operations, and special needs shelter operations. Modules Two and Three utilized specific messages or “injects.” These injects, detailing the varied situations that can arise during a tornado strike, included prompts and provoking questions to keep the discussion moving and realistic, without getting caught up in any one issue. They were delivered periodically and in multiples to induce the pressure of realistic emergency operations.

All participants received generalized injects, as well as more specific ones for their particular ESF or grouping. At certain intervals, the Exercise Director called for report-outs from the group, just as a real activation would be structured.

## SCENARIO SUMMARY

The exercise scenario was fictitious, but plausible, and involved a tornado strike across Leon, Jefferson, and Madison Counties. The following is the exercise narrative, which details the situation that produced the incident response for the exercise participants.



## EXERCISE SCENARIO CONDITIONS

**Date:** Friday May 17, 2013

**Time:** 0900 hours (9 AM EDT)

**Scenario:** For the past two years, significant tornado activity has occurred in the southeast U.S. Just recently, a tornado caused extensive damage in Hattiesburg, Mississippi portending another busy tornado season. With each spring weather system that moves into this part of the country, people ask themselves, “Could this be the day that WE are on the receiving end of a major tornado?”

May 17th in Jefferson County and Madison County begins as most days do with children being bussed to school, people stopping off at their favorite breakfast place for food and/or coffee, businesses opening up for the day, and people from other parts of the State traveling through the counties on Interstate 10. This morning is different in one way, however.

There is a brisk wind blowing out of the southwest, dark clouds are visible on the horizon, and TV meteorologists on the Tallahassee stations are highlighting the fact that much of north Florida is under a tornado watch until 12 noon today. They announce that the Storm Prediction Center in Norman, Oklahoma has issued Tornado Watch Number 72 which covers much of area, including both Jefferson County and Madison County. Switching to radar, they show a line of strong thunderstorms just west of the watch box, poised to move in on the area very quickly.

Later in the morning, at approximately 8:20 AM, at the level in the atmosphere where jets fly, a wind maximum in the jet stream begins to flow over the area and several thunderstorms in the squall line begin to rotate. Very quickly, the National Weather Service in Tallahassee issues several severe thunderstorm warnings. The ominous text in these messages states, “A tornado could form at any time”. More and more people throughout the county look to the west to see a very dark sky tinged with green. It is a sight that many of them have never seen before: so dark, so early in the day. At 9:00 AM EDT, NOAA weather radios activate in the Jefferson County and Madison County Departments of Public Safety and at businesses and residences throughout the county. Multiple tornado warnings are being broadcast.

The question that had been on the minds of many people, “Could this be the day that WE are on the receiving end of a major tornado,” is about to be answered in a big way...

## 5 ANALYSIS OF CAPABILITIES



### **ANALYSIS OVERVIEW**

This section of the report reviews the performance of the exercised capabilities, activities, and tasks. In this section, observations are organized by capability and associated activities.

The capabilities are crosscutting and sometimes overlap; therefore, responder actions could associate with any number of capabilities.

### **CORE CAPABILITIES**

The Core Capabilities List (CCL) provides a guide to addressing the priorities and achieving the National Preparedness Guidelines. Capabilities provide the means to accomplish a mission and achieve desired outcomes by performing critical tasks, under specified conditions, to target levels of performance.

Capabilities are delivered by appropriate combinations of planning, organization, equipment, training, and exercises. The CCL supports an all-hazards approach to building capabilities that may be needed in the event of terrorist attacks, natural disasters, health emergencies, and other major events.

Core capabilities selected for the Jefferson/Madison Tornado Tabletop Exercise included:

- 1) Planning
- 2) Public Health and Medical Services
- 3) Health and Social Services



### CORE CAPABILITIES DEFINED

<p><i>Planning</i></p>	<p>Conduct a systematic process engaging the whole community as appropriate in the development of executable strategic, operational, and/or community-based approaches to meet defined objectives.</p>
<p><i>Public Health and Medical Services</i></p>	<p>Provide lifesaving medical treatment via emergency medical services and related operations and avoid additional disease and injury by providing targeted public health and medical support and products to all people in need within the affected area.</p>
<p><i>Health and Social Services</i></p>	<p>Restore and improve health and social services networks to promote the resilience, independence, health (including behavioral health), and well-being of the whole community.</p>



