

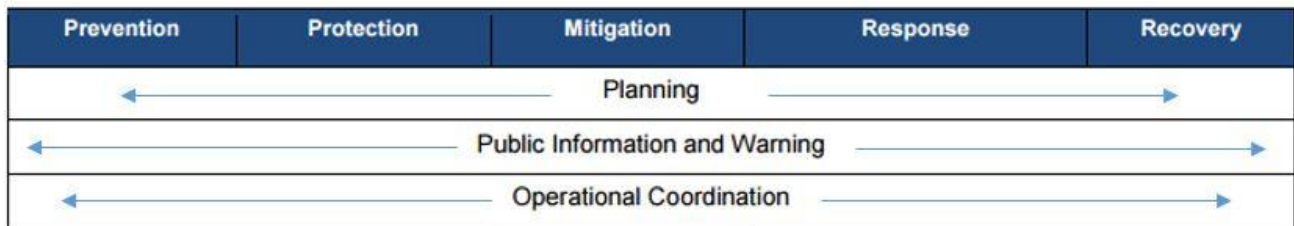


## NYCHA Emergency Preparedness: 2015 Year in Review

*Superstorm Sandy tested the preparedness and response capabilities of the entire City, including NYCHA. As part of NextGeneration NYCHA, the Authority is changing how it does business on every level including our approach to emergency preparedness. In NYCHA's commitment to protecting the welfare of its residents, the Authority has incorporated the lessons learned from Sandy and other best practices to fundamentally change emergency preparedness and operational resiliency.*

*Under NYCHA's new leadership, the Authority is working to overhaul its emergency preparedness to better align with the City coordinated efforts and the **National Preparedness Goal** framework set by FEMA, which is a vision for preparedness that identifies the core capabilities needed to address the greatest risks. The core capabilities serve as both preparedness tools and provide a common language for preparedness activities. They are highly interdependent and require the use of existing preparedness networks and activities, coordinate and unify efforts, improve training and exercise programs, promote innovation and ensure that the administrative, finance and logistics systems are in place to support these capabilities.*

### NYCHA priority capability areas within the National Preparedness Goal framework:



*In order to meet these core objectives, in June 2014 NYCHA created its first-ever Office of Emergency Preparedness (OEP) to develop and implement an all-hazards approach to minimizing disruptions to agency operations and services in the event of disasters or emergency events. OEP serves as the liaison to the New York City Emergency Management (NYCEM) and directs NYCHA's large-scale emergency preparedness response, and continuity programs through the development of NYCHA's first-ever master emergency plan—the Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan (CEMP).*

*In 2015, NYCHA enhanced emergency management programs to plan for, manage and recovery from major disasters and plans to make additional progress in 2016 and beyond.*

## 2015 Emergency Responses

In 2015, NYCHA was challenged with preparing for and responding to a number of large-scale events, demonstrating ways NYCHA is better prepared and ways we can continue to improve based on our responses to real emergencies.

### January 2015 – Winter Storm Juno

*In response to National Weather Service forecasts of a historic snowstorm, including blizzard-like conditions and up to 30 inches of snow hitting the NYC area on January 27, 2015, Mayor de Blasio signed [Mayoral Emergency Executive Order No. 87](#) instituting a travel ban effective 11:00 pm on Monday, January 26. Public transit and unauthorized emergency vehicles traveling on roadways were prohibited and schools were closed on Tuesday, January 27.*

*Citywide Coordination:* NYCHA was engaged in citywide response efforts and participated in daily planning meetings led by New York City Emergency Management (NYCEM) to coordinate with local, state, and federal emergency management representatives.

#### *NYCHA Planning & Response:*

- Adopted an Incident Command Structure (ICS) to oversee operational objectives, NYCHA field response, and financial tracking measures;
- Established a staffing schedule and created contingency plans to address any needs the disruption to mass transit may have caused. This included: coordinating with the City to have NYCHA staff added to the authorized travel list in light of the travel ban; contingency planning for shuttle services to be provided by City partners; and creating development-based carpooling strategies;
- Implemented structured snow and garbage removal plan including a fuel plan for snow removal equipment, light towers, and generators;
- Performed site inspections of developments to remove or mitigate hazards;
- Contracted snow removal workforce mainly from pool of residents;
- Prepared lists of vulnerable resident populations, including those with mobility impairments and individuals who use life sustaining equipment to facilitate emergency supportive services if needed.

