

I. PURPOSE

To provide an overview of how damage assessment will be accomplished following a disaster in Mower County. Disasters or emergencies confined within any city will generally require that the city contact Mower County Emergency Management for assistance.

II. RESPONSIBILITIES

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- A. The Mower County Emergency Management Director is responsible for designating a Damage Assessment Service Chief, who will be assigned or will be requested to assist with the following duties:
1. Developing and maintaining a damage assessment "team" composed of county, municipal, other government and private sector representatives.
 2. Maintaining a current list of personnel for the damage assessment team.
 3. Maintaining the procedures to be followed for damage assessment.
 4. Coordinating the damage assessment process (following the occurrence of a disaster).
- B. County government officials who, depending upon the nature of the disaster, will participate in a damage assessment effort:
1. County Highway Engineer
 2. County Assessor
 3. U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Emergency Board members
 4. County Auditor/Treasurer
 5. County Human Services Director
 6. County Environmental/Zoning Officer
 7. County Extension
- C. Municipal government officials who (potentially) would participate in a damage assessment effort:
1. City Engineer/Public Works Director
 2. County Assessor
 3. Emergency Management Coordinator

- D. Private Sector Agencies/Organizations that might be available, including retirees:
1. Postal Employees
 2. Civil Air Patrol
 3. American Red Cross
 4. Private Realtors and Insurance Company Representatives
 5. Local Building Contractors

III. POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

- A. A damage assessment effort will be initiated as soon as practical following the occurrence of a disaster. Damage Assessment personnel will be notified, assembled, briefed, and instructed on how the assessment will be completed, and to what extent.
1. A windshield assessment will be made first to determine shelter needs, as well as the scope of damages. Collateral damages requiring special, or heavy equipment should be noted.
 2. If weather permits, an aerial survey to determine the entire scope of the damaged areas should be done, using Civil Air Patrol Groups, private pilots and planes, or "for-hire" services. An aerial view can be extremely beneficial for emergency response activities, including damage assessment.
 3. After review of the windshield survey, the number of personnel needed to determine actual damages, will be evaluated and recruited from the support agencies.
- B. Where possible and when appropriate, pictures will be taken of damaged areas, as long as the pictures are logged to time and place. Videos are excellent to record damages providing the addresses, owners or renters are noted verbally during the filming.
1. Every attempt should be made to include photographs, videos and maps when conducting damage assessments.
 2. Damages can be noted on copies of current plat books, county maps, city maps or other means that can document the damages by the location or sites.
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- C. When damage assessment is carried out in conjunction with a request for state or federal disaster assistance, the county emergency management director will coordinate with Homeland Security & Emergency Management (HSEM).

1. (ARC) American Red Cross and (FEMA) use different methodologies to determine damages, due to their unique missions. Every effort will be used to consolidate the damage assessment data to satisfy both agencies.
- D. When possible, the county emergency management director and other appropriate local government officials will participate in damage assessment procedure training.

IV. SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

(For additional information and guidance, refer to):

Disaster Response and Recovery: Request Procedures Relative to State and Federal Disaster Assistance Programs (available from HSEM) and Mower County Emergency Management Office.

Mower County Resource Manual

V. SUPPORT MATERIALS or PERSONNEL

- A. The Mower County Assessor, having the overall responsibility to coordinate and conduct damage assessment following a disaster, should determine those supplies necessary.
 1. Anticipated needs include copies of plat maps for townships, County maps, City maps, Clipboards, pens, pencils, paperclips, cameras etc.
- B. Digital cameras are available from most all Mower County offices. Mower County LEC has numerous cameras readily available.
- C. The Mower County Emergency Management Director has a digital camera and has been involved in several damage assessment efforts. He/She will respond if his/hers jurisdiction is not affected, and can provide overall coordination of damage assessment efforts, if necessary.
 1. Emergency Management Directors surrounding counties can provide support for damage assessment efforts.