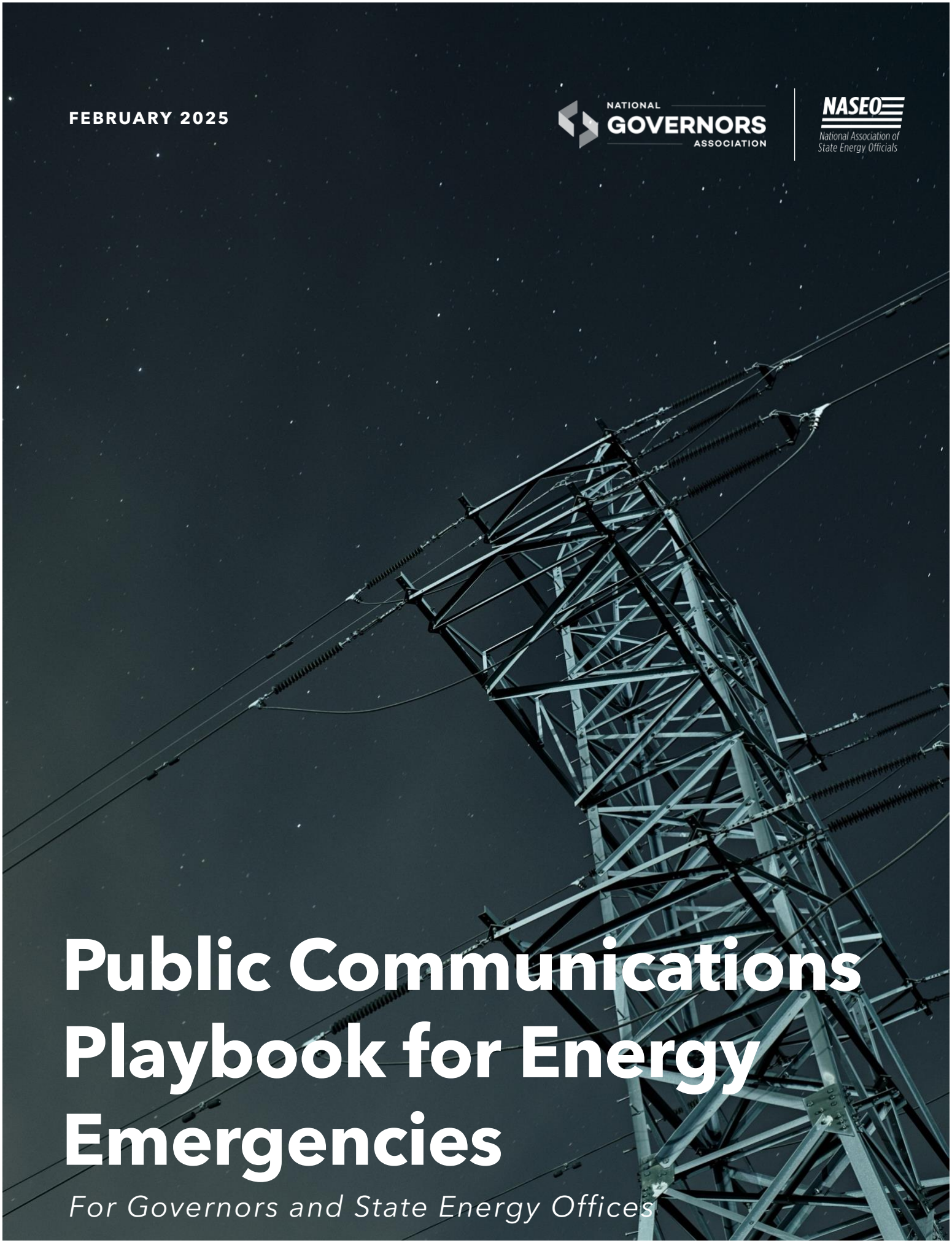
FEBRUARY 2025

NATIONAL GOVERNORS ASSOCIATION

NASEO
National Association of State Energy Officials



Public Communications Playbook for Energy Emergencies

For Governors and State Energy Offices

AUTHORS

Dan Lauf
Program Director, Energy
National Governors Association
dlauf@nga.org

Jessica Davenport
Program Director, Homeland Security & Cybersecurity
National Governors Association
jdavenport@nga.org

Phil Nichols
Senior Policy Analyst, Homeland Security & Cybersecurity
National Governors Association
pnichols@nga.org

Fiona Forrester
Policy Analyst, Energy
National Governors Association
fforrester@nga.org

Campbell Delahoyde
Senior Program Director,
Energy Security and Resilience,
National Association of State Energy Officials
cdelahoyde@naseo.org

Sarah Trent
Senior Program Manager, Energy Resilience,
National Association of State Energy Officials
strent@naseo.org

Rachel Roseneck
Avoq Communications

Mashal Hashem
Avoq Communications

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The National Governors Association Center for Best Practices (NGA Center) and National Association of State Energy Officials (NASEO) thanks the U.S. Department of Energy's Office of Cybersecurity, Energy Security, and Emergency Response for its support of this publication and Avoq Communications for their dedicated efforts to this publication.

The authors of this paper would like to thank the following contributors for their review and feedback on this publication: Brandi Martin, Megan Levy, Joel Nelson, and Juan Gomez (U.S. Department of Energy Office of Cybersecurity, Energy Security, and Emergency Response); Amy Thomas, Steven Medved, Tobias Sellier, and Giacomo Wray (American Public Power Association); Christine Csizmadia (Nuclear Energy Institute); Jessica Byrski and Trina Sheets (National Emergency Management Association); and Kendall Marr and Matthew Vollenweider (TC Energy).

NGA and NASEO would like to thank state reviewers from Arizona, Connecticut, Hawai'i, Indiana, Kentucky, Ohio, Tennessee, and Wisconsin, among others, for their valuable feedback of this publication.

This material is based upon work supported by the Department of Energy under Award Numbers DE-CR0000008 and DE-CR0000011.

Table of Contents

INTRODUCTION

Energy is essential to our daily lives. Disruptions to an energy system, such as power outages or fuel disruptions, can result in immediate impacts to the public, as well as other critical infrastructure sectors. During response to an energy emergency, Governors' offices, state energy offices, emergency management agencies and other pertinent state or territory agencies execute communication protocols to coordinate effectively across relevant groups and provide information to the public.

