# Tribal Waste JOURNAL

## Managing Disaster Debris on Tribal Lands

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*Fawn Sharp, former president of the Quinault Nation and president of the National Congress of American Indians, has worked on climate adaptation efforts for decades. Courtesy of Josué Rivas.*

# Disaster Debris Management: Part of Adapting to a Changing World

As the Tribal Solid Waste and Pollution Prevention Coordinator for EPA Region 5, Dolly Tong has been speaking with tribes about their environmental concerns for more than 25 years. Recently, she spotted a trend.

> ***"Many tribes have been bringing up climate adaptation as one of their top environmental priorities, says Ms. Tong. Just seeing that made me wonder how tribal nations are addressing debris and waste management as well as systems for climate adaptation. I had not really seen those two areas connected in their environmental planning documents."***

The two areas are indeed connected. Disaster debris management (DDM) involves creating procedures and guidelines for managing debris produced by a natural disaster. Ideally, it is conducted in a coordinated, environmentally responsible, and cost-effective way. A changing climate increases the need for DDM as disasters have been occurring with more intensity and frequency, particularly on tribal lands. Research shows that tribal communities experience increased exposure to climate change risks[1] and that the effects of a changing climate force some to abandon traditional lifestyles or methods of survival.[2] Often, tribes are also isolated from the resources that can help or have limited resources at their disposal.

Without any prior planning, the combination of a changing climate, increased disasters and the resulting debris can cause chaos. Tribes scramble to find sites where the community can collect debris – which is sometimes hazardous – and prepare it for removal. They must quickly research facilities that will accept the materials gathered, as some waste or recycling facilities only accept certain types of debris. They face impassable roads that block their ability to access emergency services or trucks willing to haul materials offsite. They do all of this in the stressful hours following a natural disaster when communication services may be down, community safety may be threatened, and funding for any recovery work may be nonexistent.Yet, that is where

1 Farrell, J., Berne Burow, P., McConnell, K., Bayham, J., Whyte, K., & Koss, G. (2021, October 29). Effects of land dispossession and forced migration on ... - science. Science. Retrieved July 13, 2022, from https://www.science.org/doi/10.1126/science.abe4943

2 U.S. Climate Resilience Toolkit. Tribal Nations | U.S. Climate Resilience Toolkit. (2020, September 28). Retrieved July 13, 2022, from https://toolkit.climate.gov/topics/tribal-nations

Ms. Tong sees hope – in her experience, tribes are starting to use proactive planning to adapt to climate change. And they're using DDM as one tool to do so.

This was the case for the Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe. Monte Fronk is the Tribal Emergency Coordinator for the Mille Lacs Band. He worked with Ms. Tong and other EPA staff to put together a simple Disaster Debris Management Plan (DDMP), a document created prior to a disaster that outlines a tribe's guidelines and procedures for managing disaster debris. It was also the case for Mark Junker, the Tribal Response Coordinator with Sac & Fox Nation who put together a simple DDMP and has used it to quickly get the tribe back to normal after everything from devastating wind incidents to train derailments. Mr. Fronk and Mr. Junker's stories are covered in detail later in this journal. Both serve as examples of tribes using DDM to prepare their lands, and their people, for an uncertain future.

### How Can Disaster Debris Management Benefit Tribes?

1. Addresses immediate threats to the lives, public health, and safety of the community.
2. Protects from further damage to natural and built environments.
3. Ensures a quicker economic recovery of the tribal nation.
4. Avoids creating unsustainable landfills mounting with each new disaster.
5. Protects and preserves culture of sovereign tribal nations.
6. Opens door for mutually beneficial collaboration with federal agencies and neighboring communities.

### What Can Tribes Learn from This Tribal Waste Journal?

There is no one size fits all approach for DDM. Each tribe will need to respond to a unique set of conditions leveraging specific resources and capacity. Consequently, this issue of EPA's Tribal Waste Journal aims to support tribes' plans for DDM in a way that fits the needs of their communities.

**This issue offers:**

- Unique DDM considerations for tribes and tribal lands
- Considerations for designing a DDMP that is easy to use and scalable for the time, staff, and resources available
- Tips for collaborating with federal agencies on DDM
- Information on DDM funding and resources
- Stories from tribes who have taken DDM steps and reaped the benefits for their communities

Although each tribe's situation will be unique, there are a few standard considerations that those working on DDMPs will want to consider. These considerations are noted in the following section to aid communities in customizing planning efforts.

*House destroyed by flooding.*

# II Considerations for Tribes Engaging in Disaster Debris Management

Unpredictable natural disasters often thrust tribes into facing debris management efforts that are more complex, larger in scale or simply unlike situations they have faced in the past. To assist them in crafting DDMPs informed by both collective knowledge and the unique needs of their communities, this section highlights some of the situations and challenges tribes may encounter.