#### *NYCHA Communications:*

- **With the field:** situational awareness reports with planning and response updates, snow removal progress, and citywide impacts were compiled and disseminated.
- **Staff:** weather updates and response notes were distributed via email; robocalls to staff with agency status and snow information were recorded and prepped for distribution.
- **Residents:** Flyers were posted with storm details and instructions for assistance (dial 311); robocalls to residents with information on agency response efforts and weather impacts were recorded and prepped for distribution.

#### *Assessment:*

- After Action Report surveys circulated by NYCHA's Office of Emergency Preparedness;
  - Post-event evaluation and discussion held to identify areas for improvement:
    - Comprehensive communications plan needed
- \*NYCHA Improvement Action:** Created an Emergency Public Information Plan to standardize communications in future events. Approved and instituted in June 2015.

### **September 2015 – Legionella at Melrose Houses**

*DOHMH identified a small cluster of Legionnaires' cases at NYCHA's Melrose Houses in the South Bronx, which prompted testing of the water distribution systems in the buildings of Melrose Houses. A preliminary positive test for the presence of Legionella pneumophila bacteria on September 2 prompted more conclusive testing and immediate remediation measures out of an abundance of caution.*

#### *NYCHA Planning & Response:*

- NYCHA established an Incident Command System structure immediately, and began coordinating its response and remediation efforts closely with DOHMH.
- In consultation with DOHMH, NYCHA implemented a phased response:
  - Since Legionella is found in warm water, NYCHA turned off the hot water supply to building with a preliminary positive on the same day as the test results.
  - A two-pronged remediation strategy was implemented:
    - Point-of-use filters – within 24 hours of the preliminary test results, nearly 2,000 showerheads and faucet filters that screen out Legionella and other particulate were procured and installed in 109 apartments with unprecedented cooperation from residents. Hot water was restored following installation.
    - Ionization Systems - filters were used while copper-silver ionization systems, which release ions that kill the Legionella bacteria, could be procured and delivered. Filters were disconnected as ionization systems were installed to the first building within two days of the preliminary test results.
  - On September 4, three additional buildings came back with preliminary positive Legionella test results. Hot water service was immediately suspended to the buildings out of an abundance of caution and copper-silver ionizations systems, which had been previously procured at the outset of the incident as a preparedness measure, were installed.
- Staff hours, supplies, and costs were closely tracked for accountability and to accurately report financial expenses.

#### *NYCHA Communications:*

- **Residents:** Within hours of the preliminary positive test results, NYCHA in partnership with DOHMH scheduled a community meeting that same day and posted flyers in buildings throughout the development and disseminated in person. Flyers contained notifications on hot water service, NYCHA's response, and Legionnaires' disease public health information. At the resident meeting, which was hosted by NYCHA's General Manager and the DOHMH Commissioner, residents were briefed on Legionella, preliminary test findings and NYCHA's response and provided an opportunity to ask questions (Spanish interpretation services were also provided.) A follow-up resident community meeting was held with NYCHA's operations staff to explain the filter installation process and reinforce the need for apartment access. Follow-up flyers on apartment access for filter installation were also disseminated. After test results were confirmed for all buildings, DOHMH and NYCHA officials held an English and Spanish telephone town hall over two days to answer questions and share the latest information with residents. A month after NYCHA's initial response, NYCHA held another town hall meeting to discuss new findings and the change in status of one test that had previously been tested positive to a negative.

- **Staff:** Melrose Houses employees and responding staff were briefed on the situation, command objectives and safety considerations in daily meetings. Follow up meetings were held with Melrose staff to provide additional information and training on the remediation systems installed. NYCHA's Office of Safety and Security sent an Authority-wide email to all employees to communicate NYCHA's response at Melrose Houses and provide general public health information on the disease. Daily status reports were sent to NYCHA managers, supervisors, deputy directors, directors, and executive staff.
- **Stakeholders:** NYCHA alerted elected officials and shared employee communications with Union leadership to keep them informed of the situation; press was also provided with updates and information.