While the specifics of each energy emergency may vary, the ability to respond quickly, strategically and effectively is rooted in having a documented, well-practiced and coordinated process, including a State Energy Security Plan or Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan. The purpose of this playbook is to provide helpful guidance on how to communicate with the public during an emergency that impacts energy production or delivery.

Coordinated Communication and Decision-making: States and territories might consider identifying protocols and procedures to manage cross-agency coordination, including how they might leverage a Joint Information System (JIS) or Joint Information Center (JIC) in conjunction with emergency management officials to coordinate and standardize messaging for a variety of potential emergency situations. Planning and exercising coordinated communications can outline who owns which response tactics, who is responsible for gathering and verifying information to be communicated, who needs to approve each work product and who serves as organizational spokespeople. Planning can also aim to identify who will ultimately be responsible for public communications decisions and how information will be shared among the response team.

Unity of Message: Message unity is imperative across federal, state, territory and local agencies, as well as with the private sector. Inconsistent messaging weakens the message and creates confusion and distrust. To keep the public calm and ensure limited energy supplies are available for critical operations, messaging between the private sector energy owners and operators must be closely coordinated and unified.

Plain Language: In the energy sector, events may be technical and complex, which requires explanations that the public can understand and find relatable. If the messaging is too technical or does not adequately reflect what individuals are experiencing first-hand, they may be less likely to trust or act on the information.

Orientation Toward Public Safety Actions: Public communications can focus on the information and guidance that the public needs to remain safe and respond appropriately during an energy emergency. Guidance on individual preparedness for an outage and pertinent information during incidents such as anticipated impacts, restoration times and actions needed to remain safe are important to deliver in an accurate and timely manner.

Proportionality: Align the frequency and tenor of communications to the situation. For example, if the state responds too aggressively or is unclear about the impacts of an incident, it may reduce public responsiveness during future incidents or cause unwanted actions and/or unintended consequences, such as excessive stockpiling of resources when a widescale disruption is not anticipated. However, withholding key information in a response may lead the public to turn to alternative narratives or misinformation about the issue at hand. Finding the appropriate balance in communicating information is key.

ENERGY EMERGENCIES

Energy emergencies range from localized to regional and short term to longer duration. Short-duration energy outages can be uncomfortable, disruptive, frightening and dangerous in some cases. Long-term outages and fuel disruptions can be life-threatening, especially for vulnerable populations. Events can also be notice or no-notice and can impact different facets of the energy sector, from electricity, natural gas delivery, liquid fuels or all the above. Additionally, power outages often disrupt standard communication channels of information.

NO NOTICE EVENTS

Physical attacks

Cyber attacks

System malfunctions, equipment failure, human error, etc.

Certain weather events (tornados, wildfires, earthquakes, flash flooding, etc.)

Sudden fuel disruptions

NOTICE EVENTS

Certain weather events (hurricanes, winter storms, severe flooding, etc.)

Brownouts/capacity issues

Public Safety Power Shutoff (PSPS) for wildfire threats

Longer-term fuel disruptions

Geopolitical impacts to supply chains

TYPES OF ENERGY EMERGENCIES

Emergency response starts at the local level; this is also true for energy emergencies. Local government emergency managers and impacted energy operators will engage first and if local resources are exhausted or constrained, additional support is requested. The response framework is designed to scale as needed. However, regardless of the size of the disaster, the public will expect to be informed. The audience size and the frequency, duration and modes of communication will vary based on the scale and severity of an energy emergency.

The U.S. Department of Energy's Emergency Response Playbook has three tiers of energy crises, with increasing consequences and level of response. Similarly, the level of communication to the public will increase with the severity of an energy event.

Tier 3 (Enhanced Watch Events): These events impact energy supply chains and/or energy services that are largely remediated by industry with little to no support from government. Local government will likely lead communications to local affected populations, communicating restoration times or when operations will return to normal. Governor's offices and State Energy Offices should monitor the situation to understand if and when greater response actions are needed.

Tier 2 (Significant Events): These events represent large disruptions to energy supply chains and/or energy services with longer restoration timelines. Responses to Tier 2 events typically exceeds local government resources. The industry will also normally seek state government assistance in the form of waivers and resource management to expedite the restoration of energy infrastructure or to mitigate impacts to affected populations or lifeline sectors.

Tier 1 (Major Events): These events are characterized by extensive disruption to energy supply chains and/or energy services with extended or indefinite restoration timelines. Tier 1 events require a large, coordinated response at every level of government to assist and expedite restoration and to mitigate the impact on affected populations and lifeline sectors.

Source: DOE Emergency Response Playbook for States and Territories

ENERGY-SPECIFIC CONSIDERATIONS

Key Elements to Consider When Communicating During an Energy Emergency

Proactively Plan Ahead

Preparing for an energy emergency is a continuous process. Proactive planning should refer to official state response plans or protocols, such as Comprehensive Emergency Management Plans, State Energy Security Plans and Emergency Support Function 12 (Energy) Annexes (ESF-12). It is equally important to incorporate regular training and exercises into the planning process to simulate the flow of information during a major event. Including Public Information Officers (PIOs) in training exercises helps communication experts better understand messaging channels and protocols. A template of communications engagement timelines can be found in the Appendix on p. 22 – 23.

To supplement official protocols, a state or territory may implement the following tactics to effectively manage the communications response:

- **Identify Energy Stakeholders and Determine Communication Roles:** As outlined in the NASEO and NARUC Energy Emergency and Preparedness Guidance, it is important to identify the response team communication roles and where they fit into existing public information programs and communication processes ahead of an energy emergency. The energy response team may include members from the Governor's office, State Energy Offices, Public Utility Commissions, Emergency Management Officials and Public Safety Officials. Data to gather:
    - Who is responsible for gathering and reporting information regarding the status of the energy emergency and the public response to the event?
    - Which agencies will receive this gathered information?
    - Who are the energy subject matter experts that can help translate energy complexities to the public?
    - What does the flow of information look like? (e.g., incoming information, draft responses, approval and distribution).
    - Which agency or office has the responsibility to engage with the public directly, or is the office responsible for providing information to other state agencies?

- **Create a checklist:** There are common foundational elements across incidents that can be reviewed, updated and practiced ahead of time. The checklist can be organized based on team roles or by order of events. See a sample communications engagement timeline in the Appendix on p. 22 – 23.

- **Coordinate with relevant partners:** Identifying key public and private stakeholders prior to any disaster will improve the effectiveness of the response. Contact lists should be compiled and verified annually at a minimum.