**Generally, natural disaster debris can include:**

- Asbestos-containing material (e.g., asbestos pipe wrap, siding, and ceiling and floor tiles);
- Ammunition and explosives;
- Animal carcasses;
- Ash;
- Asphalt;
- Building contents (e.g., furniture, personal property);
- Commingled debris (i.e., a mixture of many debris types, such as C&D debris, vegetative debris, household hazardous waste, and building contents);
- C&D debris (e.g., mixed metals, masonry materials, concrete, lumber, asphalt shingles);
- Drums and tanks;
- Electronic waste (e-waste) (e.g., televisions, computers, cell phones);
- Food waste (e.g., rotten food from grocery stores, restaurants, and residences);
- Hazardous waste (e.g., batteries, pesticides, solvents, paint thinners, mercury-containing devices);
- Household hazardous waste (e.g., household cleaners, freezer and refrigerator coolant);
- Lead-based paint;
- Medical waste;
- Metals;
- Mixed waste (i.e., waste containing both radioactive and hazardous waste components);
- Municipal solid waste (MSW);
- Scrap tires;
- Soils, sediments, and sandbags;
- Treated wood (e.g., utility poles, fencing, decks);
- Used oil and oil-contaminated waste;
- Vegetative debris (or green waste) (e.g., uprooted trees, branches, stumps, leaves);
- Vehicles and vessels; and
- White goods (i.e., household appliances, such as stoves, refrigerators, washers/dryers, and air conditioner units).

### Larger Quantity and Variety of Debris

Studies show natural disasters can generate enough debris from a community to account for five to 15 years' worth of typical waste.[3] The increased intensity and frequency of these already unpredictable disasters means that figure could be higher in some cases. Disasters can also generate many types of debris with varying management requirements. Tribes are the experts on the types of disasters their communities are likely to experience, but there are some trends in terms of the resulting debris. For example, tribes on the Atlantic and Gulf Coasts may often face hurricanes, which typically generate vegetative debris, construction and demolition (C&D) debris, building contents, animal carcasses, and displaced soils and sediments. Those in the West who are more often confronted with earthquakes and wildfires may have to deal with asphalt, ash, C&D debris, and building contents.

> **How DDMPs can help:** By pre-planning with their communities before a disaster occurs, tribes can estimate the types and quantities of debris that could be generated by common natural disasters. Several tools listed in the Resources section of this journal can assist with forecasting. After forecasting, tribes can identify waste management facilities that will accept their anticipated debris and have capacity to deal with surges during disasters.

### Larger Area of Impact

As disasters increase in intensity, they can cause more damage across tribal lands. Tribes may experience an increased need for dispersed emergency services, more segments of the community lacking access to main roads, and increased requests for debris removal assistance, among other potential needs.

> **How DDMPs can help:** Tribes can plan how to scale up services in the event of a large-scale disaster. For example, tribes may plan to designate staff or volunteer lead coordinators in various regions of the community or set up contracts with multiple debris removal and waste management facilities in the event that their usual providers reach maximum capacity during a disaster.

### Insufficient Capacity at Waste Management Facilities

The facilities that tribes typically use for recycling, treatment, storage, and disposal of waste may be impacted by a natural disaster. In addition to suffering facility damage, loss of communication channels, or other disruptions to their service, waste management facilities may lack the capacity for a surge in debris caused by a disaster.

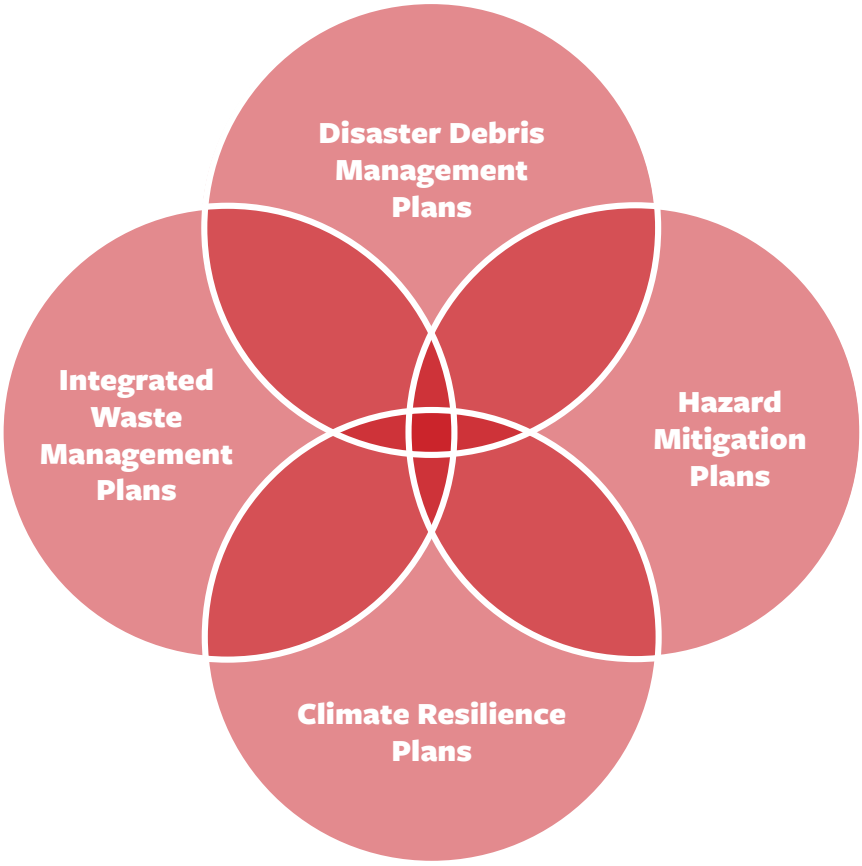
> **How DDMPs can help:** Tribes can use their DDMPs to prepare for service changes at waste management facilities. These plans can include information estimating capacity, location, key contacts, alternate means of communication, and hours of operation for each facility. EPA's Disaster Debris Recovery Tool (https://www.epa.gov/large-scale-residential-demolition/disaster-debris-recovery-tool) and Incident Waste Decision Support Tool (https://iwaste.epa.gov/) can help tribes identify facilities in their area. Learn more about these tools in the Resources section of this journal.