*Assessment:*

- After Action surveys circulated by NYCHA's Office of Emergency Preparedness
- Post-event evaluation and discussion held, identifying areas for improvement:
  - \***NYCHA Improvement Action:** A *Legionella Bacteria Remediation Annex* was created and approved for the CEMP. The annex provides organization and structure to NYCHA's response and remediation efforts to the presence of *Legionella* bacteria in our properties.

**September 2015 – Papal Visit**

*Designated a National Special Security Event by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, the Papal visit to New York City in conjunction with the UN General Assembly was the largest security challenge in City history. On September 25, the Papal visit included a visit to the Our Lady Queen of Angels School located across the street from NYCHA's Jefferson Houses in East Harlem. Security measures also impacted staff and residents in nearby developments.*

*Citywide Coordination:* NYCHA participated in daily citywide planning meetings. The Secret Service served as the lead federal agency for the design and implementation of the operational security plan. A Multiagency Communications Center (MACC)—a source for all real time information sharing to all participating security agencies and a Joint Information Center (JIC) to ensure unified messaging and communications were established. NYCHA created staffing plans for representation at the MACC and JIC in the event it was requested.

*NYCHA Planning & Response:*

- NYCHA established an Incident Command System (ICS) structure to oversee its planning and response activities.
- Three Incident Action Plans (IAPs) were developed and distributed to the NYCHA Emergency Preparedness All Call List. NYCHA's Emergency Preparedness All Call List that reaches NYCHA managers, supervisors, deputy directors, directors, and executive staff among others for uniformed cross-agency awareness of emergency information and activities.
- Operations conducted manhole inspections and sealing operations at the request of NYPD.
- Staff working in the immediate area of the Papal visit were instructed to review NYCHA's Emergency Procedure Manual specifically, Appendix G – Stoppage of Public Transportation and Appendix J-Central Office and Satellite Office Emergency Procedures, and evacuation assembly points as required by Standard Procedure 040:04:4, Fire Drills.

- Secret Service and the NYPD required three parking lots to be cleared for their purposes, which required NYCHA to identify 95 temporary parking spaces for permit holders and ensure proper notification.
- NYCHA communicated with employees and residents about security measures, including parking restrictions on NYCHA property, road closures and ID requirements for access.

*NYCHA Communications:*

- Prior to the Papal visit, flyer notifications in English and Spanish containing relevant information on the visit and potential disruptions were distributed to NYCHA residents and parking permit holders at Jefferson Houses, Johnson Houses and Washington/Lexington Houses.
- All affected resident parking permit holders also received two rounds of robocalls recorded in English and Spanish about parking restrictions.
- NYCHA staff and residents in the immediate Papal visit area, including Jefferson Houses, Corsi Houses, 335 East 111th Street, Clinton Houses, Johnson Houses, Taft Houses, King Towers, Milbank-Frawley, and Lehman Village were notified via flyers with Papal visit information, street closures, and requirements for carrying photo ID.

**October 2015 – Hurricane Joaquin**

*At the end of September, Hurricane Joaquin was a Category 4 Hurricane in the Caribbean. With a significant amount of uncertainty of Joaquin’s track and intensity, NYCHA, along with NYC Emergency Management and additional City agencies started coordinating preparations for any potential impacts of Joaquin, until the trajectory of the storm no longer indicated a risk of direct contact.*

*Citywide coordination:* NYCHA participated in more than 10 City convened conference calls to discuss weather updates, staffing, logistics, transportation, food and data. NYCHA sent staff to the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) at NYCEM and staff to the Joint Information Center (JIC) as part of storm preparedness to support New Yorkers information needs.

*NYCHA Planning & Response:*

- NYCHA established an Incident Command System (ICS) to manage the event.
- Equipment was mobilized, staffing capabilities and facility readiness was assessed, and emergency contracts were reviewed.
- Vulnerable populations lists (persons with Disabled, Access or Functional needs (DAFN) residents and other relevant resident demographics) were prepared to facilitate emergency supportive services if needed.
- NYCHA mapped population and development data and locations of potential emergency equipment, such as pumps and generators.
- NYCHA created a staff dorm and feeding plan to facilitate uninterrupted NYCHA response.
- Capital, Planning and Development assessed construction projects and sidewalk scaffolding to identify any issues and took protective measures to shore up sites.
- NYCHA reviewed and addressed any potential risks at Sandy reconstruction sites. Temporary electrical repairs were performed at O’Dwyer Gardens and trenches were secured at Coney Island Houses.