### EXERCISE OBJECTIVES

<p><i>1</i></p>	<p>Achieve further education in County Health Department personnel’s roles and responsibilities in large-scale emergency and disaster response.</p>
<p><i>2</i></p>	<p>Practice emergency operations functions to include roles and responsibilities, decision making, and coordination with other response personnel.</p>
<p><i>3</i></p>	<p>Identify, discuss, and apply lessons learned from recent tornado strikes (including Hattiesburg, MS and Joplin, MO) that impacted health and medical operations in affected jurisdictions.</p>



## **OBJECTIVE: PLANNING**

### **PREPAREDNESS**

#### **Observation:**

A NOAA Weather Radio is installed in the Department of Health buildings to alert staff of impending severe weather. Staff continuously monitors weather radio, Internet, and television during severe weather events. Staff knew to contact the EOC (if activated), the Fire Chief, or EMS to find out about the impending disaster event.

Staff knew to move to the hallway or restroom in the event of severe weather. All staff indicated they will check with their families to ensure their safety during periods of severe weather. Supplies will be stocked at Jefferson County High School for disaster operations.

#### **Recommendation:**

Coordinate plan and procedural developments with all associated agencies/organizations. Test and update plans and procedures as soon as possible.

Health Department staff should take advantage of the FEMA Independent Study Program which has a cadre of free online courses to further familiarize staff with ICS.

### **ACTIVATION**

#### **Observation:**

Upon the recognition of impending severe weather, an emergency response roster would be developed. Pre-assigned staff would report to the Jefferson and Madison County EOCs or Health Department facilities. Health Department staff will establish and maintain contact with EMS to coordinate/assist in the delivery of health and medical services.

Two - twelve hour shift operations would be initiated to provide twenty-four-hour coverage. It is likely that the State Health Department would contact the County Health Departments for a status update and an estimate of needed resources. The County Health Departments would provide subject matter experts for the County EOC as required.

Patients or visitors to the Health Department locations would be asked to remain in the building in designated safe areas until the situation has been assessed and it is safe to leave the building.

#### **Recommendation:**

Develop rosters, including back-up staff, for all locations supported by the County Health Departments.



## **OBJECTIVE: PLANNING**

### **TRANSPORTATION**

#### **Observation:**

Staff discussed the use of vehicles (including fuel and maintenance) assigned to the Health Departments. Health Department staff are not responsible for patient transport in day-to-day operations; however, in the event of a mass casualty disaster, all available vehicles would likely be used to transport patients. Additional resources for transportation services were addressed, and identified, including school busses.

The State has a mass care Ambulance Deployment Plan that may be activated if needed.

#### **Recommendation:**

Develop a strategy for the quick acquisition and use of additional transportation resources. Identify situations where additional transportation support services may be needed.

### **COMMUNICATIONS**

#### **Observation:**

During the tabletop exercise, a very good discussion ensued covering a broad range of communication technologies that would be available for use during disaster operations. Staff to staff, staff to supervisor, and staff to the County EOC types of communications were explored.

Standard and cellular telephones are the primary means of communication. Amateur radio communication capabilities will be used as the back-up. Should additional forms of communications be required, staff know to contact the County EOC. The installation of amateur radio equipment, including the assignment of radio operators, is in progress.

#### **Recommendation:**

Conduct periodic communication tests to ensure systems are functioning properly. Develop a plan or Standard Operating Guide for County Health Department emergency communications.

### **INFRASTRUCTURE**

#### **Observation:**

Medical facilities in Jefferson and Madison Counties were discussed. A strategy is in place that describes the utilization of each medical facility in the two-county area based on previous disaster operations and the incorporation of new or updated policy changes.

#### **Recommendation:**

Develop an information sheet on medical facilities in Jefferson and Madison Counties identifying resource capabilities and needs. Develop an activation plan for each medical facility in Jefferson and Madison Counties.



## **OBJECTIVE: PLANNING**

### **LAW ENFORCEMENT**

#### **Observation:**

Participants understood the need for having law enforcement provide security at health and medical facilities.

