During an emergency, the roles of an Emergency Management Agency (EMA) are clear. Your local EMA is there to provide support to first responders, disseminate information to the public, and when possible acquire and distribute necessary resources.

What exactly does your local EMA do when everything calms down and goes back to “normal?”

The main focus of an EMA is to ensure that first responders and residents of their county are prepared for an emergency. They accomplish this by hosting and coordinating training for first responders and volunteer agencies on a variety of subjects. They are also responsible for coordinating communications between first responder agencies across the county.

Everything that your local EMA does on a daily basis is in preparation for an incident, whether it be large or small. They are responsible for the creation and implementation of the county’s Hazard Mitigation Plan and Emergency Operations Plan. While the Hazard Mitigation Plan is implemented to reduce the effects of an incident when it happens, the Emergency Operations Plan outlines how the EMA, first responders, and volunteer organizations will respond to an event. As the only way to test a plan is through execution, the EMA and partner agencies will conduct and participate in several exercises throughout the year. This not only helps to ensure the plan works properly but also that everyone knows what to do when it matters most.

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