



Gwinnett

2019

OFFICE OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

END OF YEAR REPORT



A photograph of a road accident scene. In the foreground, an orange and white portable traffic sign stands on the asphalt, displaying the text "SLOW ACCIDENT AHEAD" in blue capital letters. In the background, a large tree trunk lies across the road. Several workers in orange safety gear and hard hats are visible around the tree. Two white utility trucks are present; one on the left has its headlights on, and one on the right has its emergency lights flashing. The scene is set on a paved road with trees and foliage in the background.

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LEADERSHIP & STAFF

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS



Charlotte Nash
Chairman



Jace Brooks
District 1



Ben Ku
District 2



Tommy Hunter
District 3



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District 4

COUNTY ADMINISTRATION



Glenn Stephens
County Administrator



Phil Hoskins
*Deputy County
Administrator*

LEADERSHIP & STAFF



Greg Swanson
Director



Nancy Coltrin
*EM Specialist
Planning*



Giles Roberts
*EM Specialist
Operations*



Ron Brown
*EM Specialist
Communications*



Michael Shaw
*EM Specialist
Training & Exercise*



Kevin Hill
*EM Specialist
Hazard Mitigation*



Stephanie Swanson
ASA II



Deputy N. Woosley
GCSO Liaison

The mission of the Gwinnett County Office of Emergency Management is to administer a communitywide comprehensive emergency management program in partnership with all departments, agencies, operating units, administration, and neighboring jurisdictions to save lives, protect property, and safeguard the environment. Our vision is to encourage and foster a disaster resistant community.

The OEM is a civilian unit within the Gwinnett County Police Department that handles a variety of tasks involving planning for emergencies and disasters, responding to incidents as a coordinating agency, directing mitigation against hazards, and assisting Gwinnett County Government and its residents in recovery after an incident. The OEM works very closely with all Gwinnett County departments and private/nonprofit partners to accomplish these goals.

2019 GOALS & OBJECTIVES

- Obtain and document evidence of compliance with the Emergency Management Standard as published by the Emergency Management Accreditation Program by completing a self-assessment
- Continue mandated revision to the countywide Hazard Mitigation Plan
- Implement review of safety plans in Gwinnett County public schools as required by state law
- Execute the annual Performance Partnership Agreement with GEMA and complete quarterly reporting
- Maintain and coordinate participation with the Atlanta Urban Area Security (UASI) working group
- Maintain a training program that includes assessment, development, and implementation of emergency management training for response personnel and the public
- Design, conduct, and evaluate a minimum of two (2) exercises per year as defined in the Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Program



Planning

Plans must be in place that describe Gwinnett County's emergency response, continuity of operations, continuity of government, and recovery from emergencies or disasters. Specific areas of responsibility need to be assigned for performing functions in response to a disaster, and hazards that impact Gwinnett County must be addressed. Plan documents are developed, reviewed, and revised on a schedule that is based on the specific requirements of that plan. Some plans require additional approvals such as local adoption or state and federal approval.

Plans addressed in 2019 were:

- Gwinnett County Hazard Mitigation Plan
- Emergency Operations Plan Mass Care and Shelter Support Annex
- Emergency Operations Plan Standard Operating Guidelines
- Emergency Operations Plan Dams Incident Annex
- Emergency Operations Plan Debris Management Annex
- Emergency Operations Plan Emergency Support Function Annex
- Emergency Operations Plan, Base Plan
- Emergency Operations Plan Communications and Warning Annex
- Multi-Year Training & Exercise Plan
- Hazard Identification – Risk Assessment Consequence Analysis
- Multi-Year Strategic Plan