#### **Recommendation:**

Identify security requirements for each County Health Department facility that may be activated during disasters. This should be incorporated into a facilities dossier as previously mentioned. Security arrangements should also be pre-identified for special needs shelters and Alternate Care Sites that may be established during an emergency or disaster.

### **ENERGY**

#### **Observation:**

Generators were identified as the primary means of alternate energy for County Health Department facilities in times of disaster.

#### **Recommendation:**

Identify resources, fuel and personnel, that would be needed to activate and maintain generator use during disaster events.

### **CONTINUITY OF OPERATIONS**

#### **Observation:**

Continuity of Operations (COOP) was discussed. Some of the staff were aware of the alternate locations as well as the chain of command in COOP situations. All COOP issues will be coordinated through the County Health Department Director.

#### **Recommendation:**

Evaluate existing COOP Plans to ensure each Health Department facility has an alternate location to re-locate to, if required.

Identify required supplies and equipment needed and the acquisition process. This should include information technology issues and the need for backup locations for key data.



## **OBJECTIVE: PUBLIC HEALTH AND MEDICAL SERVICES**

### **HUMAN SERVICES / MASS CARE**

#### **Observation:**

Participants understood the role of the Jefferson and Madison Health Departments in the delivery of mass care services, whether at the Health Departments, shelters, or PODs (points of distribution).

A situation of prolonged mass care operations (more than 48 hours) is a concern due to the limited number of Health Department personnel available in the two counties.

Special Needs Shelters were discussed at length and was an obvious area of concern for participants. Staff is prepared to support special needs sheltering. However, it was pointed out that while the County EOC may have a roster of registered participants, the identification, number, and location of special needs populations needs to be firmed up.

Based on an existing agreement stipulating that each special needs individual must have a caregiver, staff of the County Health Departments may be required to support the regional Special Needs Shelter in Tallahassee.

A process is in place to track the evacuation and transport of Special Needs populations.

The State also has kits available to support Special Needs sheltering, if needed.

It was pointed out by participants that local churches would also be used as host shelters and may require support from the Health Departments.

#### **Recommendation:**

Personnel should periodically review the County and State Special Needs Sheltering SOGs to maintain a good working knowledge of roles, responsibilities, and procedures.

Identify locations and prepare, to the degree possible, facilities or locations where patients would likely be taken.

Participate in the area Mass Casualty Exercise currently being formulated.

### **EXTERNAL AFFAIRS**

#### **Observation:**

Communicating with the general population was a major concern of participants. This theme emerged many times during the tabletop exercise. Staff knew “who” was responsible for coordinating information flow to the general population. The types and timing of information that should be included in a media release was discussed at length and a number of methods were discussed for getting information to the general population.



## **OBJECTIVE: PUBLIC HEALTH AND MEDICAL SERVICES**

### **EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (CONTINUED)**

#### **Recommendation:**

Develop pre-scripted standardized media releases with the County External Affairs staff, focusing on typical episodic situations such as Boil Water Orders, Special Needs Sheltering, and service delivery locations.

### **HEALTH AND MEDICAL**

#### **Observation:**

EMS will determine how Health Department personnel may best assist with the delivery of emergency medical services. Staff is available to assist EMS with triage or to take care of the “walking wounded”.

Interaction with the hospitals and medical facilities is ongoing. Staff clearly demonstrated understanding of the functions of health and medical facilities including specialty operations like special needs sheltering.

An Exercise facilitator advised the importance of conducting an expeditious and accurate damage assessment process and its relationship to an Emergency or Major Disaster Declaration. Staff indicated they were not familiar with the formalized Preliminary Damage Assessment (PDA) process. It was further stressed that this process must be coordinated through the County EOC. The State Department of Health may assist with this process. Environmental Health personnel would likely assess Department of Health facilities in disaster situations.

The determination of whether an Alternate Care Site (ACS) would be required during disaster operations would be made as soon as possible. The FDOH office can provide support for an Alternate Care Site operation.