- **Prepare energy specific messaging:** Draft statement templates and frameworks for common energy incidents, such as power outages, safety guidance and temporary sheltering instructions, which can be modified or filled in to help quickly disseminate information. Common data points for the public include:
    - Location of current outages and areas at risk for power outages.
    - How many residents are impacted/are expected to be impacted.
    - Any energy-related hazards that pose a threat (e.g., downed lines or leaking natural gas lines).
    - Any critical assets/facilities affected (hospitals, water/wastewater, food distribution, telecommunications).
    - What actions are being taken (emergency declaration, damage assessments, transportation waivers, etc.).
    - Where utility restoration crews are located and any resulting closures or changed travel patterns.
    - Projected restoration timelines from utilities.
    - Storage and inventory updates from the fuel sector.

- **Practice the Plan:** Before an emergency occurs, the state or territory can host or participate in energy emergency communication response exercises. An exercise will run through a potential scenario, allowing participants to practice their roles, including communications and information sharing, enabling a broader understanding of how the group will coordinate all actions during an emergency. This process will also help to identify and resolve potential gaps in the plan. Ensuring that key partners such as utilities, pipeline owners/operators and fuel vendors are invited to participate can improve the effectiveness of these exercises.

- **Update Plans Annually:** Roles and responsibilities evolve, and staff turnover occurs. It is important to regularly update plans to reflect changes, verify contact lists and train staff.

The Roles of Private and Public Entities

- Energy infrastructure is primarily owned by private entities. Effective energy emergency management involves regular communication between these entities, state and territorial agencies and other government leaders.

- These systems are regulated by multiple state and federal entities and supported by an array of industry coalitions. These structures may vary by jurisdiction and energy type; thus, it is important to understand those constructs before an emergency to determine who will be gathering what information and how that information will be shared.

Restoration Considerations

- Energy system restoration efforts can be hampered by factors such as inaccessible roads, ongoing hazardous conditions, concurrent disasters, widespread destruction and limited access to fuel or equipment.

- Extended outages may trigger additional cascading effects, potentially including interruptions to cellular service, disruptions to the water supply or other impacts on critical infrastructure and services. This can leave many people without adequate access to necessities such as heat/air conditioning, the ability to chill or cook food, communications and others:

    - Proactive communication messages should be crafted to provide clear instructions on civilian preparedness, limit overconsumption of any limited resources and maintain calm.

    - Consider other channels, such as the Integrated Public Alert & Warning System (IPAWS), including emergency alert systems and wireless emergency alerts, where appropriate.

    - During an extended outage, keep the public informed by providing an estimate on restoration time and, if timelines change, explaining why restoration timelines are longer.

- Disruptions to the petroleum sector may spur public hoarding of transportation fuels which could limit supplies for critical back-up power operations during restoration. Messaging should focus on easy-to-understand facts, safety, usage of proper containers, when fuel shipments might be replenished, if known, and discouraging panic buying.

Clear, Consistent and Unified Messaging

- **Immediate Needs:** Simple, direct messages reduce confusion and misinformation. Examples could include projected restoration times for power, safety instructions for downed wires or gas leaks and warming or cooling shelter information.

- **Unity of Messaging:** Align messaging across levels of government and with impacted energy providers.

- **Verification Process:** Information during an incident can change quickly, therefore it is important to have a verification process in place so that those with the latest authorized information can approve what is being shared.

- **Tailored Messages:** Different message content may be better suited for different audiences depending on the nature or impacts of the emergency. This could include, for example, guidance for households with electric-dependent residents.

- **Message Delivery:** Different segments of the population may trust different sources, so tailor message delivery appropriately and utilize local leaders, community organizations or media where possible.

BEST PRACTICES FOR COMMUNICATING WITH IMPACTED COMMUNITIES

Effective communication is critical when informing the public, ensuring safety and mitigating misinformation and panic. Below are best practices to ensure your message is clear and impactful:

Highlight Actions Being Taken: Provide clear information, actionable steps and public resources for assistance. Some of the key things people affected will want to know include:

- What's being done to resolve the issue,
- An estimated restoration timeline for energy services,
- When is the expected return to normalcy and
- What actions should be taken.

The amount of information communities will want will likely increase with the duration of the outage. This might include information on the available resources, recovery or industry-specific impacts. It may be useful to develop an informational hub for longer outages to link to the latest information, all the actions taken and available resources.

Base Your Communications on Known Facts: In the early stages of an event, a full picture of the situation may not be available. As damage is being assessed, utilities may not have access to damaged infrastructure until active danger subsides, and roadways are cleared. Start with what is known, acknowledge what is unknown and commit to providing updates as more information becomes available.

Provide honest estimates for energy restoration based on information that the utilities provide and indicate whether those estimates have shifted as more information is gathered. Simplify complex information into colloquial language with the help of experts. For human attacks on critical infrastructure, coordinate with your Governor's homeland security advisor, public safety officials and federal law enforcement partners to determine what can be shared.

Rule of Three: People often need to hear messages multiple times to process, understand and retain information. Stressful situations increase the need for repetition and simplicity. Stick to the "Rule of 3s" – 3 key points / facts, repeated 3 times.

Timing is Everything: Communicate promptly and continue to provide regular updates to stay ahead of rumors/misinformation and to ensure that the community feels informed and reassured.

Communicate with Empathy: Always approach communication with sensitivity to the emotions and concerns of those affected, which will demonstrate that their well-being is the top priority.

Maintain a Professional Tone: Avoid humor or any tone that could be perceived as casual or insensitive. Stay away from jargon and speak in a way that is accessible to all. Avoid casting blame as these are complex situations.

Ensure Unity of Messaging: The Energy Emergency Assurance Coordinators Program (EEAC) provides a foundational information-sharing and emergency communications guide for multistate and national communications and coordination. Using this resource and coordinating closely with state, federal, local and sector partners will ensure the public receives consistent and accurate information.

Make information accessible to all members of impacted communities: Consider a multilingual response or offering translated resources depending on which communities are affected.

BEST PRACTICES TO MITIGATE MISINFORMATION

Any crisis can result in the spread of misinformation since it can take time to fully understand the situation, leading to confusion. Malicious actors can also take advantage of a stressed population to sow discord on social media. The dissemination of misinformation and disinformation can gain momentum when there is a vacuum of information. Keeping the public up-to-date and engaging key messengers such as reporters, community leaders and elected officials is essential in preventing the spread of misinformation. As in all interactions with the public, it is important to be mindful of individuals' civil rights and civil liberties, including protections of rights afforded under the First Amendment. When misinformation occurs, consider the following before responding.