3 Bagenstose, K. (2022, March 22). "As climate change brings more natural disasters, debris piles up-increasing health risks." Phys.org. Retrieved July 13, 2022, from https://phys.org/news/2022-03-climate-natural-disasters-debris-piles.html

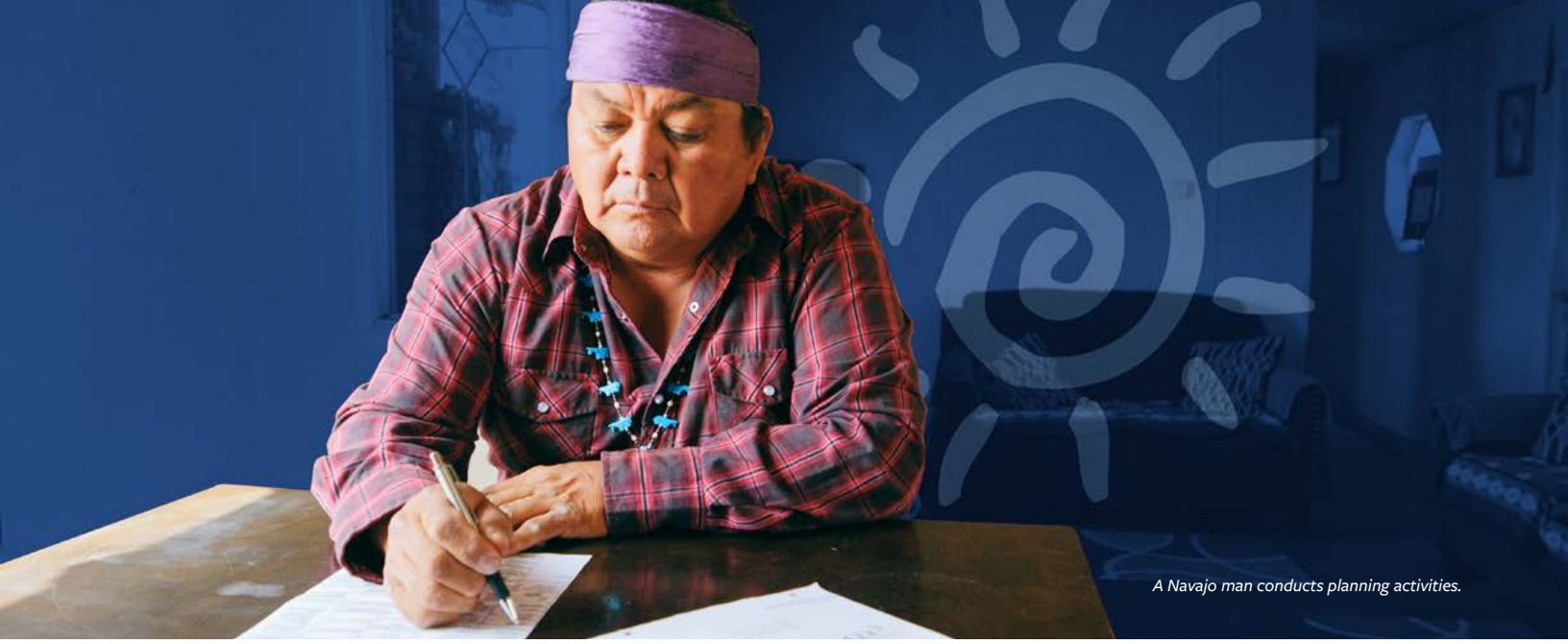
## The Overlap of Climate Adaptation and Disaster Debris Management

Climate adaptation means taking action to prepare for and adjust to both the current and projected impacts of climate change.[4] Many tribal communities have created formal assessment and adaptation plans and strategies that are publicly available through the National Congress of American Indians (https://www.ncai.org/ptg/climate-action-tribal-approaches). Understanding that climate change is expected to increase the number of extreme weather events, tribes are incorporating DDMPs into their plans for climate adaptation, hazard mitigation, and/or integrated waste management plans. For this reason, the DDMP should be written in a manner that it is both a stand-alone document and can also serve as an insert or appendix to any of these planning tools.

> **How DDMPs can help:** As tribes consider their overall climate adaptation plans, DDMPs can supplement those plans with actionable ways to respond to some of the least predictable and most jarring results of climate change.