A discussion on fatalities indicated that the Sheriff Offices would be responsible for handling bodies. A Florida Emergency Mortuary Response System (FEMORS) or federal Disaster Mortuary Response Team (DMORT) may be requested to assist in this process.

The County EOC would assist with providing resources to transport dialysis patients out of the counties to access needed services.

#### **Recommendation:**

Further discuss with EMS the assistance that the Health Departments may provide during large-scale emergencies or disasters.

Develop a local Alternate Care Site plan for the two counties. Contact the State FDOH office for assistance in this endeavor and request a future ACS exercise to practice the developed plan.

Conduct training on the Preliminary Damage Assessment process.



## **OBJECTIVE: PUBLIC HEALTH AND MEDICAL SERVICES**

### **RESOURCE MANAGEMENT**

#### **Observation:**

Staff clearly and correctly indicated that resource requests would be processed through the County EOC.

Staff understood what resources the Health Departments would be able to provide during disaster operations. Given the limitations of available resources, additional support would likely come from outside the County in the form of mutual aid from other counties or support from the State.

Supplies and equipment could be pre-positioned at the Jefferson County High School, which has been designated as an optional Alternate Care Site location.

Participants demonstrated knowledge of the Statewide Mutual Aid agreement and accompanying activation processes. It was unclear as to the status of a mutual aid agreement with Georgia counties, which may be a distinct asset in a large-scale emergency or disaster.

#### **Recommendation:**

Identify resource requirements for County Health Departments that may need to be activated during disaster operations.

Identify additional facilities that may be used by the County Health Department if an ACS needs to be established.

Determine what resources should be pre-positioned at the Jefferson County High School or other useable locations.

Identify the process for utilizing mutual aid resources from Georgia counties.

### **SEARCH AND RESCUE**

#### **Observation:**

Staff was unclear as to how the Jefferson and Madison Health Departments would support search and rescue operations. It was determined that Health Department staff would be able to assist in the care for both the disaster victims as well as for search and rescue personnel as directed by EMS.

#### **Recommendation:**

Discuss with the County Emergency Management Director and EMS Director the role of the County Health Departments in support of search and rescue operations.

Develop a Standard Operating Guide in support of search and rescue operations.



## **OBJECTIVE: HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES**

### **ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION**

#### **Observation:**

As indicated by their discussion, Health Department personnel were aware of their roles and responsibilities related to environmental health. State-level environmental health resources were discussed. It was readily apparent that a comprehensive understanding of roles and responsibilities exists for in-County and external (out-of-county) environmental health service delivery, as well as how to access out-of-county resources.

Tests must be conducted immediately after disaster impact to determine the safety of drinking water. "Boil Water" orders would be issued by the Health Department and, in concert with External Affairs, this information would be communicated to the general population.

#### **Recommendation:**

Develop a Standard Operating Guide for environmental health services during disasters.

Develop pre-scripted "fill-in-the-blank" media releases to expedite their use in disasters.

### **FOOD AND WATER**

#### **Observation:**

The Jefferson and Madison Health Departments have limited sources to provide food and water to the disaster survivor.

#### **Recommendation:**

Discuss with County Emergency Management the food and water resources needed for County Health Department facilities activated during disaster operations.

### **ANIMAL AND AGRICULTURE**

#### **Observation:**

Although the topic was discussed, the Jefferson and Madison Health Departments do not appear to have a significant role in animal issues during disasters.

#### **Recommendation:**

Review County Health Department disaster operations plans and procedures with the County Agriculture Extension and Animal Control offices to ensure that gaps do not exist in the service delivery process, especially concerning dead animals in disaster situations.



## **OBJECTIVE: HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES**

### **MILITARY SUPPORT**

#### **Observation:**

Limited discussion was given to the role of the Florida National Guard in supporting Health Department operations. The Florida National Guard has medical resources that may be used during disaster events to augment the two County Health Departments. Staff knew the process for requesting assistance from the National Guard through the County EOC.

#### **Recommendation:**

Identify resources or assistance that may be needed from the National Guard.

### **VOLUNTEERS AND DONATIONS**

#### **Observation:**

The issue of unsolicited volunteers and how to manage them was discussed at length. It was agreed upon that registration and deployment of volunteers is of utmost importance and must be coordinated. The use of volunteers should be consistent with the approach and methodologies being used by FEMA and the State Division of Emergency Management.