Pre-incident:

- Identify communication platforms that can be used to amplify messaging during an energy emergency so that the community knows where to go for information. Understanding where the community regularly receives their information will help assist in platform identification. These may include social media accounts and web-based resources such as:
    - Federal accounts: The Department of Energy (DOE); DOE's Office of Cybersecurity, Energy Security, and Emergency Response (CESER); Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and FEMA regional accounts; the National Weather Service; the American Red Cross; Center for Disease Control (CDC) Emergency and CDC Environment; the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA); and Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA).
    - State-specific accounts: Governors' offices, state emergency management offices, state energy offices, public utility commissions, state departments of transportation, state environmental agencies, utilities and law enforcement.
- Identify which social media platforms will be leveraged to disseminate key information throughout an emergency. Some common channels to consider analyzing through search and hashtags:

Facebook

Instagram

X (formerly known as Twitter)

Bluesky

Nextdoor

YouTube

Other video-based social media platforms

- Identify community influencers who may be willing to share vetted information during an incident.
- Discourage staff from posting or sharing anything that is not from official channels on agency accounts.

Immediately after an incident occurs:

- Support the PIOs, where appropriate, in development of social media language and keep messaging short:
    - Coordination through a Joint Information System (JIS), a virtual coordination center, can align messaging for communications leads.
    - Share ongoing information on the incident with communications staff in a timely manner to avoid inadvertent amplification of inaccurate or outdated information.
- Ongoing review of social media activity:
    - Monitor the accounts of energy companies, key stakeholders and the press.
    - Share content from partner stakeholders with PIOs to increase the reach of relevant content.
- Additional content for consideration:
    - Amplify information from trusted industry partners such as impacted electric utilities.
    - Be clear about what you don't know as this can mitigate the number of conflicting statements issued as a situation evolves.
    - Inform the public if an incident is evolving and may require changes in recommended actions in the future. Consider making notes about what was known at the time and what changed to be able to answer questions effectively.
    - Keep key leaders informed so that they have access to the latest, accurate information to share.

MEDIA OUTREACH

News coverage is a crucial way to inform the public before, during and after an emergency. Keeping reporters and the community engaged is essential to keeping the public informed and preventing the spread of misinformation.

There are a variety of tactics to engage the public through media outreach, depending on the gravity and urgency of the announcement. The following chart outlines the media channels that can be deployed and important considerations for when to leverage them.

Media Channels	Timeline for Development
 **Media Statements**	• Immediately following an incident to alert reporters that the state is aware of the situation and acting on it.
 **Press Conferences**	• Up to 48 hours in advance of a significant weather event with notice requiring public attention or action (e.g., wildfire evacuation, heat wave preparedness, hurricane). • In some cases, immediately following a significant no-notice event, if conditions are safe (e.g., cyberattack, power infrastructure failure, earthquake). • Regularly after an event as outages and/or dangerous conditions persist.
 **Press Release**	• Up to 48 hours in advance of a significant weather event with notice (prepare for power outage), if a press conference is not feasible. • Immediately following a Tier 3 event (e.g., notice of a local fuel or power disruption). • Up to 24 hours following an incident to provide new facts or response updates.
 **Responding to Media Requests**	• If a reporter requests clarification. Developing FAQs for regular reporter questions can help reduce the burden on staff to respond. • If appropriate, refer to industry stakeholders.
 **Opinion Pieces**	• Best deployed following an emergency or during a long restoration period. • Should be used when messaging needs reinforcement or to correct misinformation. • Can be useful during non-emergencies to foster preparedness or promote mitigation actions particularly during specific awareness days or months.

COMMUNICATION CONSIDERATIONS WHEN KEY PLATFORMS ARE DOWN

In scenarios where traditional communication platforms are disrupted, state officials must utilize alternative communication methods to effectively reach the public. Although not an exhaustive list, this may include:

Battery-powered or hand-crank radios can operate independently of the electric grid for emergency use, although these devices may not be as widely owned by households today. Officials should establish partnerships with local radio stations well in advance to ensure that they can broadcast critical updates and instructions during a crisis, as well as encourage residents to consider backup communication devices. Many communities have officially designated radio stations as part of the emergency broadcast network.

Mobile communication units establish a temporary cellular network and can be deployed in strategic locations, such as community centers or town squares. These units can serve as hubs for officials to disseminate information and for residents to charge devices and obtain face-to-face updates.

Community networks, including neighborhood associations, local community leaders, law enforcement, faith-based organizations and volunteer organizations active in disasters (VOADs), can help relay information through word-of-mouth, ensuring that even those without direct access to electronic communication means are kept informed. In some cases, and for longer-duration outages, consistent meetings and the distribution of flyers can help keep the public informed.

Amateur (Ham) Radios are operated by private citizens in the local community. Amateur radio can fill in gaps when more traditional communication systems fail. These operators are often passionate about providing communications services during emergencies. Check with local leaders on their availability along with local Community Emergency Response Teams (CERT) in the impacted community.

COMMUNICATING DURING AN ENERGY EMERGENCY

ACTIVATE COMMUNICATIONS PLAN

When an emergency occurs, refer to the state energy security and emergency response plans. A response plan ensures that the right personnel and procedures are in place to effectively address the issue and protect the public in the event of an energy emergency. It is best to activate a plan during the earliest signs of an incident to closely monitor any potential situations and engage key stakeholders.

ALIGN ON CORE MESSAGING

Given the number of departments and agencies involved in any emergency response, establishing a regular cadence for meetings, calls and communications through a Joint Information Center (JIC) or Joint Information System (JIS) will ensure consistent information sharing and messaging across agencies and partners.

Message Flow Example: While every energy scenario is different, the below timeline represents an example of how information typically flows:

1. **Pre-Incident:** For anticipated, notice events, offer preparation tips. These may include safety measures advising proper generator usage, how to prepare for power interruptions or methods to stay warm or cool during extreme weather. In the case of no-notice events, regularly provide guidance for common events in your region (for example: what to do during a tornado, wildfire or flash flood).

2. **Pre-Incident Through First 12 Hours:** Focus on the "what" – Share initial incident details that have been verified.

3. **Within 24 Hours:** Focus on the "who" – Introduce key players involved in the situation and the response.

4. **Within 36 Hours:** Focus on the "how" – Explain the causes of the incident, identify responsibility appropriately and chart a path forward.

