

# Response Resources & Best Practices

APPA has compiled numerous preparedness and response resources and best practices that are complementary to the mutual aid process. This section comprises two parts: a list of relevant reference materials, and key considerations by function or incident type.

## Reference material topics:

- All-Hazards Resources
- Cyber Incident Resources
- Crisis Communications Resources
- Pandemic Resources

## Key considerations topics:

- Incident Finance & Public Assistance
- Island Territory Responses

## Reference Material

### All-Hazards Resources

#### [All-Hazards Guidebook](#)

The *All-Hazards Guidebook* walks public power utilities, joint action agencies, state associations, and other industry representatives through the five-step preparedness cycle to help in the development or continuous improvement of emergency preparedness programs and all-hazards planning efforts. It also offers best practices and strategies for each step and outlines a variety of emergency planning resources.

#### [Restoration Best Practices Guidebook](#)

The *Restoration Best Practices Guidebook* is a collection of tips and best practices for utilities and other entities involved in utility restoration operations and emergency management. Public power utilities (either requesting or responding to mutual aid), joint action agencies, state and regional associations, and others working on restoration can download the guidebook to learn how to plan and participate in effective restoration operations.

#### [FEMA Public Assistance & Hazard Mitigation Grant Programs Toolkit](#)

Public power utilities are eligible to receive disaster assistance through FEMA following major disaster declarations. This toolkit provides resources for how to best position your utility to maximize FEMA Public Assistance and Hazard Mitigation funding.

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## [Emergency Preparedness Tabletop Exercise-in-a-Box](#)

Updated in 2019, this standalone resource provides everything you need to conduct a tabletop exercise, including guidance on preparing for the exercise, facilitating the exercise, and conducting a post-exercise debrief. Six exercise scenarios are included: active threat / active shooter, cybersecurity incident, flood, tornado, wildfire, and winter storm.

## **Cyber Incident Resources**

### [Cyber Incident Response Playbook](#)

The *Cyber Incident Response Playbook* provides step-by-step guidance for utilities to prepare a cyber incident response plan, including engaging industry and government partners with available resources and the process for requesting cyber mutual aid.

### [Public Power Cybersecurity Roadmap](#)

The *Public Power Cybersecurity Roadmap* provides a framework for utilities to develop and implement improvements to their cybersecurity readiness based on the needs and priorities identified in the Cybersecurity Scorecard tool.

### [Cybersecurity Information Sharing Report](#)

The *Cybersecurity Information Sharing Report* lays out guidance on collecting event logs and securely sharing them with cybersecurity service providers, the E-ISAC, and other utilities. Sharing threat information is crucial to building a stronger cybersecurity posture within the public power community, as it allows utilities to respond to the wider threat picture.

### [Cybersecurity Information Engagement Plan](#)

The *Cybersecurity Information Engagement Plan* outlines methods for sharing and discussing cybersecurity information with non-expert audiences such as utility staff, leadership, government partners, and other utilities.

## **Crisis Communications Resources**

### [Storm Communications Guide](#)

The *Storm Communications Guide* offers tips for communicating effectively with all stakeholders before, during, and after a storm. It includes press release templates, sample social media posts, and checklists.

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## **Communications Templates**

The communications templates include a collection of shareable infographics and instructional videos illustrating best practices during emergency power outage responses, as well as outage recovery safety tips for communicating with stakeholders.

## **Pandemic Resources**

### **Assessing and Mitigating the Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19)**

*Assessing and Mitigating the Novel Coronavirus* is a resource guide developed in partnership with the ESCC to help electric power industry leaders make informed, localized decisions in response to the COVID-19 global health emergency. The guide highlights data points, stakeholders, and options to consider in making decisions about operational status while protecting the health and safety of employees, customers, and communities.

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## Key Considerations

Best practices and lessons captured from responses during recent mutual aid events are noted below and should be considered for incident finance & public assistance and island territory responses.

### Incident Finance & Public Assistance

This section outlines lessons learned from major events involving the FEMA public assistance process and summarizes a portion of the content found in the [FEMA Public Assistance Program and Policy Guide](#).