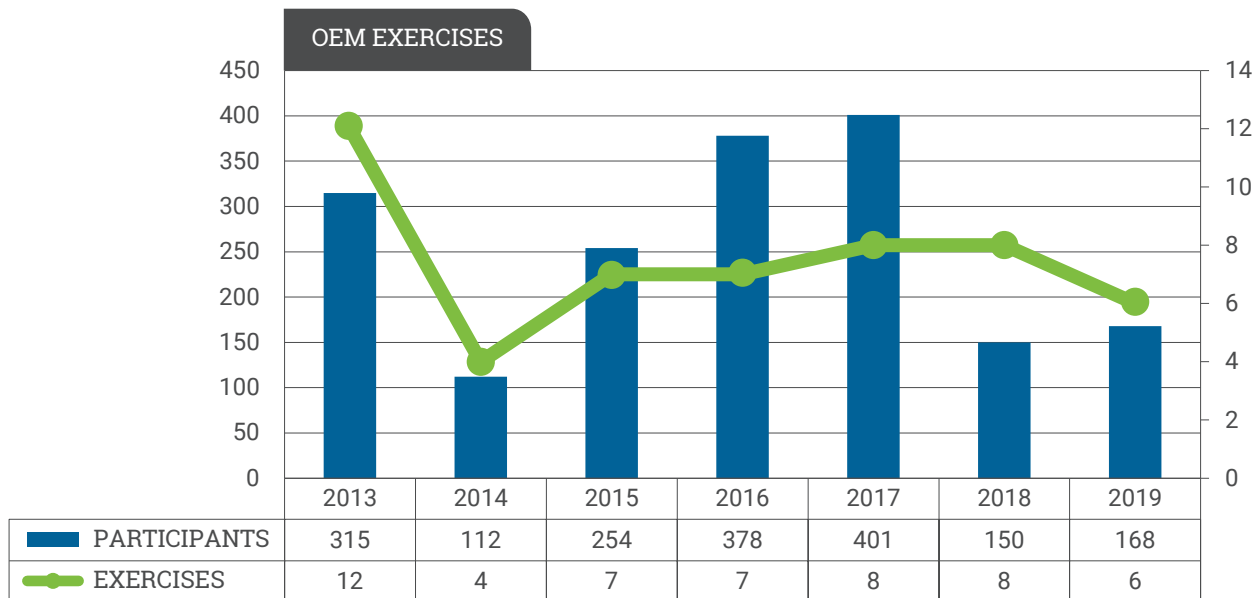
Training



Gwinnett OEM manages a formal documented training program that includes training needs assessments, curriculum, course evaluations, and records of training. Training is regularly scheduled and specialized to the threats and hazards of the county. In 2017, OEM identified a need for formalized WebEOC refresher training. Monthly classes were held to address the number of individuals requiring the training, and in 2018, WebEOC training was reduced to quarterly sessions. Overall, the number of unique training classes continues to increase year over year.



Exercises



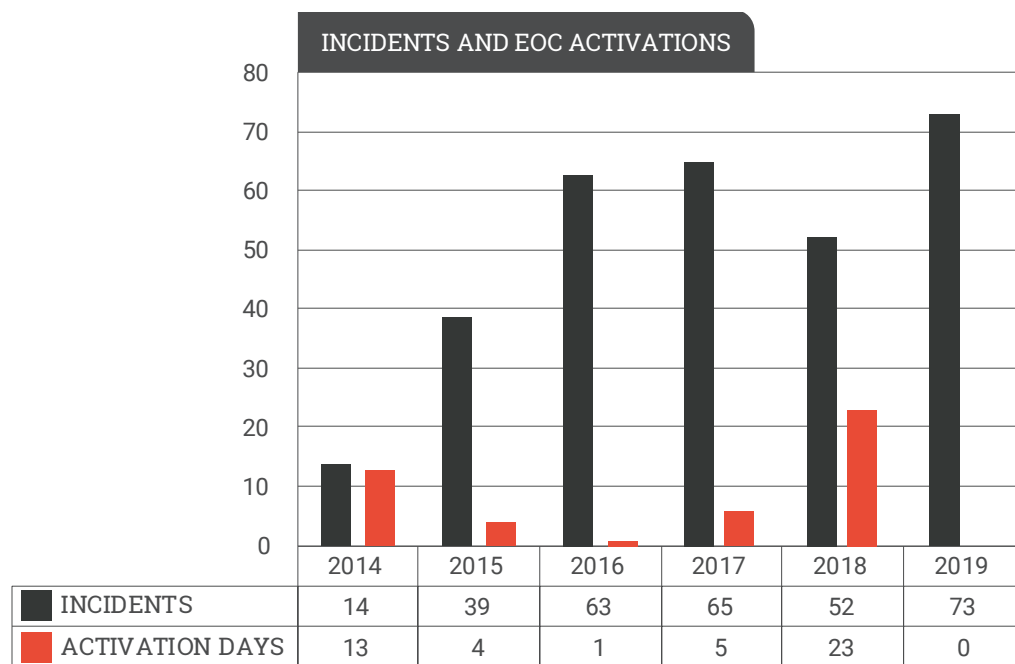
Gwinnett County OEM manages a formal exercise program to test the skills, abilities, and experience of the county's emergency personnel as well as plans, policies, procedures, equipment, and facilities. All exercises are conducted and documented in accordance with the Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Program.