5. **Within 72 Hours:** Evaluate the "how" – Be prepared for scrutiny and questioning of your response efforts.

When applicable, the following information should be provided to the public as soon as possible, if not already provided by other relevant agencies:

- Nature of the event
- Location of the event
- Time of the event
- Public safety status and guidance if action should be taken
- Impact or anticipated impact of event (e.g., power outage, damage to critical facilities and other infrastructure, status of individuals involved)

- Expression of concern or sympathy for any impacted communities or victims of the incident, and discussion of support services being offered
- The response of the relevant state agency and immediate next steps
- Where to go for additional information or resources (e.g., where to obtain gasoline)
- Highlight paths for obtaining important information

Be prepared for the following questions:

- The timeline of the response (e.g., when will power be restored, power lines cleared from a roadway or when the pipeline will be operational)
- The steps that the agency did or did not take that could have prevented the incident
- Severity and status of public safety as the incident progresses
- What steps the agency will take to lessen the severity of and ultimately prevent similar events in the future

Examples of strong state communications during an energy emergency can be found in the Appendix on p. 19-21.

CONCLUSION

This playbook outlines essential strategies for managing communications during an energy emergency. This guidance is intended to equip state officials with a simple framework to effectively navigate the complex challenges in providing unified public communications during energy supply and infrastructure disruptions.

Key Takeaways:

1. **Preparedness and Proactivity:** Effective crisis communications require preparedness. Regular training, updating emergency plans, pre-crafting communication materials and developing trusted public communications platforms are crucial for rapid deployment when an emergency unfolds.

2. **Unity of Message:** Consistent and clear messaging is key to avoid public confusion and counteract misinformation. A unified message across all levels of government and the private sector presents a cohesive narrative to the public.

3. **Engagement and Empathy:** Energy-related crises can cause stress among the public. Understanding and addressing the emotional and practical needs of the community through empathetic communication can help reassure the public, maintain the calm and encourage cooperative behavior.

4. **Adaptability in Communication Channels:** State officials understand the importance of using both traditional and non-traditional communication methods to reach the broadest audience possible, especially under circumstances where typical channels like cell service or internet may not be operational.

5. **Importance of Exercising:** Hosting or participating in energy emergency response exercises allows participants to practice their roles, increase coordination and improve processes prior to an emergency. Ensuring that crisis communications plans are incorporated into exercises is important for building emergency preparedness.

APPENDIX

GLOSSARY

Emergency Operations Center (EOC): A central command and control facility responsible for carrying out the principles of emergency preparedness and management or disaster management functions at a strategic level during an emergency. The EOC is managed by the state's Emergency Management Agency, and during an emergency response, it supports resource needs and requests, coordinates plans and determines current/future needs, as well as provides coordination and policy direction.

Emergency Support Function 12 (ESF-12): Emergency Support Function 12 (Energy) is a plan that states may use to describe how they will coordinate information sharing, procedures and resources to support the response to and recovery from shortages and disruptions in the supply and delivery of energy of all kinds to the people of the state. ESF-12 is typically an Annex to the state's emergency operations plan, detailing which agencies are responsible for what functions, legal authorities and a tiered system for understanding the severity of the energy emergency and complimentary response measures.

Some states will bifurcate the state-level ESF-12 role between the Public Utility Commission (PUC) and State Energy Office (SEO), with the PUC having direct authority for the electric sector and the SEO maintaining responsibility for liquid fuels.

Fusion Center: A multi-agency center owned and operated by a state or urban area that serves as a focal point for the receipt, analysis, gathering and sharing of threat-related information between state, local, tribal, territorial, federal and private sector partners.

Joint Information Center (JIC): A facility established as the central point of contact for news media and interested parties to coordinate incident information activities at the scene of the incident. Public information officials from all participating federal, state and local agencies should collocate at the JIC. A Joint Information System (JIS) integrates incident information and public affairs into a unified organization that provides consistent, coordinated, accurate, accessible, timely and complete information to the public and stakeholders during incident operations.

Public Information Officer (PIO): The individual responsible for communicating with the public and the media, and/or coordinating with other agencies concerning incident-related information requirements.

The PIO is responsible for developing and releasing information about the incident to the news media, incident personnel and other appropriate agencies and organizations. There should be a lead PIO assigned to each incident, and depending on the size or complexity of the incident, the PIO may have assistants, including supporting PIOs representing other responding agencies or jurisdictions.

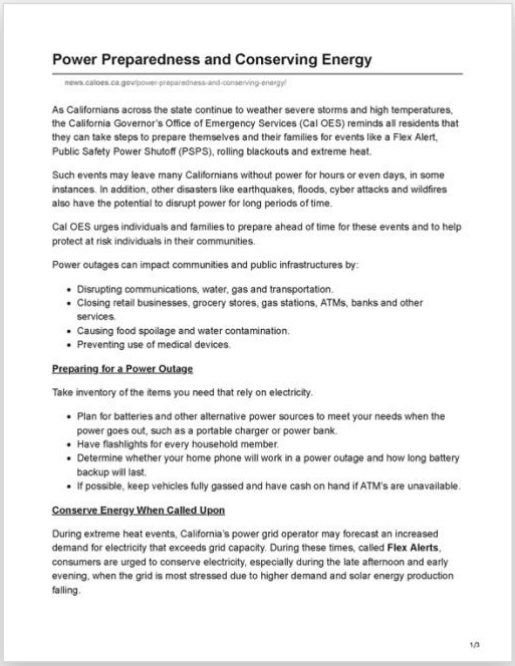
PUBLICLY AVAILABLE WEB RESOURCES TO SHARE WITH THE PUBLIC:

DOE CESER: Emergency Response Hub	DOE CESER: Energy Security and Resilience Learning Series	FEMA: Recovering from Disaster	CDC: What to Do to Protect Yourself From Electrical Hazards	NWS: Safety After the Storm
SafeElectricity.org: Safety Before and After Storms	Edison Electric Institute: Restoration Process Step-by-Step and EEI Industry Response and Restoration Communication Tools	American Public Power Association: Storm Center and Mutual Aid	DOE CESER Social Media: @DOE_CESER, and LinkedIn	American Gas Association: Severe Weather and Emergency Preparedness Handbooks

EXAMPLES OF STRONG COMMUNICATION DURING AN EMERGENCY

Pre-Event Resources

California: Tips for Power Preparedness and Conserving Energy



Power Preparedness and Conserving Energy

news.caloes.ca.gov/power-preparedness-and-conserving-energy/

As Californians across the state continue to weather severe storms and high temperatures, the California Governor's Office of Emergency Services (Cal OES) reminds all residents that they can take steps to prepare themselves and their families for events like a Flex Alert, Public Safety Power Shutoff (PSPS), rolling blackouts and extreme heat.