#### Ongoing Preparedness

- Collect pre-incident evidence of system maintenance
- Define procurement policies and procedures
- Document mutual aid utilities pre-disaster policies
- Create mutual aid agreement or memorandum of understanding (MOU) template that states that the mutual aid is responsible for providing the same level of detail as the applicant (host utility), including itemized receipts
- Create **lodging cost checklist**, where the following should be included on the receipts:
  - Hotel name, employee name, nightly rate, dates of stay
- Create **damage assessment template**, which might include:
  - Pre-restoration photos or video
  - Annotated maps with coordinates
- Create **restoration work template**, which might include:
  - Post-restoration photos or video
  - Annotated maps with coordinates
  - Any deviations or changes in restoration from the original
- Create **invoice template**, which might include:
  - Date
  - Item description
  - Unit price
  - Quantity
  - Subtotal
  - Taxes
  - Total

*Note: Barge invoices must include a manifest of the vehicles transported*

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- Create **transportation cost template**, which might include:
  - Itemized receipts for overweight baggage fees (tools)
  - Airfare receipts with passenger names
  - Invoices for shipping equipment

*Note: Barge invoices must include a manifest of the vehicles transported*
- Create **labor cost template**, which might include:
  - Actual hourly labor rates plus fringe benefits, by individual
  - Pre-disaster policy
  - Name
  - Position
  - Date
  - Hours worked
  - Hourly rate
  - Amount
  - Fringe rate
  - Fringe amount
  - Total labor
  - Description of work
- Create **equipment cost template**, which might include:
  - Vehicle make
  - Vehicle model
  - No. of days
  - No. of hours
  - Vehicle use rate
  - Total
  - VIN or SN
  - Dimensions
  - Weight
  - Type of vehicle

*Note: These costs are usually based on hourly rates, or on mileage if documented and less costly than hourly rates*
- Create **supplies cost checklist**, which might include:
  - If purchased:
    - Itemized receipts
    - Itemized invoices
    - Quantities used
    - Justification if not used
  - From stock:
    - Original invoice or historical cost records
    - Inventory records
    - Type
    - Quantities
    - Location used

*Note: Costs should be tracked if the supply has a useful life of less than one year and costs less than \$5,000*

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- Define needed **procurement documentation**, which might include:
  - Procurement policy
  - Procurement documents
  - Cost or price analysis
- Define **contract management process**, which might include:
  - Copy of contracts
  - Copy of change orders
  - Summary of all invoices

*Note: Contracts cannot be open-ended; they must have a termination date*
- Provide guidance on level of detail and documentation required to support invoices
- Create policy for document storage (e.g., hard copy, electronic, file share)
- Define tracking system for trucks and reimbursement process
- Document special arrangements between requesting and responding utility or contractors
- Consider processes for protecting confidential information (e.g., personnel rates)
- Define reimbursement policy for truck stock and other materials
- Create tracking system for truck stock and other materials
- Coordinate with government to ensure that taxes for mutual aid are either waived or billed directly to the host utility

## Pre-Deployment

- Collaborate with FEMA on unit of tracking (e.g., circuit, feeder, span)
- Issue mutual aid agreement or memorandum of understanding

## During Response

- Assess damage using **damage assessment template**
- Document restoration using **restoration work template**
- Calculate materials used per unit tracked
- Document labor costs using the **labor cost checklist**
- Document equipment costs using the **equipment cost checklist**
- Document supply cost using the **supplies cost checklist**
- Collect needed **procurement documentation**
- Collect lodging receipts, ensuring they have all the items from the **lodging cost checklist**
- Collect invoices, ensuring they match the **invoice template**

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- Collect transportation costs, ensuring they have all the items from the **transportation cost checklist**
- Collect itemized meal receipts if actual costs (instead of per diem rate) are being reported  
*Note: Meals provided with lodging cannot be captured with the per diem rate*
- Utilize **contract management process**
- Collect and retain timesheets of all workers
- Collect and retain activity logs
- Collect and retain inspection reports
- Coordinate shared services such as:
  - Barge
  - Base camp
  - Security
  - Meals

