



2024

OFFICE OF
EMERGENCY
MANAGEMENT

END OF YEAR REPORT



Gwinnett

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LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR



As we reflect on the past year, I am pleased to present an overview of the accomplishments and initiatives undertaken by the Gwinnett County Office of Emergency Management in 2024. In the face of evolving challenges and a complex operational environment, we have remained steadfast in upholding the Gwinnett Standard—demonstrating excellence in service, stewardship, and integrity.

Our mission remains clear: to build and sustain a Disaster Resistant Community. In 2024, we advanced this vision through continued implementation of a comprehensive emergency management program in partnership with internal departments, regional agencies, and neighboring jurisdictions. Our adaptability and commitment to collaboration have been key to navigating an ever-changing landscape.

Hazard mitigation continues to serve as a foundation of our strategy. This year, Gwinnett County finalized the update of the Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan, incorporating input from stakeholders and community members. This collaborative process has deepened our understanding of localized risks and strengthened our strategies to reduce vulnerability across the county.

Planning and training remain cornerstones of our preparedness efforts. We conducted thorough reviews and updates of emergency operations plans, assigning clear roles and responsibilities to ensure seamless coordination during incidents. Customized training programs reached first responders, non-governmental organizations, and private sector partners—ensuring they are equipped to respond to emerging threats.

Exercises continued to enhance our readiness. In alignment with the Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Program, we executed a variety of drills and functional exercises, exceeding state requirements. Highlights included a large-scale severe weather response exercise that tested interagency communication, decision-making, and operations.

The OEM Duty Officer program remains integral to our response framework. In 2024, Duty Officers facilitated coordinated responses during severe weather, hazardous material incidents, and heightened activity. Their vigilance ensured timely situational awareness, resource deployment, and communication with leadership and the public.

I extend my sincere gratitude to the Board of Commissioners for their continued support and commitment to Integrity, Accountability, Equity, Inclusivity, and Innovation. Their leadership has been instrumental in reinforcing our mission and expanding our capabilities.

As we look ahead, the Gwinnett County Office of Emergency Management remains resolute in our pursuit of excellence. Together with our partners, we will continue to strengthen community resilience and enhance our ability to respond to future challenges.



MISSION AND VISION

The Gwinnett Standard

The Gwinnett Standard is an expectation of excellence in service, stewardship, and integrity in everything we do. It is a connecting thread that runs throughout County government and is reflected in the excellence of our schools, libraries, businesses, community organizations, and residents.

Vision Statement

The Vision of the Gwinnett County Office of Emergency Management is to encourage and foster a Disaster Resistant Community.

Mission Statement

To administer a community wide 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.

Board of Commissioners Values Statement

Integrity: We believe in being honest, building trust, and having strong moral principles.

Accountability: We believe in stewardship, transparency, and sustainability.

Equity: We believe in fairness and respect for all.

Inclusivity: We believe in engaging, embracing, and unifying our communities.

Innovation: We believe in continual adaptation of technology, process, and experience.

MITIGATION

Hazard mitigation is any sustainable action that reduces or eliminates long-term risk to people and property from future disasters. Mitigation planning breaks the cycle of disaster damage, reconstruction, and repeated damage. Federal and State funding is occasionally available for specific mitigation efforts for those communities that have a federally approved Hazard Mitigation Plan. Gwinnett County was awarded a mitigation planning grant to support the update of the Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan. Public input regarding the Hazard Mitigation Plan was received through a published survey and several in-person public outreach meetings. The survey was broadcast on several Gwinnett County maintained platforms but also received support from several municipalities who circulated the survey as well. The survey, in combination with the outreach meetings and their results, not only satisfies a federal requirement for the plan but also allows a way to record citizen opinions on localized hazard risks.

The Office of Emergency Management continues to support various departments and municipalities by providing technical assistance as they seek funding for mitigation projects identified through the ongoing plan maintenance process.

PLANNING

Plans must be in place that describe Gwinnett County's emergency response, continuity of operations, continuity of government, hazard mitigation, 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, evaluated, 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. In 2024, four plans were evaluated and revised.

Plans Evaluated & Revised

- Strategic Plan
- Hazard Identification, Risk Assessment, Consequence Analysis
- Emergency Management Manual
- Continuity of Operations Plan
- County Hazard Mitigation Plan
- Integrated Preparedness Plan
- Emergency Support Functions Annex
- Continuity of Government Annex

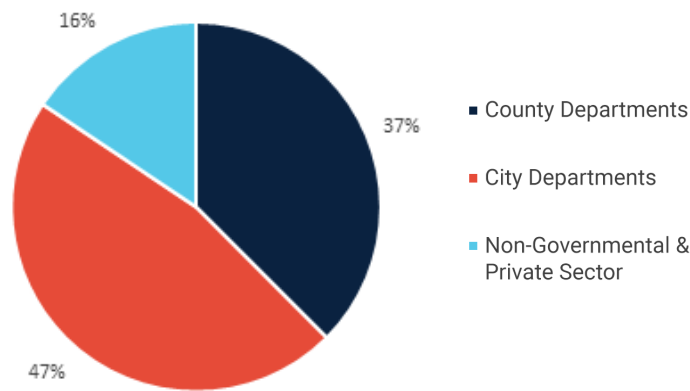


TRAINING AND EXERCISES

Training

The Office of Emergency Management administers a formal training program that begins with a needs assessment to address internal and external requirements. Participants in the assessment process include County departments, city departments, and non-governmental and private sector partners.