The state mandates that we hold two exercises per year — a number that OEM has at least doubled for the past seven years. In 2019, GEMA determined that only top-scale exercises would count toward the requirement. Since tabletop, functional, and full scale exercises are very complicated events to execute, OEM scaled back the total number of exercises to be able to commit resources toward these complex events. While the number of exercises decreased in 2019, the total number of participants in all exercises increased, reflective of the broader scope of these exercises.

12Stone Active Shooter Exercise



Incident Response



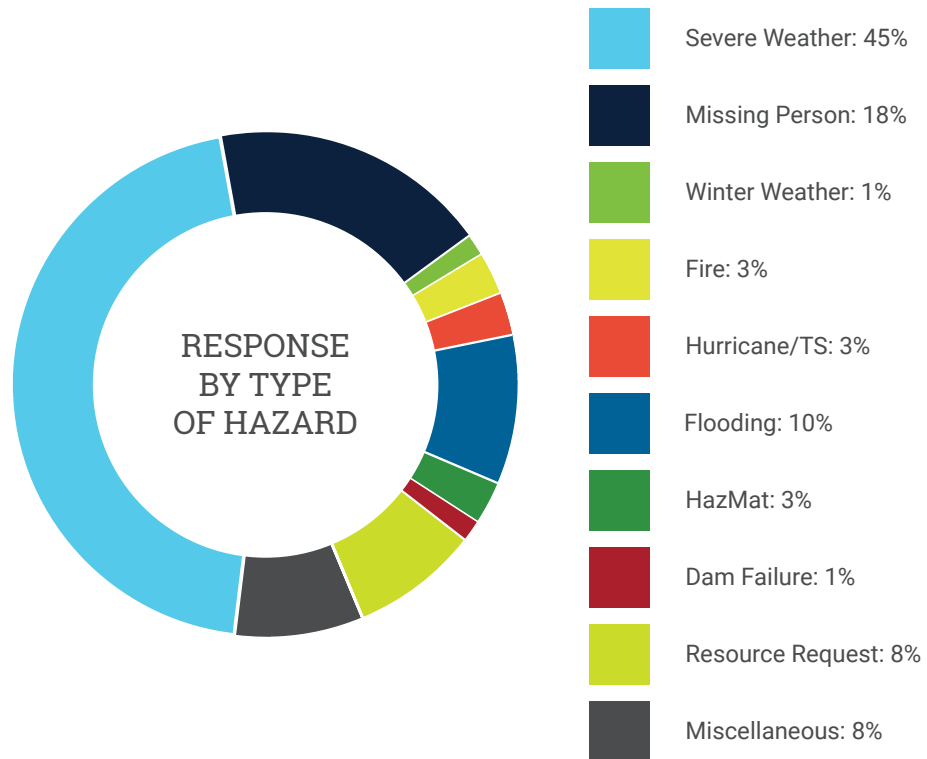
The *Georgia Emergency Management Act of 1981* (O.C.G.A. 38-3-27), requires the local director, or their designee, to be available or on call at all times beyond normal working hours. The duty officer serves as the OEM primary emergency point-of-contact for the alert, notification, and initiation of a preliminary response to major emergencies and disaster events occurring in Gwinnett County.

The marked increase in the days of EOC activation between 2017 and 2018 was caused by OEM's revision of its definition of Activation to address the fact that the EOC can have different levels of activation beyond all or nothing. There were no formal EOC activations in 2019, however, the incidents that require duty officer involvement continued to rise in both quantity and complexity. Policy and procedure development have allowed duty officers to manage many events without formal EOC activation.