4 Source: https://www.epa.gov/climate-adaptation/climate-adaptation-and-epas-role



*A Navajo man conducts planning activities.*

# II Disaster Debris Management Planning for Tribes: Key Steps

DDM planning is scalable. Tribes all over the U.S. have found success by starting with the basics and scaling down, or up, depending on available time, staff, and resources. This section outlines the steps involved in crafting a basic plan, beginning with the activities that stand to provide the greatest benefit, no matter the level of available resources. Tribes interested in more robust, comprehensive planning can consult EPA's "Planning for Natural Disaster Debris" guidance (https://www.epa.gov/homeland-security-waste/guidance-about-planning-natural-disaster-debris).

Each tribal community will have different needs, resources, and vulnerabilities to consider. Tribes will benefit from using the questions posed in this section to guide their thinking on core DDM needs while considering other questions that are unique to their communities.

## Step 1:

### Consult with community members who can assist with planning and who are likely to be involved in DDM implementation.

Which members of your community have information or resources about debris management-related activities? Which community members have been involved in previous disaster recovery efforts? Start by talking to them and gathering information about existing and available resources. Consider speaking with those connected to:

- Tribal Council
- Tribal Elders
- Community members
- Transportation
- Sanitation
- Emergency response
- Environmental health
- Public health
- Public works
- Zoning
- Industry and business

What role will each community member play during disaster response? Consider assigning these roles, as appropriate.

## Step 2:

### Identify the type and amount of waste your community may generate during various disasters.

- What types of disasters are likely to happen in your community?
- Consider the industrial, agricultural, residential, and commercial aspects of the community. Also consider what types of waste might be generated. How are these wastes addressed in your tribe's integrated waste management plan or hazard mitigation plan?
- Do any federal or local laws or regulations apply to the potential waste?
  - » Consider including a contact list of tribal, federal, state, and local environmental officials who you can consult if guidance on regulations is needed during cleanup. This list could also include officials representing transportation, emergency response, public health, public works, agricultural, and zoning agencies, as well as FEMA and the United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE). Contacts for EPA's regional tribal waste coordinators can be found on EPA's website at https://www.epa.gov/tribal-lands/forms/contact-us-about-tribal-waste-management).
- How much waste may be generated?
  - » Typically, it is challenging to predict waste quantity estimates that are completely accurate. However, understanding possible ranges of debris that may be generated provides valuable information that can help determine waste management needs. Here are some best practices.
    - **Consider past disasters** in your community or nearby communities to get an idea of the types and quantities of debris that may be generated.
    - **Use forecasting tools** to create data-backed estimates. EPA's Waste Materials Estimator can generate estimates for the types and quantities of materials that may require decontamination and/or disposal following a disaster. This tool can generate waste estimates for open spaces and various structures. Access it at https://iwaste.epa.gov/waste-materials-estimator. In addition, FEMA's Hazus-MH program estimates potential damage and economic losses from earthquakes, hurricanes, and floods. Find more information and instructions for downloading the latest version of Hazus-MH for free at https://www.fema.gov/hazus.
    - **Consider runoff debris** that may enter your community following a disaster from either an upland or upstream source.
- Can the amount of potentially generated waste be reduced in advance by reducing the source of the waste? What strategies have been explored in your tribe's integrated waste management plan?

## Step 3:

### Evaluate your reuse and recycling options

- What reuse and recycling options (e.g., recycling facilities, markets for reused and recycled products) currently are available in your community or in nearby communities?
- Can the existing options be scaled up to handle disaster-related wastes?

## Step 4:

### Consider waste collection strategies

- How may the waste be sorted before being removed from the site of the disaster?
- Can the volume of the waste be reduced?
- How may the waste be collected and transported off-site after a disaster?

### What are the benefits of sorting waste?

Sorting waste may sound like a tedious task in the wake of a disaster. However, doing so can play a significant role in aiding a community's recovery.

**Benefits include:**

- **Waste management becomes more cost-effective.** For example, separating hazardous and non-hazardous waste can help a community avoid sending all waste to a facility that processes hazardous materials. (Hazardous waste can cost significantly more to manage than traditional non-hazardous waste).
- **Waste can be reduced in volume more effectively.** For example, separating vegetative debris allows a community to take actions like wood chipping to reduce the overall volume, and cost, of management.
- **Facilities can accept waste more easily** (and the chances of a facility rejecting waste are reduced).
- **Non-contaminated wastes remain separated from contaminated wastes.** This can help safeguard the health of a community's land and people, and present opportunities for reuse and recycling.
- **Each waste stream can be more appropriately and efficiently managed** in accordance with its applicable regulations and requirements.

## Step 5:

### Determine locations or criteria for waste management sites

- What locations are suitable for waste staging, storage, and decontamination activities (if necessary)?
- Are waste management contracts and/or collaboration agreements pre-negotiated for those locations?
- If you cannot pre-determine suitable locations, what criteria should be used for selecting sites in real time?

## Step 6:

### Select potential waste management facilities

- What reuse, composting, recycling, treatment, and disposal options currently are available in your community, or nearby community? You can use EPA's Disaster Debris Recovery Tool to find facilities near your community.
- Which waste types do each waste management facility accept?
- How much of each waste type can each facility receive?
- Under what conditions, if at all, will specific facilities accept the waste?
- Are contracts pre-negotiated with these facilities, as well as with neighboring communities?