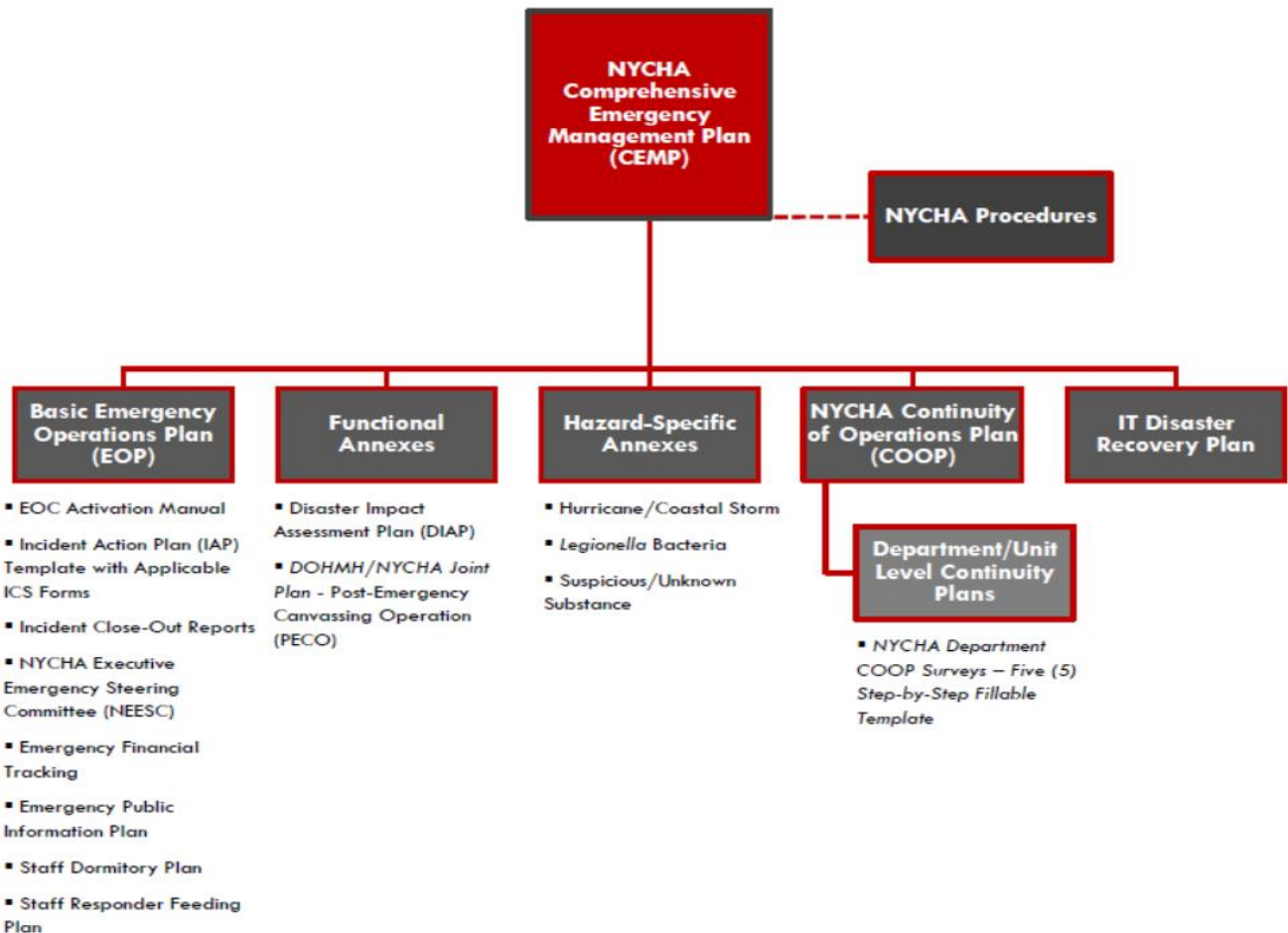
*NYCHA Communications:*

- **Residents:** Resident notifications with pre-storm information and preparedness were refined and translated into Spanish, Russian and Chinese for distribution. Information about NYCHA's preparations was also distributed to tenant association presidents and community programs stakeholders.
- **Staff:** Daily incident action plans (IAPs) were created and disseminated to executives and NYCHA staff. Situational awareness reports (an average of six updates throughout the day) were distributed to the NYCHA Emergency Preparedness All Call List, NYCHA's communication network for uniformed cross-agency awareness on emergency activities and background.
- **Stakeholders:** Elected officials and key stakeholders were updated on NYCHA's pre-storm actions.

