



Virginia Department of
Emergency Management

Hurricane Season Webinar

Date: August 7, 2020

State Coordinator of Emergency Management Curtis Brown

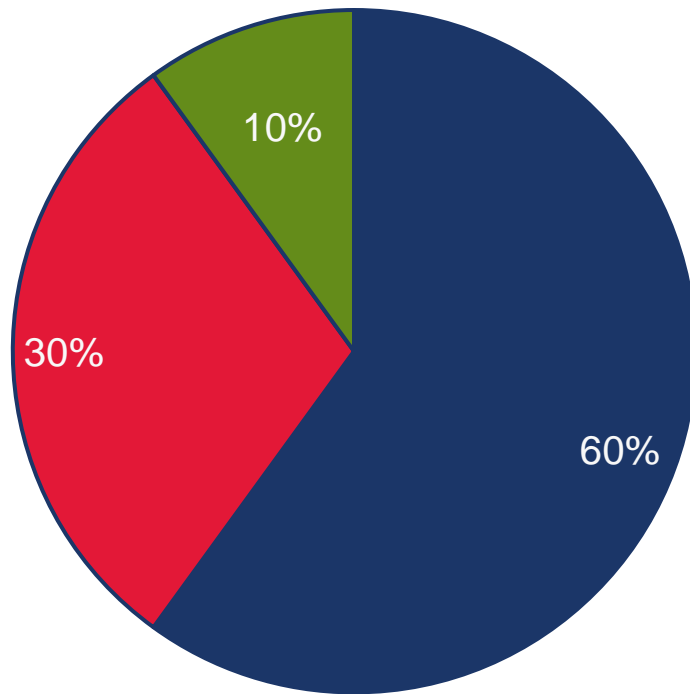
Gov. Ralph Northam appointed Curtis Brown as State Coordinator of Emergency Management at VDEM on June 9, 2020

Curtis previously served as Chief Deputy State Coordinator and Deputy Secretary of Public Safety & Homeland Security



2020 Atlantic Hurricane Season Outlook

Season Probability



Named Storms
13-19



Hurricanes
6-10



Major Hurricanes
3-6



■ Above-normal ■ Near-normal ■ Below-normal

VDEM Structure & Updates

- Absorbed ISP Division from VITA (now called 9-1-1 and Geospatial Services NGS)
- Reorganization created four new bureaus as of July 1 – NGS, Financial Management, Chief of VEST, Chief of Staff (see next slide for org chart)
- Currently operating virtually due to COVID-19
- Currently activated for several concurrent emergency declarations

