

Integrating Climate Change into Municipal Emergency Preparedness Programs

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My Approach...

- Not a scientist, engineer, or adaptation specialist
- Physical geographer, weather fanatic, and emergency manager
- Graduate level education; also a practitioner and represent the experience at ground level

Field Observations



The Climate...

- Response focused
- Full support often lacking
- Still learning yesterday's processes and procedures
- Capacity quickly overwhelmed

We are Warming Up...

- Climate Change addressed simply by its nature/by default
- Involved in events due to incident management structure
- Recognize that climate change and adaptation needs to be integrated in current practices

Challenges

- Regulated components of Emergency Preparedness Program
 - No special requirement to prepare for climate change
 - Climate Change is not a “hazard”
 - All-hazard emergency plans

Challenges

- Factors for hazard planning tend to disregard a changing climate
- Controversial topic for public awareness campaigns
- Individual resilience and preparedness not expected

Steps for Integration

- Change the historical thought process
 - Base plans on current information
 - Use science to plan for what the hazard looks like in the future
- * There is little guidance on how to include climate change in a risk assessment

Small steps...

- Focus on near-term actions
 - Exercise compounding events
 - Strengthen mutual aid
- Include the public
- Actively participate in mitigation strategies/ adaptation planning

Thank you