## Island Territory Responses

### Pre-Hurricane Season / Ongoing Preparedness

- **Pre-negotiate contracts** needed for response, which may include:
  - Vendors to meet needs of the mutual aid personnel, such as:
    - Lodging
    - Food and water
    - Security
    - Staging
    - Ground transportation (must have TWIC cards for drivers and be able to quickly exit port to avoid cost of parking or staging at port)
  - Maritime carriers or third-party barging vendors
  - Third-party vendor to coordinate shipping logistics of moving fleet
  - List of utilities or contractors that maintain barging contracts so they can be used as a resource
- **Review insurance coverage** and determine whether supplemental insurance might be needed in the event of a disaster; if so, obtain quotes and pre-negotiated contracts from insurance providers

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- Define the process for **preparing equipment for transit**, which may include:
  - Plastic-wrapping equipment
  - Photographs or videos of equipment condition prior to departure
  - Staging location
  - Variations between barge versus ship
- Define and document the **requirements for line workers traveling with their tools** via airplane
- Research and document variations between ports and shipping companies to use as reference in an emergency; considerations may include:
  - Port fees
  - Port staging area
  - Crane and ramp accessibility
  - Union versus non-union ports
  - Hours of operation
  - Holidays
  - Taxes
  - Ocean travel time (consider driving to another port to reduce ocean travel time)
- Create **pre-shipping checklists with shipping companies**; while these checklists vary by company, it is better to be more comprehensive, possibly including:
  - Original titles or proofs of ownership
  - Insurance
  - Cost of vehicle
  - Exact dimensions
  - Weight
  - Fuel level (e.g., 1/4 tank versus full)
  - Port fees
  - Taxes
  - Spare parts
  - Photographs or videos of vehicles (document condition prior to departure)
  - Documentation for alternative equipment operators or drivers
  - Certificate of insurance for "all-risk cargo"



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- **Define shipping process**, which may include:
  - Loading and unloading protocol (e.g., last on / first off)
  - Timelines for completing loading and unloading
  - Requirements to be met before the equipment can be retrieved from the ports
  - Time estimates for completing these requirements
- **Define unloading process on the island**, which may include:
  - Offsite fueling stations
  - Staging space on-site or secondary offsite staging location to avoid port fees
  - Crane or ramp to unload equipment (ramp is preferred where possible)
  - Local drivers to move the equipment off the port to a secondary staging station if equipment arrives before personnel
- **Define the demobilization process**, which may include registration or inspection stickers for equipment upon arrival in the U.S. (if the inspection expired while deployed)
- **Define alternate material and vendor matrix** (alternate supplies that can be used when preferred supplies are not available)
- Define the process for **onboarding incoming mutual aid personnel** and utilizing contract resources
- **Create storage plan template**, which may include accurate vehicle and equipment information in the manifest including vehicle value, license plate, issuing state, and current location

## Pre-Deployment

- **Define communications plan** and document-sharing method (electronic or paper)
- Define **standard meeting structure**; considerations might include:
  - Cadence of meetings (e.g., daily, weekly)
  - Types of meetings (e.g., phone, video, in-person)
  - Attendees
- Identify fleet to be transported across the open seas
- **Prepare equipment for transit**, which may include using the pre-shipping checklist and the guidelines for preparing equipment for transit
- **Confirm clearance requirements at customs** using the pre-shipping checklist
- Identify port(s) of departure and return using the ports and shipping companies matrix
- **Mobilize shipping companies and select sea agent** using the ports and shipping companies matrix

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- **Identify ground transportation**
- **Obtain supplemental insurance using pre-negotiated contract**, if needed

## During Response

- **Mobilize and transport team(s)**
- Conduct real-time coordination using the standard meeting structure
- Confirm required documentation for shipping equipment using the pre-shipping checklist
- Prepare for basic needs of mutual aid personnel leveraging the pre-negotiated contracts
- **Follow the predefined shipping and unloading processes**
- Transport non-line resources immediately using the pre-negotiated contracts; these resources may include:
  - Damage assessors
  - Incident management teams and specialists
  - Financial specialists
- Create and maintain storage plan using the storage plan template

## Demobilization

- Arrange for **transportation back to mainland using pre-shipping checklist** and pre-negotiated contracts
- Follow predefined demobilization process