

OFFICE OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

2024 YEAR IN REVIEW

PHASES OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT



This report provides major accomplishments and projects from the Larimer County Office of Emergency Management in 2024.

BY THE NUMBERS



4

INCIDENTS



47

PARTNER ENGAGEMENTS



21

COMMUNITY HUBS



24

COMMUNITY OUTREACH EVENTS



21

PREPAREDNESS PRESENTATIONS & WORKSHOPS



23

EMERGENCY OPERATIONS CENTER TRAINING & EXERCISES



LARIMER COUNTY

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT



Dare to Prepare Education Program

Larimer OEM started the Dare to Prepare in September of 2023. Dare to Prepare is a 16-hour educational program focused on sharing essential concepts of basic preparedness, personal resilience, disaster 101, civic engagement, community building, and leadership to residents of Larimer County. The program's comprehensive topics aim to instill confidence and readiness in responding to and recovering from disasters that may impact our region.



Larimer Fire Agency Grant Program

Larimer County provides \$30,000 yearly through the Larimer Fire Agency Grant Program to local fire departments and districts to assist with grant matching needs and to provide support for local fire programs. In 2024, this grant helped to firefighter attendance at the Fire on the Plains Academy and fire academy, new turnout gear, and the purchase of replacement nozzles, thermal imaging cameras, fire pumps, and gas monitors.

2024 Recipients include:

- Crystal Lakes Fire Protection District
- Front Range Fire Rescue
- Glen Haven Volunteer Fire Department
- Lyons Fire Protection District
- Pinewood Springs Fire Protection District
- Rist Canyon Volunteer Fire Department
- Wellington Fire Protection District



Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Accessibility Plan (IDEA) 2024- 2026

The Larimer County Office of Emergency Management Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Accessibility Strategic Plan was developed to outline activities, partnerships, and action items required to ensure a more equitable and inclusive emergency management program that better serves the needs of the community in all phases of disaster.



2024 Water and Wastewater Supply Chain Resilience Plan



Supply Chain Planning

In 2024, Larimer OEM hosted a few interns who were instrumental in creating comprehensive documents as part of our supply chain planning efforts. The two lifeline plans that were completed this year include a fuel plan and a water/wastewater resilience plan.

Access & Functional Needs Working Group

Larimer OEM began facilitating an Access & Functional Needs Working Group of non-government organizations, people with lived experience, and emergency management partners to help address access and functional needs in Larimer County emergencies.





Community Mitigation Grant Program

Following the success of 2022 and 2023, the Board of County Commissioners allocated an additional \$50,000 to the Community Mitigation Grant Program. This allowed Larimer OEM to award funding to 18 different communities from throughout Larimer County totaling \$100,000 in awards. This program empowers community members to take action on hazard mitigation projects.

The Community Mitigation Grant Program

Community-led mitigation projects. Grant program created by Larimer County and managed by the Office of Emergency Management.

For more information on the Community Mitigation Grant Program visit tinyurl.com/LarimerCMG or scan the QR code





Community Wildfire Defense Grant



In 2024, Larimer County OEM was awarded \$9,696,438 by the United States Forest Service through the Community Wildfire Defense Grant for the Red Feather Lakes area. This grant will implement wildfire mitigation treatments in open space, along roadways and on private properties; provide education on home ignition zone concepts and mitigation work to establish or improve defensible space; create improvements to evacuation routes, plans and procedures; enhance community capacity of dealing with post-treatment woody biomass; create improvements to community wildfire preparedness; and build social capital to improve community resilience.

Woody Biomass Strategy

Larimer County has partnered with a consulting organization to research the challenges with woody biomass and to produce a report that provides a nuanced understanding of the challenge locally, identifies potential solutions, and offers an actionable strategy for local implementation in Larimer County moving forward. While this study and strategy project continues into next year, a [Larimer County Woody Biomass Estimate Dashboard](#) has been developed as an interactive tool that provides an estimate of woody biomass across Larimer County

Colorado Strategic Wildfire Action Program (COSWAP)

Larimer OEM was awarded an additional \$1,100,000 through the Colorado Strategic Wildfire Action Program for cross-boundary landscape mitigation work. This grant was submitted in partnership between the Larimer County Office of Emergency Management, Larimer Conservation District, Coalition for the Poudre River Watershed, Colorado Parks and Wildlife, Big Thompson Watershed Coalition, and the Loveland Fire Rescue Authority.



Alexander Mountain Fire

At approximately 11am on July 29, 2024, the Larimer Office of Emergency Management (OEM) received a report of an active wildfire on Alexander Mountain west of Sylvan Dale Ranch and north of U.S. Highway 34. The fire burned a total of 9,668 acres and destroyed 54 buildings, 29 of which were residential structures. All evacuation orders were lifted as of 10:48 a.m. on August 12, exactly two weeks from the time the Alexander Mountain Fire was first reported to dispatch. The Larimer Regional EOC was activated until August 12th and then transitioned to a recovery organization.



Photo Credit: USDA



Pearl Fire

At approximately 12pm on 9/16/2024, a wildfire was reported in Crystal Lakes. The fire burned approximately 128 acres by the time it was contained on 9/21/2024. The Larimer Regional EOC was activated to support response efforts. Larimer County Sheriff's Office determined that the fire originated on private property and was human caused.

Public Safety Power Shutoff

Due to high temperatures and extreme winds, Xcel Energy conducted a Public Safety Power Shutoff (PSPS) in Larimer County on April 6, 2024. The Larimer Regional EOC provided community support throughout this event.