The process of how to effectively identify the knowledge, skills, and abilities of each volunteer is also extremely important to the delivery of health and medical services. This topic will be further discussed with the State office of the Florida Department of Health.

#### **Recommendation:**

Identify the types of health and medical volunteers that may be required by the County Health Department during disaster operations.

Develop a Standard Operating Guide on the use of volunteers and donations during disaster events.



## **OBJECTIVE: ALL**

### **ADDITIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS**

- Make use of the FDOH Regional Emergency Response Advisors to identify and acquire additional resources during a disaster.
- Continue to keep the “three deep” Department ICS position chart updated.
- Keep all emergency contact information, including phone numbers and email addresses, updated so they are current when an emergency occurs.
- Continue to review Special Needs Sheltering operations guidelines to include any updated information promulgated by the State office of the FDOH.
- Ensure that Special Needs Sheltering registration information is readily available from the County Emergency Management offices.
- Continue to plan for continuity of operations (COOP) situations to include the backup of key information and data at a remote location.
- Encourage employees to have a personal disaster plan (so that their families are taken care of) in the event that they are recalled to work during a disaster. Also encourage employees to develop a “go pack” to assist in their response to a disaster.
- Continue to refine “who is responsible for what” during large-scale emergencies or disaster operations.
- Maintain good situational awareness of all of the resources that are available from the State and mutual aid partners, should they be needed in Jefferson or Madison County.
- With EMS and Emergency Management, continue to plan for mass casualty incident response so that key actions can be taken “automatically” should the need arise.
- Continue to identify appropriate facilities in both counties that may be used as an Alternate Care Site, a Special Needs Shelter, a casualty collection point, or as a temporary County Health Department facility.

## 6 CONCLUSION

The “*Jefferson/Madison Tornado Tabletop Exercise*” was successful in that it allowed exercise participants to test plans, processes, and procedures not only for a tornado but for other types of large-scale emergencies or disasters. There was great participation from all of the attendees with much thought being given on how to better serve citizens during large-scale emergencies or disaster situations. Responders were able to practice key incident responsibilities and simulate the handling of a plausible tornado emergency.

The exercise resulted in critical analysis of existing agency policy and agency response procedures by trained evaluators, and provided decision-making experience for key Health Department personnel. Additionally, the exercise provided an excellent discussion forum on how response procedures can be improved upon.

The “*Jefferson/Madison Tornado Tabletop Exercise*” planning process and exercise provided an opportunity to apply training and lessons learned from recent large-scale incidents such as H1N1, the Hattiesburg, Mississippi tornado, and the Joplin, Missouri tornado. The simulated incident response, and ensuing incident management techniques portrayed by the exercise participants, revealed strengths and, in some cases, areas for improvement.

The exercise demonstrated that Jefferson and Madison County Health Departments possess excellent baseline capabilities but also served to identify areas where improvement can be made. The Departments are commended for taking the initiative to develop such an exercise, and for developing a proactive environment in order to make the community a safer place in which to live and work.

The citizens of both Jefferson and Madison Counties are served by a dedicated, capable, and committed group of Health Department professionals, and their service to the community is invaluable.





## 7 IMPROVEMENT PLAN

Subsequent to issues identified in the Observations/Recommendations areas above, Jefferson and Madison Counties should address the following recommendations as part of an “Improvement Plan” to enhance response capabilities:

Core Capability	Observation	Recommendation	Corrective Action	Capability Activity
Planning	There are a number of key roles and responsibilities that accrue to the CHDs during times of large-scale emergency or disaster.	Continue to develop SOGs for disaster assignments, Special Needs Sheltering, volunteer coordination, mass casualty assistance, environmental health response, etc. These should include task “checklists” to ensure that all areas are covered.	Standard Operation Guideline development and implementation	Health and Medical
Number	Primary Responsible Agency	Agency POC	Due Date	
1	Jefferson/Madison CHDs			