### EPA's Disaster Debris Recovery Tool

EPA's Disaster Debris Recovery Tool (https://www.epa.gov/large-scale-residential-demolition/disaster-debris-recovery-tool) provides information and locations of over 20,000 facilities capable of managing disaster debris. It can be used by tribal communities to plan for the safe transport, recycling, and disposal of debris. An important piece in the DDM puzzle, the tool connects potential waste streams to the appropriate facility, increasing the likelihood that debris will be recycled rather than added to a landfill. Learn more about the origin of this tool in EPA Perspectives, Section IV of this journal.

## Step 7:

### Create a waste management-focused community outreach plan

- How will your community be informed of waste management-related information, including who to call for assistance and where to transport waste?
- Which community members can help to spread important information before, during and after a disaster? Do you have their contact information readily available during an incident?

## Step 8:

### Address health and safety considerations for waste management operations

- What are the risks associated with the potential waste streams and the use of decontamination technologies?
- Do emergency personnel have appropriate training regarding waste handling and management? Who can train them?
- Is personal protective equipment available should a disaster occur?

*A tribal member reviews a resource list.*

# IV EPA Perspectives: DDM Resources That Benefit Tribes

## EPA as the Connector

Melissa Kaps has worked with tribal nations in her role within EPA's Office of Resource Conservation and Recovery for nearly 15 years. When thinking about her work in the field of DDM, she often remembers an early-career experience of visiting a tribal nation during an EPA training session.

> ***"Learning more about the checkerboard pattern that can happen on reservation lands was eye-opening for me,"***

Ms. Kaps recalls. "We were on a bus touring the reservation, and it's like, 'That road is owned by the Department of Transportation. This road is owned by the county. And this is our road.'"

The experience helped her realize the importance of collaborating and coordinating with neighboring communities and organizations – and the role EPA can play in supporting this collaboration. One way that EPA can help is simply by making connections. EPA's Regional Tribal Waste Coordinators can set up planning meetings between tribes and local emergency managers focused on DDM. At such meetings, topics of discussion can include, but are not limited to, heavy duty equipment, access roads, debris collection, staging sites, and funding opportunities (both joint and individual).

### More About Checkerboarding Within Reservations

Tribal leaders acting as stewards of their land often face numerous challenges due to "checkerboarding." Since federal trust lands were first codified into U.S. law 135 years ago, loss of territory within tribal lands due to individual, fractionated ownership has raised questions of jurisdiction and the responsibilities of neighboring governments. Disputes about resource ownership, services rendered, and restrictions associated with a given plot of land can result in confusion and sometimes litigation. Outside ownership of land resources can also have a profound impact on tribal lands, including a tribe's ability to engage in disaster resilience efforts. At times, tribal nations are actively working to control the flow of waste created by neighboring entities.

Environmental leaders working to avoid negative outcomes related to checkerboarding can make their voices heard by participating in collaborative, multi-stakeholder efforts with local and state governments. By joining area councils and participating in DDM tabletop exercises with their counterparts in the regions, these leaders can raise awareness about tribal governance and cultural values that may be compromised by the checkerboarded distribution of lands and services.

## General Assistance Program Grants

Passed In 1992, the Indian Environmental General Assistance Program Act allows EPA to provide General Assistance Program (GAP) grants to federally recognized tribes and tribal consortia for planning, developing, and establishing environmental protection programs as well as developing and implementing waste programs on tribal lands. Fortunately, most tribal nations already collaborate with the EPA through the General Assistance Program, which funds the creation of five-year environmental plans outlining emergency operations and waste management practices.

## Emergencies and Disasters

Environmental managers know that preparing for emergencies and responding to disasters can be two very different things. Working as an on-scene coordinator for the EPA, David Morrison has been involved in the response to a number of major events since 2017, including Puerto Rico after Hurricane Maria, flooding in the midwestern U.S. in 2019, California wildfires in 2020, and the tornadoes that hit Kentucky in December of 2021. His interactions with tribal nations included removal of hazardous materials (hazmat) with tribal fire departments, response to active emergencies such as oil spills, train derailments, and community flood preparation when flooding was imminent.

He uses the example of planning for a flood to introduce the basic course of action tribes can take when affected by a major disaster. "Typically, the tribal emergency manager has two avenues," Mr. Morrison says. "They can declare an emergency which sets up funding mechanisms for preventative measures, like sandbagging. Then, [after the occurrence of the flood], they can declare a disaster and deal with the aftermath, at which point they can implement the DDM annex as part of their emergency operations plan." Learn more about a DDM annex in the next section.

Mr. Morrison recommends reaching out to Regional Tribal Solid Waste Coordinators (https://www.epa.gov/tribal-lands/forms/contact-us-about-tribal-waste-management) to receive guidance on keeping DDM annexes up to date. Having a

current plan will, in turn, set tribal nations up for success as they seek public assistance to fund their ongoing emergency preparedness and disaster response efforts.