Training Needs Assessment Participants



Training is regularly scheduled and specialized to the threats and hazards of the county. Courses were conducted in the subject areas listed below. Target audiences may include key public officials, first responders, non-governmental and private sector partners, and the general public.

Course Title	Number of Offerings
Incident Command System/Emergency Operations Center Interface	1
Intermediate Incident Command for Expanding Incidents	1
Advanced Incident Command	1
Continuity of Operations	2
WebEOC Incident Management Software	9
Basic Emergency Operations Center Processes	5
Search for Missing Persons	5
Total Training Courses	24



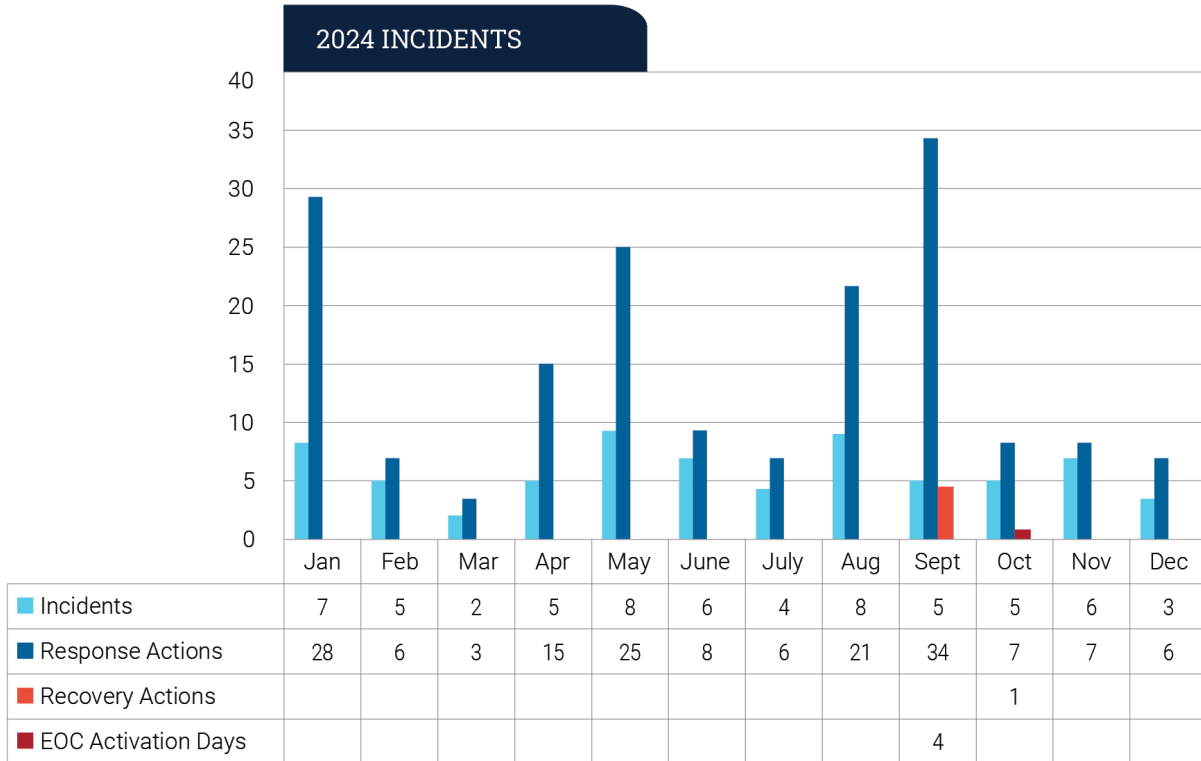
Exercises

Exercises play a vital role in preparedness. A formal exercise program provides a low-risk and controlled environment to familiarize personnel with roles and responsibilities, foster meaningful interaction, and enhance communication. Exercises also assess and validate plans, policies, procedures, capabilities, and identify strengths and areas for improvement. Exercises are conducted and documented consistent with the Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Program. The State of Georgia requires two exercises per year are completed by local emergency management programs.

Gwinnett County conducted a Functional exercise in 2024. This exercise validated existing plans, procedures, and equipment associated with activating the Alternate Emergency Operations Center. Multiple County departments, municipal departments, and volunteer organizations participated in the event. Valuable information was learned that will contribute to the improvement of not only how the Emergency Operations Center will function in an alternate facility, but how the county can better leverage their capabilities during all activations of the EOC. In total, the exercise included participation of 45 active participants representing 14 different organizations.

DISASTER RESPONSE

The Georgia Emergency Management Act of 1981 (O.C.G.A. 38-3-27) requires the local director, or their designee be available or on-call at all times beyond normal working hours.



The OEM Duty Officer serves as the 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. Incidents that require a Duty Officer response continue to rise in both quantity and complexity. Whether responding to a request for resources, coordinating disaster response actions, or leading the search for a missing person, the OEM Duty Officers are responsible for putting the County’s emergency plans into action. Consideration will be given to activating the Emergency Operations Center when the Duty Officer becomes aware of an incident and anticipates a need for coordination and/or resource support from the EOC. Management of these major emergencies and disasters requires the support of the entire OEM staff. Scheduled planning, training, and exercise activities are put on hold during the response and recovery to these non-scheduled events.

As part of normal operations, OEM duty officers responded to a large number of and variety of incidents, resulting in 576 staff hours directly related to response and recovery actions.



Gwinnett

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