2024 Alexander Mountain Fire

As soon as the fire was considered contained, a large recovery group began meeting to discuss recovery needs, challenges and opportunities. This Recovery Collaborative consisted of eight work groups:

- Water Recovery
- Road and Infrastructure
- Public and Environmental Health
- Planning and Building
- Individual Needs
- Unmet Needs
- Economic Health
- Mitigation and Resilience

ESTIMATED
COUNTY
COSTS



\$1,200,000

Because of the threat to the watershed and water quality, actions were taken immediately to mitigate this risk. Larimer OEM managed a hazard tree removal project along roadways in the fire area to ensure egress and ingress and to prepare for winter season. And multiple partner organizations provided assistance directly to individuals impacted by the wildfire. Recovery will continue in the Spring of 2025.

CAMERON PEAK FIRE & POST-FIRE FLOODING

ESTIMATED
COUNTY
COSTS



\$10,825,839

\$25,609,446

TOTAL
DISASTER
COSTS

Other Disasters

Larimer County continues recovery from the Cameron Peak Fire with post-fire mitigation efforts. For the first time since the fire, 2024 did not see any losses due to post-fire flooding.

The COVID-19 disaster was closed out in 2024, and Larimer County continues to work with FEMA on reimbursements for both COVID-19 and the 2013 Flood.



Connecting Our Communities Micro-Grant

The Connecting Our Communities Micro-Grant encourages more social connection and increased community resilience throughout Larimer County. Awardees for the Connecting Our Communities Micro-Grant for 2024:

- Poudre Valley Mobile Home Park
- Glacier View Fire Protection District
- Nueva Vida Mobile Home Park



Larimer OEM Community Resilience Survey

In 2024, Larimer OEM conducted the annual Community Resilience Survey to understand the level of countywide community resilience. There were 242 survey responses including English and Spanish responses. Below are a few key findings from the survey:

- More respondents indicated they had people in their neighborhoods that the trust this year over last year's results by 15%. A whopping 40% of respondents never interact with their neighbors.
- Within the Spanish-speaking population, we saw a trend of higher social connectivity than with the English-speaking population.
- 63% of respondents DO NOT believe there are adequate systems in place for people with disabilities or for those who are unable to self-evacuate in an emergency situation. This is a decrease of 13% since last year.
- 64% of respondents feel the Office of Emergency Management provides opportunities and resources to alleviate disruptions during a crisis in the community. This is an increase of 16%.



Larimer Connects Community Hubs

Larimer Connects Community Hubs are physical locations that build community resilience through information dissemination and resource sharing. Larimer OEM added three additional hubs in 2024, with a total of 21 hubs throughout unincorporated Larimer County. 11 of these locations store sheltering supplies in the event resources are unable to get into the area.

Hurricanes Helene and Milton

Two of the Larimer OEM team deployed to Florida to assist with the response and recovery from Hurricane Helene and Hurricane Milton. Both Camille Millard and Lori Hodges worked in local Emergency Operations Centers to support emergency management staff.



The Larimer OEM Team met once both Lori and Camille returned to Larimer County and reviewed the lessons learned from both deployments. These lessons were presented to the Board of County Commissioners in a worksession to report on the actions taken to improve Larimer County OEM systems and procedures for future emergencies and disasters. Additionally, Larimer OEM was able to illustrate to the Board the current strengths within the county OEM system that were able to be utilized while deployed to help other organizations.



COLORADO
Department of Agriculture

Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) Response

Lori Hodges also deployed to assist Weld County and the Colorado Department of Agriculture with the response to an outbreak of Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza at multiple dairies and poultry facilities. This gave Lori the opportunity to dust off her Planning Section Chief skills as part of a local Incident Management Team.



Kohl Parrott

Kohl obtained his Certified Emergency Manager credential through the International Association of Emergency Managers



Camille Millard

Camille was awarded the Rookie of the Year Award by the CO Emergency Management Association

Lori Hodges

The OEM Director published a book that was officially released in 2024 about her experiences and lessons learned working as a paramedic and firefighter in Summit County, Colorado.

Shaking in the Forest:
Finding Light in the Darkness



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2025 GOALS



Larimer OEM will implement these exercises and programs to meet established goals for 2025.



Formalize Regional EOC

Larimer County, Windsor, and Loveland will continue to work cooperatively on regional EOC processes and procedures. This includes formalizing processes and procedures, enhancing technology, and standardizing systems.



Supply Chain Planning

Larimer OEM will continue to develop the various components of a Supply Chain Plan in 2024 to address supply chain needs and priorities during a disaster incident or event that impact the county. The Fuel and Water Plans were completed in 2024. Additional lifeline areas will be completed in 2025.



Integrated Emergency Management Curriculum (IEMC)

Larimer OEM will participate with municipal OEMs and partner organizations in a week-long training at the Emergency Management Institute in Emmitsburg, Maryland as part of FEMA's Integrated Emergency Management Curriculum. This includes several classroom activities as well as multiple exercises to test our systems.



Dare to Prepare / Education Programs

Larimer County OEM will continue to expand its preparedness and education programs in 2025. This will include enhancements to the Dare to Prepare program to include online and in-person options, as well as offering supplemental education programs and classes.



Formalize Access & Functional Needs Program

Larimer OEM will continue working with partners to strengthen the Access & Functional Needs (AFN) Program in 2025. The AFN Program includes an AFN working group and workshops/seminars on AFN needs and opportunities.



Mitigation Programs

Larimer OEM will continue working with partners throughout Larimer County on mitigation opportunities, including grants management, contract work, community engagement, and mitigation education. Larimer OEM will also continue to move forward on recommendations to the Board of Commissioners on a woody biomass strategy.