COVID-19, First Amendment Events, now in recovery phase for TS Isaias



State
Coordinator

Executive
Assistant

Chief
Deputy

Disaster
Services

Mission
Support

NGS

Financial
Management

Chief of the
VEST

Chief of Staff

Planning

TEED

VGIN

Accounting

State IMT

External
Affairs

Regional
East

Human
Resources

PSC

Procurement

Project
Management

Regional
West

Information
Technology

Regions

Disaster
Grants

Response
Programs

Facilities &
Safety Office



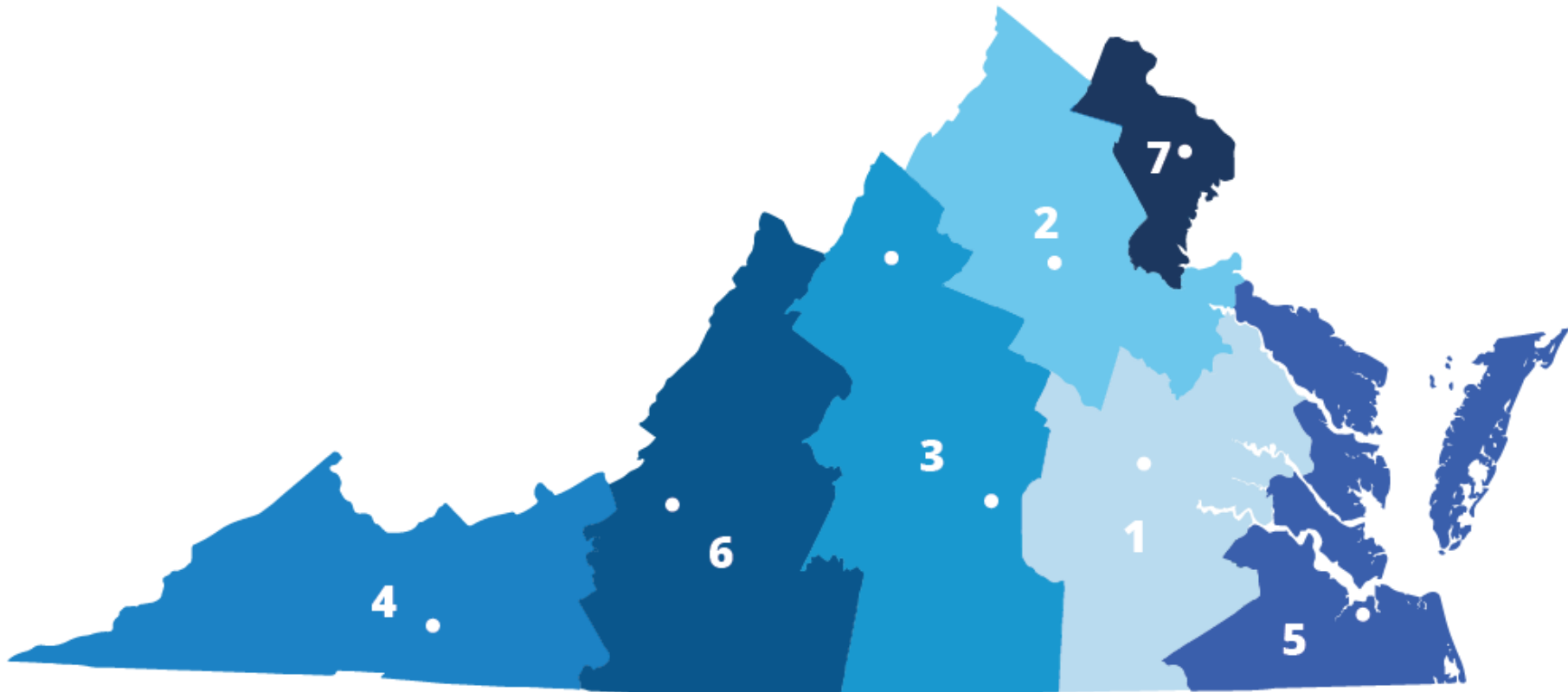
VDEM Disaster Services

- John Northon, VDEM

- Consists of Planning, Response Programs, Regional Support East, and Regional Support West
- Search and Rescue
- Hazardous Materials
- Provide support to local partners



VDEM Regions



Operational Awareness and Tips

- John Northon, VDEM

- Localities using WebEOC to place resources and supply request prior to event
- Having staff trained and using Crisis Track software
- Know your neighboring jurisdictions resources and have MOU's in place
- Understand your local evacuation clearance times to allow adequate time for residents to evacuate
- Inland regions need to be aware of inland flooding with tropical systems



Planning Assumptions

- John Northon, VDEM

- Personnel limitations are likely
- Resource limitations likely (in-state mutual aid & EMAC)
- Health protection measures add complexity and cost
- Economic impact of COVID-19 will increase dependence on government services
- Traditional sheltering strategies not preferred
- Coordination with public health is essential at every level of response
- Partnership with local businesses may help fill gap
- Many aspects of response and recovery will be virtual



Sheltering Considerations in the COVID Environment

- Michelle Pope, VDSS

- State Health Commissioner issued Order of Public Health Emergency
- Directs non-congregate sheltering of populations temporarily displaced due to evacuation orders
- Where non-congregate sheltering is not possible, congregate emergency shelters may operate and shall adhere to social distancing recommendations, enhanced sanitizing practices on common surfaces, and other appropriate guidance



Sheltering Considerations in the COVID Environment

- Michelle Pope, VDSS

- The CDC has indicated that the highly infectious nature of COVID-19 coupled with “the potential for pre-symptomatic transmission underscores the importance of social distancing, including the avoidance of congregate settings, to reduce COVID-19 spread.”
- The use of non-congregate evacuation sheltering is preferred because it, unlike congregate evacuation sheltering, sufficiently separates individuals from both the imminent hazard and the COVID-19 virus.
- Due to COVID-19, FEMA has pre-approved reimbursement for non-congregate sheltering for populations seeking emergency shelter in the Commonwealth of Virginia under Public Assistance (PA) Category B – Emergency Protective Measures.



Sheltering Considerations in the COVID Environment

- Michelle Pope, VDSS

- VDSS, DGS, and VDEM are actively working to establish contracts to support non-congregate sheltering during the 2020 hurricane season.
- We recognize that in the event of a catastrophic event, congregate sheltering may be necessary. Shelter capacity (space) and capability (staff, services, supplies) for such a large-scale or catastrophic event in the Commonwealth is an ongoing concern. As such, VDSS is working to adapt the existing State Coordinated Regional Shelter Plan and its supporting procedures to ensure they meet federal and state health guidance and restrictions such as physical distancing and the use of personal protective equipment.
- VDSS is actively coordinating with VDEM and VDH to ensure state coordinated regional shelter planning will meet the needs of the Commonwealth and minimize the impacts that COVID-19 might have on sheltering operations



Virginia Emergency Support Team

- Michelle Oblinsky, VDEM

- Central organization that coordinates disaster collaboration for the Commonwealth
- Led by VDEM personnel
- Comprised of over 40 state agencies and 250 people
- Commonwealth of Virginia Incident Management Team
- Voluntary Agency Liaison
- Training for state agencies
- EO 41 – involvement of all state agencies and employees in disaster response
- Private sector engagement



Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Efforts

- Dr. Lauren Powell, HEWG

- Working Groups
 - Health Equity Task Force
 - -Health Equity Working Group
 - Access and Functional Needs Working Group
 - Overarching Communications Working Group
- Targeted DEI social media/TV/radio messaging
- DEI review of 2020 Hurricane Guide in the COVID-19 environment



Public Communications Efforts

– Lauren Opett, VDEM

- ASL interpreter for all press conferences
- ASL translation of all Executive Orders
- Translation of Executive Orders and guidance into top 6 languages
Spanish, Korean, Mandarin, Arabic, Vietnamese, Tagalog
- Live Spanish translation of Governor's press conferences hosted on VDEM Facebook page
- Accessibility review of state digital properties supporting COVID-19 response



Public Communications Efforts

– Lauren Opett, VDEM

- PIO meetings before, during, and after disasters

Sharing of graphics, example here:

<https://www.vaemergency.gov/hurricanes/storm-season-graphics/>

- Want to develop more robust PIO list across the Commonwealth
- Need to build relationships early and often
- Partners in preparedness

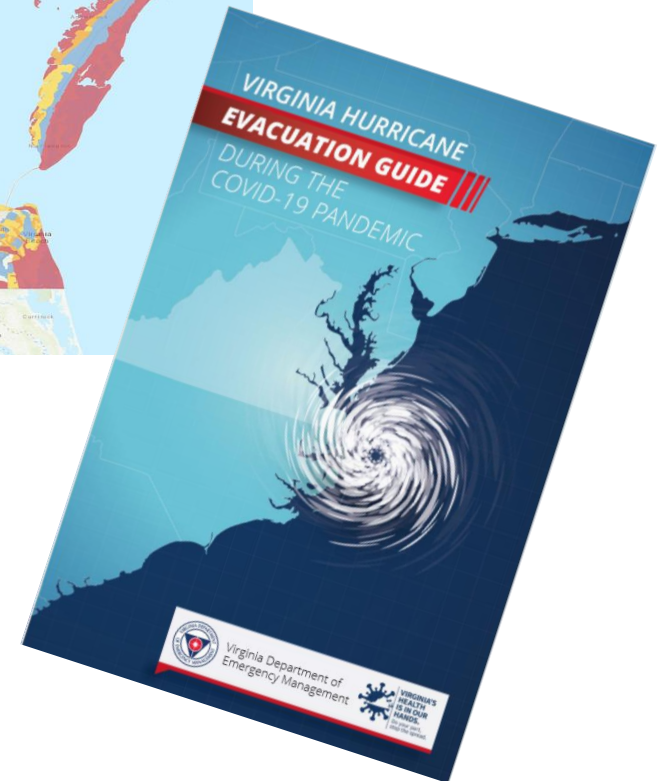
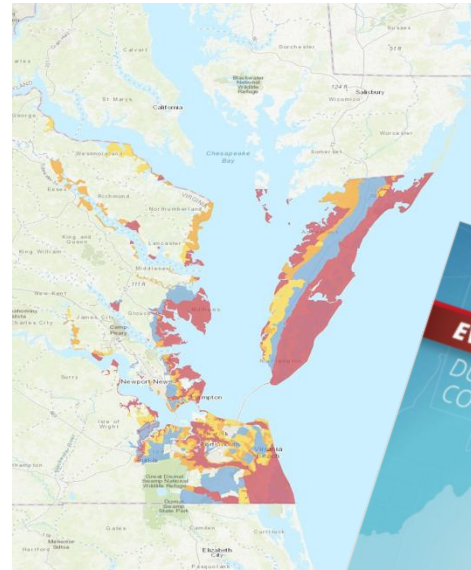
Partnering with non-profit organizations to reach and support vulnerable populations

Allows residents to receive information from sources they trust in their communities



Know Your Zone (KYZ) and Hurricane Guide During COVID-19 Pandemic

Know Your Zone is an awareness initiative that applies to roughly **1.25 million** residents in **23 localities** along Coastal Virginia, the region of the state most vulnerable to hurricanes and other tropical storms



Virginia Sales Tax Holiday

August 7-9, 2020

Eligible Items: <https://www.tax.virginia.gov/virginia-sales-tax-holiday>

- Hurricane and emergency preparedness products
 - Portable generators - \$1,000 or less per item
 - Gas-powered chainsaws - \$350 or less per item
 - Chainsaw accessories - \$60 or less per item
 - Other specified hurricane preparedness items - \$60 or less per item
- School supplies, clothing, and footwear
 - Qualified school supplies - \$20 or less per item
 - Qualified clothing and footwear - \$100 or less per item
- Energy Star™ and WaterSense™ products
 - Qualifying Energy Star™ or WaterSense™ products purchased for noncommercial home or personal use - \$2,500 or less per item



Questions?



THANK YOU!