## Disaster Debris Management Annex for Emergency Operations Plan

Adding a small DDM component to an Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) – a process known as annexing that plan – will go a long way in the effort to stay resilient in the wake of disaster. In its simplest form, a DDM annex may mean storing the contact information of local managers at debris recovery staging sites in your EOP and making sure to update lists regularly.

Setting up a disaster debris management annex to your EOP can be as simple as a few quick phone calls with your EPA Regional Coordinator. (You'll find contact information listed in the Resources section of this journal.)

## Public Assistance: Stafford Act Funding

Tribal emergency response teams managing disaster debris and recovery efforts tend to ask one key question, "How are we going to pay for all of this?"

In some cases, the answer is public assistance. FEMA's Public Assistance Program provides supplemental grants to state, tribal, territorial, and local governments to help communities quickly respond to and recover from major disasters or emergencies. This funding is available thanks to the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act of 1988. It is commonly known as the Stafford Act.

### The Criteria

When estimated costs of damages from a major disaster reach a minimum of $250,000, the federal government will consider funding the recovery effort through the Stafford Act. Reaching the threshold of $250,000 does not automatically unlock those funds – the President must first declare a disaster. Both tribal and state governments can request that a declaration be made by filing jointly or separately. FEMA's Declaration request form for Tribal Chief Executives (https://www.fema.gov/sites/default/files/documents/fema_presidential-declaration-request_fema-form_010-0-13_2022.pdf) can be found in the Resources section of this journal.

### What is an Emergency Operations Plan?

Emergency Operations Plans (EOPs) help planners examine a hazard or threat before it arrives, so that their communities can produce comprehensive and coordinated responses. Focusing on areas of prevention, protection, response, recovery and mitigation, EOPs set up routine processes that various team members and partnering organizations can follow to achieve the quickest return to normalcy possible. EOPs can cover processes at the Federal, Tribal, State and Local levels. However, to be the most effective, planning must always be community-based and represent the whole population and its needs. For more in-depth information on EOPs, review FEMA's Comprehensive Preparedness Guide on Developing and Maintaining Emergency Operations Plans (https://www.fema.gov/sites/default/files/2020-05/CPG_101_V2_30NOV2010_FINAL_508.pdf)

### The Next Steps

If Stafford Act public assistance is awarded, DDM activities may be reimbursed as "emergency work" (Category A). The cost share for public assistance is 75% federal, 25% non-federal, and this could be adjusted by the President.

- Stafford Act funds can be applied to two categories:
  - **Category A: Emergency Work**
    - » Debris Removal (DDM)
    - » Emergency Protective Measures
  - **Category B: Permanent Work**
    - » Roads and Bridge Systems
    - » Water Control Facilities
    - » Public Buildings/Equipment
    - » Public Utilities
    - » Other (Parks, Recreation, etc.)

## Non-Stafford Act Emergencies

While the magnitude and frequency of disaster events continue to rise, not every event will reach the Stafford Act threshold in damages. Some may cross the threshold, but disaster relief funds may not be available, or the relief request will not be granted by the President. In such cases, it is up to tribal nations and local communities to respond and raise funds for disaster relief and recovery efforts through alternative channels.

In these circumstances, collaboration with local organizations, municipal and state governments and EPA's on-scene coordinators can be the key to recovering from disasters in an efficient, resilient manner. Due to the chaotic nature of the hours following a disaster, it helps to build these relationships in advance.

Some questions to consider are: Who has access to which resources and funding streams? What lands and properties have been affected and under whose jurisdiction do they fall? How can productive, working relationships be maintained and even strengthened through a collaborative recovery effort?

## Planning & Collaborating Across Several Federal Agencies and Governmental Organizations

Tribal emergency managers working to tackle pressing DDM tasks may interact with a variety of colleagues from numerous government agencies. Navigating the network of recovery and relief professionals and procedures can be confusing and time consuming. Who you work with can change depending on the situation. During federally declared disasters, FEMA or the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers may lead recovery efforts. Disasters of the lower magnitude (non-Stafford Act) may find tribes interacting with a patchwork of many regional response teams, including those from the Bureau of Indian Affairs, other tribal nations, and/or state and municipal governments. Each disaster brings with it a different set of circumstances. Plan for a variety of scenarios.

EPA's on-scene coordinators can support tribal response managers working to address the situation at hand while making contacts with the relevant agency. Additionally, EPA's "Planning for Natural Disaster Debris" (https://www.epa.gov/sites/default/files/2019-05/documents/final_pndd_guidance_0.pdf) guide lists agencies and their specific support programs related to DDM, including funding and technical assistance. Resources can touch on prevention, planning, recycling and disposal programs.

## Preliminary Damage Assessment: A Critical Step in Requesting Public Assistance

The Preliminary Damage Assessment (PDA) is a joint assessment used to determine the magnitude and impact of an event's damage. The assessment is "joint" because typically, a FEMA/state representative will visit tribal applicants and view their damage first-hand to help assess the recovery scope. For tribes, the PDA comes after the community has conducted an Initial Damage Assessment (IDA) and has determined that the damage exceeds the tribe's recovery capabilities.