Such events may leave many Californians without power for hours or even days, in some instances. In addition, other disasters like earthquakes, floods, cyber attacks and wildfires also have the potential to disrupt power for long periods of time.

Cal OES urges individuals and families to prepare ahead of time for these events and to help protect at risk individuals in their communities.

Power outages can impact communities and public infrastructures by:

- Disrupting communications, water, gas and transportation.
- Closing retail businesses, grocery stores, gas stations, ATMs, banks and other services.
- Causing food spoilage and water contamination.
- Preventing use of medical devices.

Preparing for a Power Outage

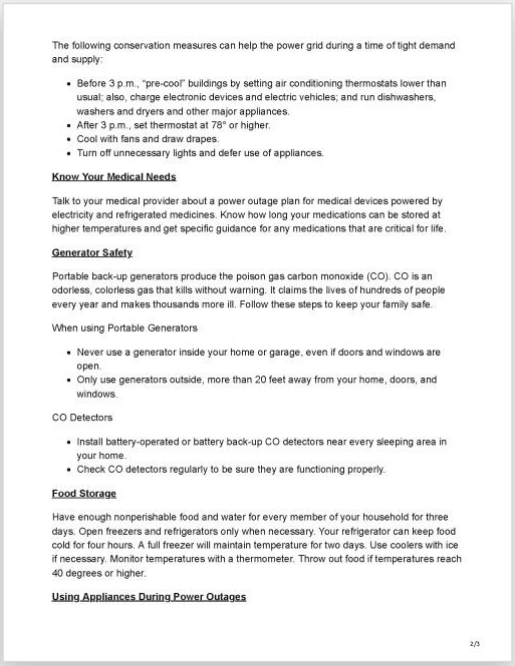
Take inventory of the items you need that rely on electricity.

- Plan for batteries and other alternative power sources to meet your needs when the power goes out, such as a portable charger or power bank.
- Have flashlights for every household member.
- Determine whether your home phone will work in a power outage and how long battery backup will last.
- If possible, keep vehicles fully gassed and have cash on hand if ATM's are unavailable.

Conserve Energy When Called Upon

During extreme heat events, California's power grid operator may forecast an increased demand for electricity that exceeds grid capacity. During these times, called **Flex Alerts**, consumers are urged to conserve electricity, especially during the late afternoon and early evening, when the grid is most stressed due to higher demand and solar energy production falling.

1/3



The following conservation measures can help the power grid during a time of tight demand and supply:

- Before 3 p.m., "pre-cool" buildings by setting air conditioning thermostats lower than usual; also, charge electronic devices and electric vehicles; and run dishwashers, washers and dryers and other major appliances.
- After 3 p.m., set thermostat at 78° or higher.
- Cool with fans and draw drapes.
- Turn off unnecessary lights and defer use of appliances.

Know Your Medical Needs

Talk to your medical provider about a power outage plan for medical devices powered by electricity and refrigerated medicines. Know how long your medications can be stored at higher temperatures and get specific guidance for any medications that are critical for life.

Generator Safety

Portable back-up generators produce the poison gas carbon monoxide (CO). CO is an odorless, colorless gas that kills without warning. It claims the lives of hundreds of people every year and makes thousands more ill. Follow these steps to keep your family safe.

When using Portable Generators

- Never use a generator inside your home or garage, even if doors and windows are open.
- Only use generators outside, more than 20 feet away from your home, doors, and windows.

CO Detectors

- Install battery-operated or battery back-up CO detectors near every sleeping area in your home.
- Check CO detectors regularly to be sure they are functioning properly.

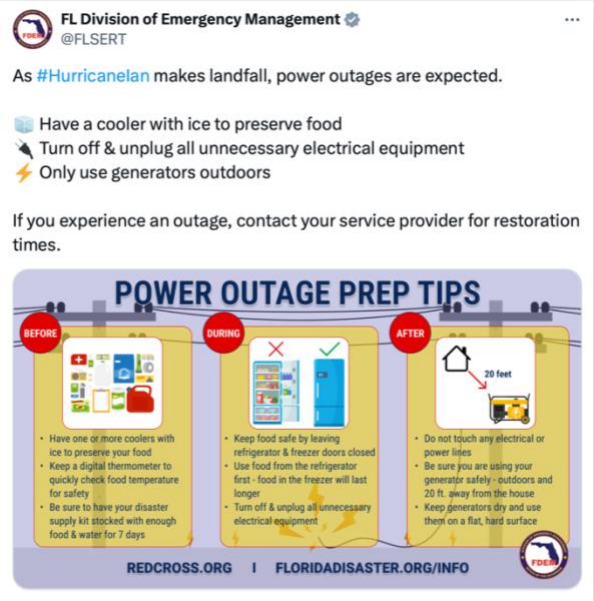
Food Storage

Have enough nonperishable food and water for every member of your household for three days. Open freezers and refrigerators only when necessary. Your refrigerator can keep food cold for four hours. A full freezer will maintain temperature for two days. Use coolers with ice if necessary. Monitor temperatures with a thermometer. Throw out food if temperatures reach 40 degrees or higher.