## 2015 Emergency Planning

NYCHA’s “central hub” for large-scale emergency planning—the CEMP (the Comprehensive Emergency Management plan), initiated in 2014, integrates multiple plans intended to manage all the hazards NYCHA could face. As new threats to NYCHA’s people and property surface, new plans are developed and synced into the CEMP. It outlines the roles and responsibilities of operational personnel and support providers and how those activities complement others. The first all-encompassing emergency management playbook in NYCHA’s history, this massive undertaking will develop over multiple years.

*\*Graphic below displays the prioritized Planning Components for 2014 – 2016; it does not represent all of the plans that will make up the complete NYCHA CEMP*



In 2015, NYCHA updated more than ten detailed CEMP component plans, including:

- **Emergency Public Information Plan**— specifies how critical information will be disseminated to NYCHA's employees, residents, and other stakeholders.
- **Executive Emergency Steering Committee** - designed to bring together cross-agency NYCHA executives to address emergency planning and response operations.
- **Standardized Incident Action Plans (AIP) and Close-out Reports** – outlines specific incident management hierarchy, planning, response, and recovery roles and responsibilities identified by staff

name, specific objectives and operational emphasis, daily updates, resource tracking processes and paperwork, sign-in sheets, and financial projections and expenditures.

- **Disaster Impact Assessment Plan**– details operations that are necessary to identify the impact of an event, quantify losses, facilitate repair work, and to restore utility services in order to return or preserve NYCHA properties to a safe, sanitary, and decent condition as soon as possible.
- **Post-Event Canvassing Operations (PECO) NYCHA Annex**– joint effort with the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene that specifies how the City will identify NYCHA residents who are sheltering-in-place and in need of evacuation and / or critical services.
- **Notification & Warning Plan**– specifies emergency alert messaging and methods to quickly share critical information with staff and stakeholders.
- **Emergency Financial Tracking and Cost Projection**– identifies accurate expenditures and promotes fiscally responsible decision making.
- **Staff Dormitory Plan**– identifies support operations necessary for the establishment and management of a congregate sleeping area for all NYCHA staff pre-positioned for response to a large scale event.
- **Staff Responder Feeding Plan**– identifies the process of procurement, preparation, and provision of meals to NYCHA responders necessary to facilitate continuous emergency operations.
- **Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP)** – overhauling NYCHA approach to planning, OEP instituted the direct involvement of Authority-wide staff and the creation of step by step surveys that NYCHA departments completed to define the actions, resources, and procedures **each unit** will need to ensure the execution of their essential functions.

## 2015 Emergency Training

NYCHA's Office of Emergency Preparedness (OEP) has created and facilitated internal training and exercises on NYCHA's emergency planning and response to public health concerns, including suspicious substances, high-heat emergencies, hurricanes and damage assessments.

OEP conducted a joint Full-Scale Post Disaster Community Outreach Exercise with the NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DOHMH) on Tuesday, September 30, 2014 at Meltzer Towers. OEP has also participated in numerous external training and exercise opportunities including the Mayor's Executive-Level Winter Weather, Extreme Heat, and Coastal Storm tabletop exercises, the American Red Cross's New York Shakes Community-Based Organization Functional Exercise, the NYC Department of Correction Annual COOP Tabletop Exercise, the City's Hurricane Sandy After-Action Review, the New York City Emergency Management's 2014 and 2015 Citywide COOP Conferences, and the International Association of Emergency Managers 2015 Conference.

**Integration:** OEP has successfully coordinated with local, state and federal partner agencies and volunteer, community-based, non-profit entities to have the post-disaster needs of New Yorkers who reside in NYCHA developments formally incorporated into City plans. Through integration, issues such as the identification of post-emergency needs and the timely referrals to appropriate service providers, emergency shelter, disruptions to food supply, and the distribution of temporarily unavailable life-sustaining commodities such as food, water, ice, and baby formula can be specifically addressed.