**Here are other important PDA facts:**

- After the IDA, the tribal government will formally request a Joint PDA.
- Tribal governments may request a Joint PDA concurrent with or separate from a state's request for a Joint PDA.
- The Joint PDA request should be in writing and should describe the disaster event, the dates the event occurred, and type and severity of damage. It will specify the type of Joint PDAs needed (i.e., Individual Assistance and/or Public Assistance), include information on when and where a tribal government would like to conduct the Joint PDAs, and the tribal point of contact for the Joint PDAs. A template can be found at https://www.fema.gov/disaster/how-declared/preliminary-damage-assessments.
- Except in extraordinary circumstances, FEMA will not conduct Public Assistance Joint PDAs if the initial damage assessments do not indicate that the damage exceeds the minimum damage amount of $250,000.
- If state and tribal governments request Public Assistance Joint PDAs for overlapping areas and a tribal government decides to request a separate declaration, then FEMA will not count the enrolled tribal members who live in the relevant counties in the county population for the purposes of calculating per capita damage in a state's request. This will more appropriately reflect the population used to determine the county's Public Assistance per capita damage indicator for a state request. FEMA will use enrollment numbers from a tribal government to determine the appropriate population.

## A Brief History of the Disaster Debris Recovery Tool

About a decade ago, when Dolly Tong began seeing tribal nations identify climate adaptation as a top priority, she realized her team at the EPA was developing something they could offer to tribal communities eager to become more adaptive: The Disaster Debris Recovery Tool. The simple database showed users in EPA Region 5 where they could take their debris following a major disaster in their area. Facilities were categorized by the materials they accepted and processed, such as metal scrappers, tire collection, household hazardous waste and electronics, allowing environmental managers to identify potential material streams and plan ahead. Now expanded to all regions of the EPA, this database provides planners with the tools needed to connect material streams to the proper facilities in communities across the U.S.

"You can use the database to seek those alternative facilities, and use them as emergency contacts in your plan," says Dolly.

> ***"It's a way to be prepared before the disaster happens. Most likely your normal partners will be overwhelmed."***

## Hierarchy of Disaster Debris Management

EPA's David Morrison outlines a helpful "hierarchy of waste management" strategy to categorize, process, and remove debris streams while meeting more immediate needs of the community.

"If a tribe does not have a disaster debris management plan, and they're hit with a disaster, suddenly everything becomes a priority and it gets overwhelming," Mr. Morrison says. "People are coming to them wanting roads cleared, power restored, and health care needs met. At that point, waste management goes right to the bottom of the list, because the easiest thing to do is send everything to the landfill."

To avoid that scenario, managers applying the waste management hierarchy may begin with identifying which debris items would be beneficial to reuse within the community, which can be easily recycled, and what treatment or conditioning the repurposed and recycled materials require. Applying this approach makes it more likely that the waste that remains will be significantly less than the original volume of debris, with much less potential for toxicity when it reaches the landfill.

Mr. Morrison emphasizes the point of employing this critical DDM strategy as a way to protect the future generations from feeling the effects of disasters that came long before them.

## Tabletop Exercises and Technical Assistance

### Tabletop Exercises

EPA's David Morrison urges tribal emergency response teams to engage in tabletop exercises to prepare for different disasters and the resulting debris streams. During a tabletop exercise, key personnel involved in emergency management discuss simulated emergency situations and potential responses. Not only are tabletop exercises best practice for tribal response teams aiming to draft an effective DDMP, they can also be a great way for tribal nations to build collaborative working relationships with neighboring communities and governments who, in many cases, share mutual interests in emergency operations.

Participants may consider the community's DDM needs and the resources available under a variety of unexpected circumstances. For instance, a tornado event may not meet the criteria for federal disaster declaration. Or a major hurricane may receive federal funding for heavy equipment, but damaged access roads won't support anything larger than a pickup truck. Whatever the scenario tested, contact your EPA solid waste coordinator, public works coordinators and departmental directors to walk through the plan and what this means for the tribe and neighboring community. "It can be eye-opening and very beneficial," Mr. Morrison says.