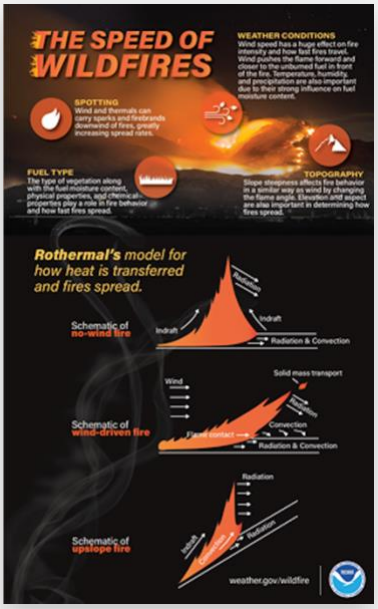
Using Appliances During Power Outages

2/3

Florida: Tweet on Pre-Hurricane Power Outage Prep Tips

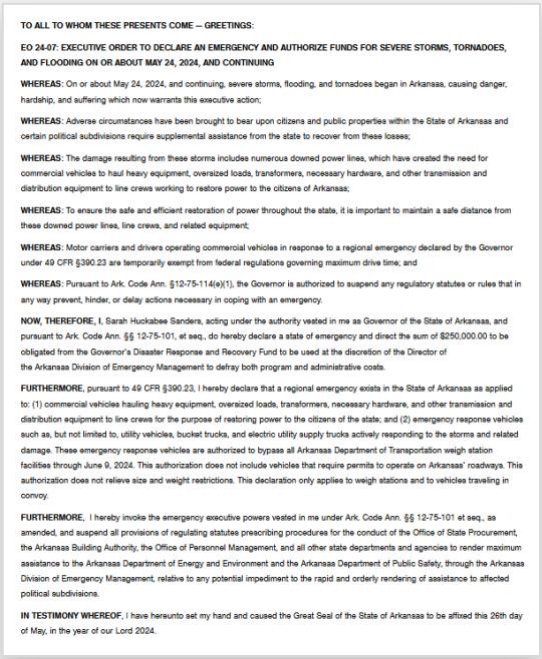


National: NOAA Wildfire Speed Infographic



Event in Progress Resources

Arkansas: Governor Sanders Executive Order on Extreme Flooding and Tornados



TO ALL TO WHOM THESE PRESENTS COME – GREETINGS:

EO 24-07: EXECUTIVE ORDER TO DECLARE AN EMERGENCY AND AUTHORIZE FUNDS FOR SEVERE STORMS, TORNADOES, AND FLOODING ON OR ABOUT MAY 24, 2024, AND CONTINUING

WHEREAS: On or about May 24, 2024, and continuing, severe storms, flooding, and tornadoes began in Arkansas, causing danger, hardship, and suffering which now warrants this executive action;

WHEREAS: Adverse circumstances have been brought to bear upon citizens and public properties within the State of Arkansas and certain political subdivisions require supplemental assistance from the state to recover from these losses;

WHEREAS: The damage resulting from these storms includes numerous downed power lines, which have created the need for commercial vehicles to haul heavy equipment, oversized loads, transformers, necessary hardware, and other transmission and distribution equipment to line crews working to restore power to the citizens of Arkansas;

WHEREAS: To ensure the safe and efficient restoration of power throughout the state, it is important to maintain a safe distance from these downed power lines, line crews, and related equipment;

WHEREAS: Motor carriers and drivers operating commercial vehicles in response to a regional emergency declared by the Governor under 49 CFR §390.23 are temporarily exempt from federal regulations governing maximum drive time; and

WHEREAS: Pursuant to Ark. Code Ann. §12-75-114(e)(1), the Governor is authorized to suspend any regulatory statutes or rules that in any way prevent, hinder, or delay actions necessary in coping with an emergency.

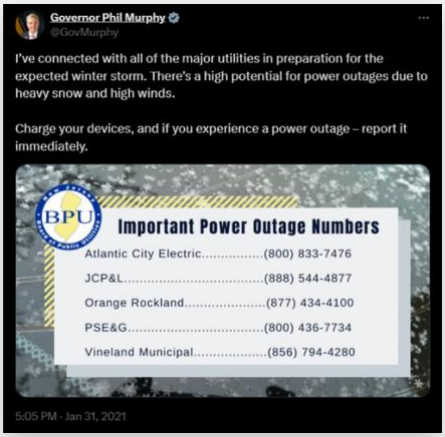
NOW, THEREFORE, I, Sarah Huckabee Sanders, acting under the authority vested in me as Governor of the State of Arkansas, and pursuant to Ark. Code Ann. §§ 12-75-101, et seq., do hereby declare a state of emergency and direct the sum of $250,000.00 to be obligated from the Governor's Disaster Response and Recovery Fund to be used at the discretion of the Director of the Arkansas Division of Emergency Management to defray both program and administrative costs.

FURTHERMORE, pursuant to 49 CFR §390.23, I hereby declare that a regional emergency exists in the State of Arkansas as applied to: (1) commercial vehicles hauling heavy equipment, oversized loads, transformers, necessary hardware, and other transmission and distribution equipment to line crews for the purpose of restoring power to the citizens of the state; and (2) emergency response vehicles such as, but not limited to, utility vehicles, bucket trucks, and electric utility supply trucks actively responding to the storms and related damage. These emergency response vehicles are authorized to bypass all Arkansas Department of Transportation weigh station facilities through June 9, 2024. This authorization does not include vehicles that require permits to operate on Arkansas' roadways. This authorization does not relieve size and weight restrictions. This declaration only applies to weigh stations and to vehicles traveling in convoy.

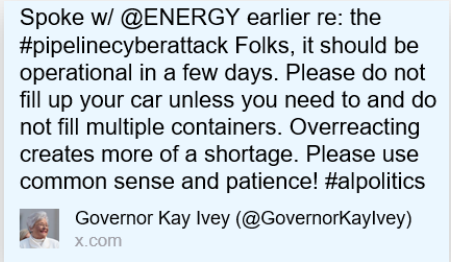
FURTHERMORE, I hereby invoke the emergency executive powers vested in me under Ark. Code Ann. §§ 12-75-101 et seq., as amended, and suspend all provisions of regulating statutes prescribing procedures for the conduct of the Office of State Procurement, the Arkansas Building Authority, the Office of Personnel Management, and all other state departments and agencies to render maximum assistance to the Arkansas Department of Energy and Environment and the Arkansas Department of Public Safety, through the Arkansas Division of Emergency Management, relative to any potential impediment to the rapid and orderly rendering of assistance to affected political subdivisions.

IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Great Seal of the State of Arkansas to be affixed this 26th day of May, in the year of our Lord 2024.

