

DAMAGE ASSESSMENT

ANNEX E

E1. Purpose, Situation, and Assumptions

E1.1 Purpose

The purpose of this Damage Assessment Functional Annex is to guide and coordinate agencies and organizations in conducting damage assessments following a disaster. Timely damage assessment may facilitate state and federal assistance following an incident and provide important information for incident response and recovery planning.

E1.2 Situation Overview

Damage assessment is a function that evaluates the extent of damage in the jurisdictions, usually within 12-36 hours, from an incident, emergency, or disaster. This information is used at the local level for incident planning and assistance requests. At the state and federal levels, the damage assessment is used to determine if a state or federal disaster will be declared and the types of assistance that will be made available. A basic inventory of Park County reveals the following assets could sustain damage:

- Public facilities and equipment
- Residential structures and property (about 8,300 housing units)
- Businesses (about 800 establishments)
- Communications infrastructure
- Electric infrastructure
- Natural gas infrastructure
- Petroleum pipeline infrastructure
- Storm water and flood control infrastructure
- Transportation infrastructure
- Water and sewer infrastructure

The assessment of damages may be conducted by various independent teams, including, but not limited to:

- Government (local, state, and/or federal)
- American Red Cross
- Utility Companies
- Insurance Companies

E1.3 Planning Assumptions

- Information on the damage incurred is needed for planning and/or declaration purposes.

E2. Concept of Operations

The decision points that follow are the responsibility of incident management. Note that not all decision points may be necessary and some decision points may be combined during rapidly escalating situations.

- *Decision Point: A rapid needs assessment is necessary to evaluate immediate response needs.*

The “size-up” provided by the first emergency response units arriving on the scene of an incident is an example of an initial damage assessment. A rapid needs assessment is a broader (in the geographic sense) evaluation of the impacts to Park County communities. This type of assessment strives to quickly evaluate the damage for the purposes of immediate needs for life safety. The rapid needs assessment typically includes:

- Identification and severity of the areas impacted
- Estimate of the number of people impacted
- Status of infrastructure operations and outages
- Identification of immediate life safety needs

The initial rapid needs assessment may be conducted by emergency responders or Emergency Operations Center personnel using 911 reports, field reports (from assessment teams and/or incident command posts), and/or aerial assessments.

- *Decision Point: A damage assessment of public property is needed.*

When public property and infrastructure is damaged in a disaster, an assessment of the extent of damages should be performed. This process may be as simple as gathering information from the affected departments and companies or as extensive as assembling a team of local, state, and federal representatives to evaluate the losses. The facilities and systems that should be assessed, as applicable, include:

- Public Buildings, Facilities, and Equipment
- Schools and Property
- Transportation Infrastructure (Bridges, Roads, Airports, Railways, etc.)
- Electric Infrastructure
- Water Infrastructure
- Waste Water / Sewer Infrastructure
- Storm Water and Flood Control Systems
- Communications Infrastructure
- Natural Gas Infrastructure
- Petroleum Pipeline Infrastructure

If possible, a report listing the damage locations, a description of the damage, the number of people affected by the outage or loss, costs to date on emergency restoration measures, an estimate of the permanent repair cost, and ideas for mitigating similar future losses, should be developed, even if incomplete.

- Decision Point: An understanding of the extent of damage to private property is needed.

The process of assessing the damage to private property depends on the number of properties involved. When only a few structures are impacted, the damage may be assessed on a property by property basis by emergency responders or others through visual inspection and interviews with the property owners, including gathering information on the extent of insurance coverage.

In larger scale disasters, a less detailed approach is needed. A “windshield survey” may be more appropriate. With this type of assessment, structures are generally categorized as having been “destroyed,” sustained “major” damage, or sustained “minor” damage. The result is an assessment containing the total number of structures within each category, ideally by jurisdiction and possibly neighborhood. The goal is to collect, organize and report the damage assessment to Montana Disaster and Emergency Services (DES) within 12-36 hours of the incident. American Red Cross disaster volunteers are trained in conducting these types of assessments and may be a valuable partner to coordinate with.

E3. Organization and Assignment of Responsibilities

The responsibilities listed here are specific to this function. Note that all entities, whether listed or not, are also responsible for their basic disaster and emergency responsibilities as outlined in the [Base Plan, Section 3.2](#), as applicable.

The following entities are not specific to jurisdiction. Therefore, in an emergency, the jurisdiction(s) affected will have the responsibility for these roles, and other non-affected jurisdictions may also be involved through mutual aid.

Disaster and Emergency Services

- Coordinate community-wide damage assessments.
- Submit damage assessment reports to Principal Executive Officers / Local Elected Officials and Montana Disaster and Emergency Services.

911 Dispatch

- Provide information on reported damages to DES/EOC, as applicable.

Voluntary Organizations Active in Disasters (VOAD)

- Assist with community-wide damage assessments. (American Red Cross)

State and Federal Emergency Management Entities

including Montana DES and FEMA

- Conduct state/federal Rapid Needs Assessments and Preliminary Damage Assessments, as needed.

Other Entities

- Report assessed damages to DES/EOC, as applicable.
- Perform other duties as needed and assigned.

E4. Direction, Control, and Coordination

Incident Command and/or Unified Command will vary depending on the incident causing the need for damage assessment. Park County Disaster and Emergency Services is primarily responsible for the damage assessment function, but may require the assistance of and information from other agencies. Additional information on the direction and control function can be found in the [Direction and Control Annex](#) and [Base Plan, Section 4](#).

E5. Information Collection and Dissemination

E5.1 Information Collection for Planning

Table E5.1A lists the key information needed and possible sources needed for a damage assessment.

Table E5.1A Possible Information Sources

<i>Information Type</i>	<i>Source</i>
Extent of community damage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Law Enforcement - Fire Departments - American Red Cross - Building Inspectors
Extent of infrastructure damage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Street and Road Departments - Utility Providers - Water and Sewer Departments / Districts - Government Administration
Extent of government property damage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Government Administration - School Administrators

E5.2 Public Information

Information regarding the public information function can be found in the [Public Information Annex](#).

Through electronic media and other means, surveys may be established to gauge the level of damage in the communities. The public may also benefit from knowing that damage assessment teams may be moving through the area and driving slowly by homes.

E6. Communications

See the [Communications Annex](#) for more details on emergency communications in Park County.

E7. Administration, Finance, and Logistics

E7.1 Finance/Administration

For additional information on the Finance/Administration function, particularly the importance of recordkeeping, see the [Base Plan, Section 7.1](#).

E7.2 Logistics

For additional information on disaster and emergency logistics, see the [Base Plan, Section 7.2](#).

E8. Plan Development and Maintenance

See the [Base Plan, Section 8](#) for additional information on annex development, review, revision, and exercise.

E9. Authorities and References

E9.1 Authorities / References

None.

E9.2 Acronyms

See the [Base Plan, Section 9.4](#) for the list of acronyms used in this plan.

E10. Attachments

None.