Target Capability	Observation	Recommendation	Corrective Action	Capability Activity
Planning	It was noted that mutual aid assistance from Georgia counties may be beneficial, given their proximity to both Jefferson and Madison Counties.	Work with Emergency Management to identify the processes and procedures necessary to forge mutual assistance agreement across State lines.	Process and Procedure Development	Mutual Aid
Number	Primary Responsible Agency	Agency POC	Due Date	
2	Jefferson/Madison CHD and Emergency Management			



Target Capability	Observation	Recommendation	Corrective Action	Capability Activity
Planning	In large-scale emergencies or disasters, transportation of sick and injured people may be a priority. As such, it is necessary to identify multiple sources of transportation.	Identify resources for transporting sick and injured people to include ambulances, busses, and resources available through the State Ambulance Deployment Plan.	Process, procedure, and resource identification.	Transportation
Number	Primary Responsible Agency	Agency POC	Due Date	
3	EMS, Emergency Management, Jefferson/Madison CHDs			

Target Capability	Observation	Recommendation	Corrective Action	Capability Activity
Planning	During emergencies or disasters, facilities may be needed to house additional shelters, Alternate Care Sites, or remote Health Department operations.	Continue to identify (and make arrangements to use) facilities, within the two counties, that may be pressed into use for emergency operations.	Resource identification	Facilities
Number	Primary Responsible Agency	Agency POC	Due Date	
4	Jefferson/Madison CHDs and Emergency Management			



Target Capability	Observation	Recommendation	Corrective Action	Capability Activity
Planning	During the exercise, a number of incident control, operational, and recovery issues were identified that will require coordination with other agencies.	Continue to meet and plan with other key agencies in the counties (especially through Emergency Management) so that a “seamless” response operation can be fielded during times of emergency or disaster.	Coordination	Emergency Management
Number	Primary Responsible Agency	Agency POC	Due Date	
5	Jefferson/Madison CHDs, Emergency Management, other Agencies			

Target Capability	Observation	Recommendation	Corrective Action	Capability Activity
Health and Medical	A large part of the CHDs’ responsibility during disasters focuses on the establishment and operation of Special Needs Shelters.	Continue to refine planning, training, resource identification, and role assignments for Special Needs Sheltering operations.	Policy and Procedure	Sheltering
Number	Primary Responsible Agency	Agency POC	Due Date	
6	Jefferson/Madison CHDs			



Target Capability	Observation	Recommendation	Corrective Action	Capability Activity
Planning	Exercise participants did not feel that the Special Needs Sheltering registration list was up to date.	Work with Emergency Management (who is responsible for SNS registration) to ensure that an up-to-date pre-incident list of SNS users is in place.	Coordination	Sheltering
Number	Primary Responsible Agency	Agency POC	Due Date	
7	Emergency Management, Jefferson/Madison CHDs			

Target Capability	Observation	Recommendation	Corrective Action	Capability Activity
Planning	Given that a disaster may negatively impact Health Department facilities and/or staff, it is important to identify backup facilities and staff to ensure the continuity of operations.	Continue to enhance continuity of operations planning (COOP) to help ensure that key CHD operational and administrative responsibilities can be carried out in times of disaster.	Continuity of Operations Planning to include remote storage (with accessibility) of key Department information and data	Operations
Number	Primary Responsible Agency	Agency POC	Due Date	
8	Jefferson/Madison CHDs			



Target Capability	Observation	Recommendation	Corrective Action	Capability Activity
Planning	For triage, casualty collection, and medical surge purposes, the Departments need to have an Alternate Care Site (ACS) plan in place.	Work with the State Florida Department of Health office to create an ACS plan for the two counties.	Plan Development	Medical Surge
Number	Primary Responsible Agency	Agency POC	Due Date	
9	Jefferson/Madison CHDs			

Target Capability	Observation	Recommendation	Corrective Action	Capability Activity
Planning	The Jefferson/Madison Tornado TTX appeared to be valuable for attendees. Further exercising, both internally and with key response partners, would be beneficial.	Identify future exercise needs and also participate with other County, regional, and State exercises to further enhance operational readiness.	Training and Exercising	Operations
Number	Primary Responsible Agency	Agency POC	Due Date	
10	Jefferson/Madison CHDs, Emergency Management			