New Jersey: Governor Murphy shares post on X with outage reporting instructions during winter storm



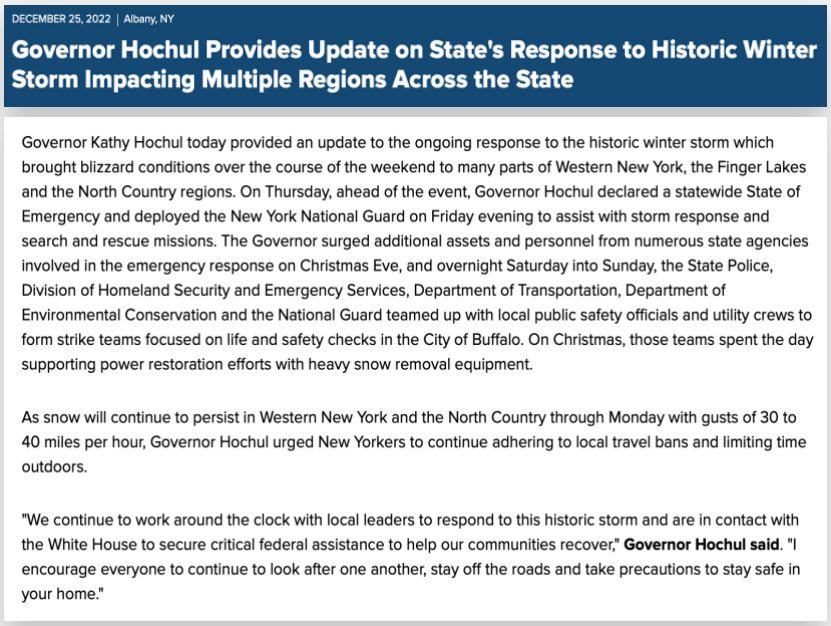
Alabama: Governor Ivey issues statement to prevent panic



Event in Progress Resources

Kentucky: Governor Beshear's Facebook Post Following Pipeline Explosion

New York: Governor Hochul's Blizzard Recovery Press Release



DECEMBER 25, 2022 | Albany, NY

Governor Hochul Provides Update on State's Response to Historic Winter Storm Impacting Multiple Regions Across the State

Governor Kathy Hochul today provided an update to the ongoing response to the historic winter storm which brought blizzard conditions over the course of the weekend to many parts of Western New York, the Finger Lakes and the North Country regions. On Thursday, ahead of the event, Governor Hochul declared a statewide State of Emergency and deployed the New York National Guard on Friday evening to assist with storm response and search and rescue missions. The Governor surged additional assets and personnel from numerous state agencies involved in the emergency response on Christmas Eve, and overnight Saturday into Sunday, the State Police, Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Services, Department of Transportation, Department of Environmental Conservation and the National Guard teamed up with local public safety officials and utility crews to form strike teams focused on life and safety checks in the City of Buffalo. On Christmas, those teams spent the day supporting power restoration efforts with heavy snow removal equipment.

As snow will continue to persist in Western New York and the North Country through Monday with gusts of 30 to 40 miles per hour, Governor Hochul urged New Yorkers to continue adhering to local travel bans and limiting time outdoors.

"We continue to work around the clock with local leaders to respond to this historic storm and are in contact with the White House to secure critical federal assistance to help our communities recover," **Governor Hochul said**. "I encourage everyone to continue to look after one another, stay off the roads and take precautions to stay safe in your home."

TIMELINE FOR ENGAGEMENT TEMPLATE

The following timeline of engagement provides an example of key communications actions in the hours and days of an incident response. An editable version of this grid can be found here for communications teams to tailor actions, status and action owners during a communications response. When adapting, consider tailoring the timeline template for notice and no-notice events as well as large-scale events with longer duration outages.

In Advance of an Energy-Related Incident	Status	Lead
Activate Communications Team, assign areas of responsibility and identify chain of approval contacts.		
Set up traditional and social media review.		
Identify a spokesperson or spokespeople for the agency.		
Identify energy subject matter experts.		
Develop and align core messages.		
Identify stakeholders who can be deployed to bolster support for policies during an incident.		
Review list of media contacts.		

Within a Few Hours After Energy-Related Incident Occurs	Status	Lead
Gather all facts. Decide if the message is coming from the Governor's office or a state agency. Draft a public statement. Have the statement approved by all necessary parties.		
Disseminate public statements through reporters and appropriate social media channels.		
Field questions from reporters.		
Compile and disseminate message guidance and tough Q&A to stakeholders and validators to ensure messaging is aligned, and/or convene call with supportive stakeholders.		
Begin gathering any necessary experts who may be needed to support the public response.		
Continue reviewing traditional channels/social media and share real-time and hourly reports with Response Team.		
Follow up with reporters in real time to correct any inaccuracies.		

If necessary, issue guidance to employees and on-site partners about the event and instruct them to route all media inquiries through the Response Team.		
Hold another call or meeting with the Response Team to assess the initial communications efforts, their impacts and determine next steps.		

Day After Energy-Related Incident	Status	Lead
Continue monitoring and sharing traditional/social media reports every few hours.		
Continue to follow up with reporters and editors to maintain open lines of communication and correct inaccuracies.		
Host call or meeting with the Response Team to determine the schedule for the next several days and whether a long-term communications effort must be deployed (e.g. to share ongoing information on a longer-term response/recovery, bolster support for specific policies, share more on the overall policy direction or agency leadership and rationale for their decisions).		
Determine whether additional public statements are necessary in light of new information or due to the evolution of the situation.		
Determine whether additional public events are necessary (e.g., meeting with impacted communities).		
Continue to respond to questions from reporters and educate them on background as necessary.		
Host call with stakeholders to share updated messaging information. Deploy stakeholders as necessary to amplify the message across traditional outlets and social media.		

Days Following the Energy-Related Incident	Status	Lead
If needed, draft op-eds and letters to the editor to respond to inaccuracies in coverage.		
Deploy experts and stakeholders for media interviews.		
Continue sharing traditional and social media reports every few hours.		
Employ proactive communications plan (proactive updates, websites and social media updates to reflect latest timelines and facts).		

INFORMATION GATHERING, VERIFICATION AND COORDINATION

In addition to the **Energy Emergency Assurance Coordinators Program** presentation, the following resources provide guidance for cross-agency and cross-sector collaboration:

The Southeastern Petroleum Shortage Response Collaborative Regional Framework's Public Information Section provides petroleum-specific internal coordination and public information guidance.

The National Incident Management System Basic Guidance for Public Information Officers provides an overview of formal structures and information flows, including regional coordinated response, communication flows, information verification and effective decision-making.

NASEO State Energy Assurance Guidelines provide lessons learned from responding to energy emergencies in recent years and the results of the dialogue at conferences, exercises and meetings on energy assurance.

The National Governors Association's State Resources Center on Energy Security provides Governors with a one-stop-shop for the information and resources they need to plan for and respond to energy emergencies.

The American Gas Association provides the Emergency Preparedness Handbook as a framework in coordinating mutual assistance, defining leadership roles, and ensuring industry-government communication for crisis response and recovery.