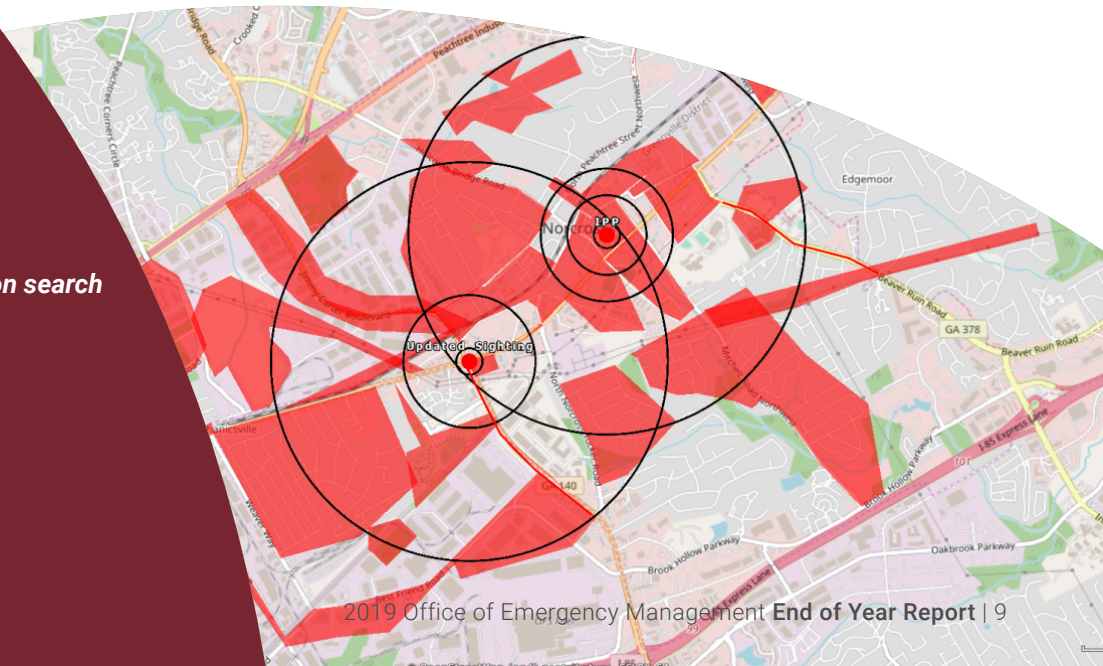
January 1 Cardinal Lake Dam response

Response Types

The OEM duty officer responds to a variety of incident types. This chart provides a breakdown from 2019.



April 14 missing person search



SUMMARY OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS & HIGHLIGHTS

Staff Professional Accomplishments

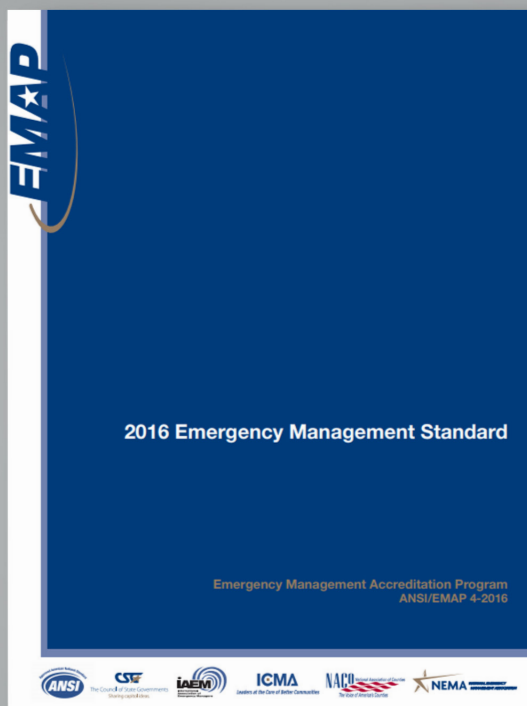
- Ron Brown completed the County's LEAD Academy
- Giles Roberts obtained International Certification as an Emergency Manager.
- Giles Roberts began the Professional Management Program offered by Columbus State University
- Stephanie Swanson obtained her Amateur Radio Technician license



Emergency Management Accreditation Program

The Emergency Management Accreditation Program is an independent nonprofit organization whose mission is to foster excellence and accountability in emergency management programs by establishing credible standards applied in a peer review accreditation process. The EMAP standards provide a set of metrics that help emergency management agencies understand their capabilities and capacity for disaster management.

