



*Dodge County
Office
of
Emergency Management*

**Municipality Guidelines
for
Assessing and Documenting
Disaster Damage**

Dodge County Office of Emergency Management

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January 2024

DAMAGE ASSESSMENT PROCESS AND PURPOSE

Damage assessment is the process of determining the location, nature and severity of damage sustained by the public and private sectors in a disaster situation. It includes estimating the amount of loss and the resulting impacts of those losses on the affected individuals and communities.

Damage assessment is a responsibility that is shared by the federal, state and county/local governments. Each level must be prepared to carry out its role to complement and support the other.

The damage assessment process is an ongoing one that is essentially three-phased; the first phase begins immediately after the disaster, the second phase occurs just prior to a request for federal assistance and the third phase takes place if a federal declaration is received. During each of these phases the process serves a distinct purpose. The focus of this document is to explain the role of local municipalities.

Obtaining timely and accurate damage information is the key to identifying the needs of individuals and communities affected by the disaster. Once needs have been identified, decision-makers can determine if local resources will be able to address those needs or if they must be supplemented.

Wisconsin is governed by "Home Rule". Home Rule requires that each municipality ask for county assistance before the county emergency management department can assist. The overall authority **always** rests with highest elected official for each municipality. It is imperative, therefore, that the local municipalities submit damage assessment information as soon as they get preliminary estimates to the county emergency management department.

The damage assessment information that is obtained from each municipality is refined and used to document and substantiate requests for state and federal assistance. All such requests must describe the extent of the damage, list the local, county and state resources already in use or exhausted and specify what types of assistance are needed to alleviate the suffering and loss caused by the disaster.

The information is compiled by the county emergency management director and is put into a Uniform Disaster Situation Report (UDSR). The UDSR, when properly completed, provides a useful summary of a specific disaster situation. It indicates the scope of the disaster in terms of damages and injuries. It also provides information as to the personnel and equipment necessary to effectively manage the disaster situation. It is from the UDSR that the Governor decides if and what types of federal assistance will be requested. It is imperative, therefore, that the form be completed as thoroughly and accurately as possible. A sample UDSR is attached.

The 24-hour report consists of the municipality's best **estimates**, compiled from information gathered from the different departments and areas affected by the disaster. Local municipalities are responsible for submitting updated reports as new or additional information becomes available to the county emergency management department. This can be done via phone, fax, or e-mail to the county office.

DISASTER REPORTING

Attached are several forms which may aid you in keeping track of costs associated with a disaster. Use these forms as you feel necessary, keeping in mind that good record-keeping is vital for reimbursement in disasters. It is never too early to start documenting costs and submitting information to your county emergency management director. The more documentation you have on an on-going basis only substantiates the need for additional resources and possibly funding.

Within the first 24-hours it is imperative that this information is forwarded to the Dodge County Office of Emergency Management. To aid the department in tracking all damage assessment information, please fill out the Disaster Report Form and fax, along with the Private Sector Damage and Public Sector Damage forms to (920) 386-3994 or email to jmeagher@co.dodge.wi.us or apulvermacher@co.dodge.wi.us.

Private Sector Damage

When you record information for private sector damage you are recording the total number of homes and businesses sustaining minor and major damage. Determining minor and major damage to homes will vary depending on the type of event that has occurred. A Quick Reference Guide for Damage Assessment is provided to help you make those determinations. On the Private Sector Damage form provided you should complete the name, address, phone number, type of structure, type of damage, detailed description of the damage, cost estimate of the damage reported and indicate if photos were taken of the damage. This may be done over the phone as your residents call in to report damage. However, if you do this over the phone, be sure that your residents take photos to document the damage. This information may be needed for your local damage assessment teams or for FEMA officials should they come to inspect the damage. It may be helpful to also log a site number for each report and to then transfer that number to the appropriate location on a local map.

Public Sector Damage

Public sector damage includes cost incurred by local governments and private non-profit organizations or institutions. Public sector damage is broken down into seven separate reporting categories.

Category A – Debris Clearance

Here you will want to determine the costs incurred for clearing debris from public roads and streets in order to maintain traffic flow. Include costs for removing debris from public property to restore public services and to protect public health and safety, removing public buildings damaged by the disaster that are beyond repair and are a threat to public safety, and removing debris from private property by government forces to protect public health and safety.

Category B – Protective Measures

In this category you will want to determine costs for: performing emergency flood protection activities, including sandbagging, diking, pumping, and emergency stream clearance; emergency purchase of safety barricades, signs, and other warning, safety, or traffic control devices; emergency search and rescue operations, including extra police and fire personnel needed and overtime pay; emergency security and traffic

control, including extra police and fire personnel needed and overtime pay, and; other emergency protective measures taken to protect public health and safety, including warning of further risks and hazards, dissemination of public information on health and safety measures, etc.

Category C – Road Systems

Determine the amount of damage to highways, roads and streets including damage to normal right-of-way elements such as culverts, curbs, gutters, public sidewalks, shoulders, embankments, drainage ditches, road or street signs, traffic control signs, street lights, signal lights, etc. Also include costs for repairing or replacing damaged bridges.

Category D – Water Control Facilities

Record all costs incurred to repair or replace dikes, levees, drainage channels, irrigation works, dams or other water control facilities.

Category E – Public Buildings and Related Equipment

Estimate the cost of damage to public buildings, including the cost of replacing operating supplies and inventory contained in the disaster-damaged buildings. Also determine if any publicly owned equipment, such as squad cars or fire trucks, were damaged as a result of the disaster and estimate the cost to repair or replace it.

Category F – Public Utility Systems

If storm and/or sanitary sewer systems have been damaged, estimate the cost of repair or replacement. Also, determine if any sewage or water treatment plants, public water systems, or public light/power facilities or utilities have been damaged and estimate the cost of repair or replacement.

Category G – Other

Estimate the cost of damage incurred to improved areas in municipal parks or recreational facilities. Include in this category any other disaster-related costs incurred by local governments that are not already accounted for in any of the above sections.

Public Sector Damage is vital information that will need to be included on the UDSR that is submitted to the State. Please fill out the Public Sector Damage form according to category and a brief breakdown of where the figures came from.

You may fax or e-mail all damage assessment information to:

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