In 2019, the Office of Emergency Management completed a multi-year effort towards EMAP accreditation. OEM provided more than 10,000 pages of documentation as proof of compliance for the 64 standards and 103 elements in the current EMAP standard. Assessors from EMAP were on-site during the week of November 4 – 7, 2019, to review the documentation and during the exit briefing announced that OEM was preliminarily compliant with all standards. Full compliance can only be awarded by the EMAP Commission, and is expected in June 2020.



StormReady Community

The National Weather Service recognized Gwinnett County's efforts in preparing the county for hazardous weather and renewed Gwinnett County's designation as a StormReady Community in 2019. Gwinnett first received the prestigious designation in 2007, and it has been renewed every three years since then.

To be officially StormReady, a community or site must:

- Establish a 24-hour warning point and emergency operations center
- Have redundant communications systems to receive severe weather forecasts and warnings and to alert the public
- Create a system that monitors local weather conditions
- Promote the importance of public readiness through community seminars
- Develop a formal hazardous weather plan, which includes training severe weather spotters and holding emergency exercises

As a component of the StormReady Community program, the National Weather Service SKYWARN storm spotter program trains emergency managers, dispatchers, other first responders such as police officers and firefighters, along with the general public on how to stay vigilant by identifying features in clouds that usually preclude the occurrence of severe weather. Trained SKYWARN storm spotters report hazardous weather conditions to their local NWS offices; amateur radio operators are also invited to participate. The Office of Emergency Management hosted the required Storm Spotter training on May 1, 2019.



May 1 Storm Spotter training

Atlanta Regional Commission

The Atlanta Regional Commission – Urban Area Security Initiative embarked on a program in 2019 to introduce public safety officials to different cultures in the metro Atlanta area with the express purpose of building stronger and deeper relationships with local community leaders. Director Greg Swanson and EM Specialist Nancy Coltrin attended the Gwinnett County session, meeting with community leaders from local Buddhist, Hindu, Sikh, Muslim, and Jewish communities.



Hazard Mitigation

The purpose of hazard mitigation planning is to identify policies and actions that can be implemented both immediately and in the long term to reduce risk and future losses. Gwinnett County's Hazard Mitigation Plan forms the foundation for our long-term strategy to reduce disaster losses and break the cycle of disaster damage, reconstruction, and repeated damage. An updated Hazard Mitigation Plan must be submitted to the Federal Emergency Management Agency every five years, and the County's current plan expires in August 2020.

This level of planning update isn't done in a vacuum, and Emergency Management Specialist Kevin Hill took the lead in engaging multiple County departments and local jurisdictional contacts to produce the current plan revision in time for the mandated update. More than 40 individuals representing County agencies, local jurisdictions, and educational organizations participated in these planning efforts. In addition, three public meetings were held in 2019 to gain input from Gwinnett County residents.

EM Specialist Hill submitted the update to the Georgia Emergency Management /Homeland Security Agency in October 2019 for initial approval. The plan was approved by GEMA in December and sent to FEMA for final approval. Once approved by FEMA, the Gwinnett County Board of Commissioners and each city in the county must formally adopt the plan prior to the August 2020 expiration date.



Community Outreach

Community Outreach is an important component of emergency management. Understanding the needs of our diverse community and imparting the message of whole community preparedness is a key element of building a disaster resistant community. OEM participated in a wide range of activities across the county in 2019 to aid in this effort.

- The Ahmadiyya Muslim Community 130 Year Celebration
- Korean Consulate meeting and tour of the Emergency Operations Center
- Summit Hill Elementary School Career Day
- Georgia Gwinnett College Preparedness Festival
- Junior Achievement Volunteer Day
- Lilburn National Night Out
- Public Safety Fall Festival
- Gwinnett County Multicultural Festival
- Gwinnett County Public Schools Law, Public Safety, Corrections, and Security Academy Advisory Committee
- Ron Brown and Giles Roberts participated in the Georgia Balance of State Continuum of Care Point-in-Time count for Gwinnett County with the HomeFirst Gwinnett Initiative to help identify homeless populations within the county
- OEM staff participated in Barrow County's Hazard Mitigation Plan Update Kickoff Meeting as a neighboring jurisdiction





Gwinnett

COUNTY GOVERNMENT

GWINNETT COUNTY
Emergency Management
800 Hi-Hope Road | Lawrenceville, GA 30043
GwinnettEMA.com