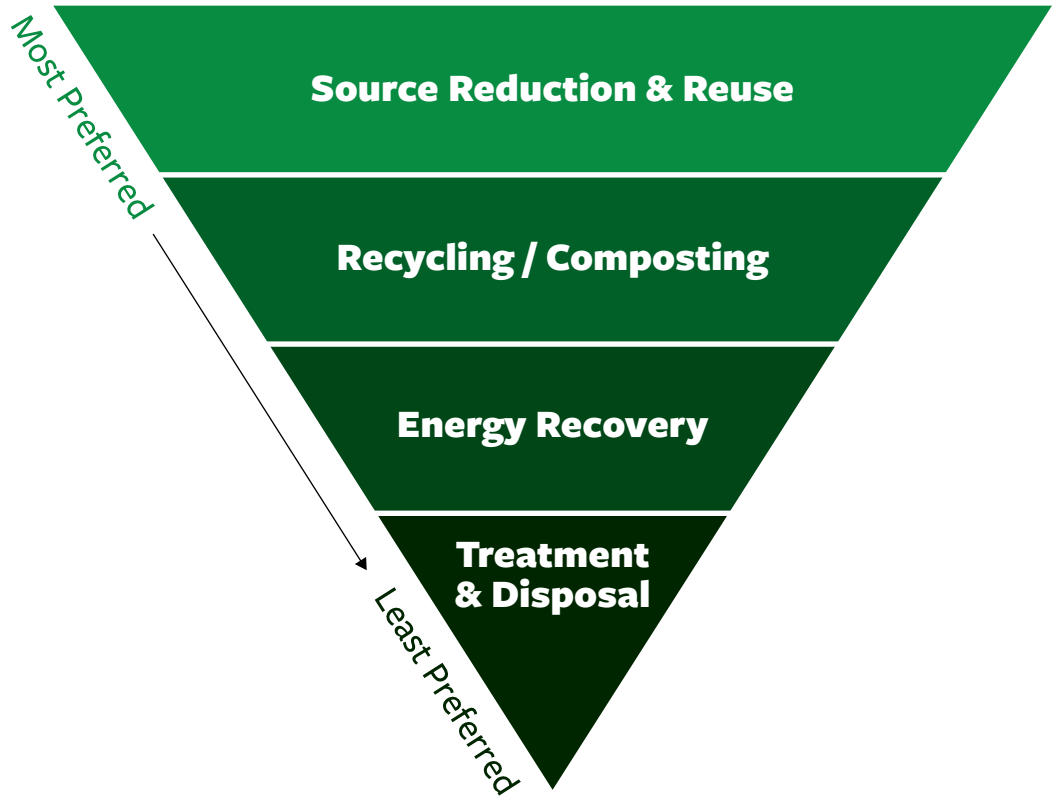
Not only will your tribal nation become more prepared as you collaborate, but your team will also build a resource to support funding efforts. You can reference the DDM plan in mitigation grant applications to prepare for future disasters or when requesting a disaster relief declaration through the Stafford Act. Updating your DDM plan with support from EPA coordinators will aid in the creation of a plan tailored to your tribe's needs.

**Technical Assistance**

In addition to leading discussion and intertribal knowledge sharing, the EPA provides DDM technical assistance. This may include review of DDM terminology, technical assistance materials, and interactive worksheets that guide thinking as tribal emergency response teams devise plans both as a tribe and a collaborator with local, state, and federal government organizations. For a deep dive, consider reading the EPA's comprehensive guide on DDM, Planning for Natural Disaster Debris (https://www.epa.gov/sites/default/files/2019-05/documents/final_pndd_guidance_0.pdf). You can find additional information on that guide and more in the Resources section of this journal.

Identify actions you will take to handle the disaster debris that is generated. The Waste Management Hierarchy ranks the various management strategies from most to least environmentally preferred. The hierarchy places emphasis on source reduction and reuse, followed by recycling, as key to the sustainable management of debris.

## WASTE MANAGEMENT HIERARCHY



*Wood debris is chipped for communal use.*

## DISASTER DEBRIS MANAGEMENT PLANNING IN ACTION:

# Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe

### An Unexpected Event and A Swift Return to Normalcy

Monte Fronk is the Tribal Emergency Manager for the Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe, one of the 11 sovereign nations in Minnesota. Known as the woods and water people, the Ojibwe have been on the front lines of intense disasters that have tested the limits of their people's namesake reputation. During Mr. Fronk's decades-spanning tenure in the role, several extreme flooding and wind events have affected the Mille Lacs lands deeply, and they've bounced back with remarkable resilience, in spite of limited capacity and resources.

Mr. Fronk recalls his emergency team's response to a major wind event in 2011 that appeared to come out of nowhere, blowing down large swaths of forest on Mille Lacs land that overlaps with Pine County, Minnesota. While regular maintenance of the forest can happen through natural wildfires and human-prescribed burns, the sheer amount of fallen branches and downed trees from the wind created an unsafe, disaster-prone environment across thousands of acres.

The Mille Lacs emergency response team appealed for state and emergency federal declarations, and quickly got to work. The Tribal Emergency Response Committee's forestry division procured heavy duty equipment to process the excessive fallen timber into mulch, fuel for heating homes and ceremonial use. Mr. Fronk recalls the surprised reaction of a state official soon after the event, "John came up from the state, looked around and said,

'Where is all your debris?' "They've chipped it up," Mr. Fronk responded, "We just have to give it all away."

When all of the pre-incident planning has been done, bouncing back sounds simple enough. However, there were a number of steps that Mr. Fronk and team needed to take to put those recovery mechanisms in place. The following sections provide examples of building resiliency into your Tribe's emergency and disaster response.

## Organizational Structure and Tribal Emergency Response Committee (TERCs)

While a single person fills the role of Tribal Emergency Response manager, DDM is never a one-person job. Assembling an emergency response team helps to distribute the workload across multiple team members – maximizing the efforts of specialists within the group. The formation of a Tribal Emergency Response Committee (TERC) can fill a number of roles, such as drafting an emergency operation plan and community resource guides, while conducting incident management training for key community leaders. Created in 2000, the Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe TERC brought together 25 people with key roles in the 4,000-plus member band. TERC members include tribal commissioners, as well as leaders within tribal health, public safety, health and human services, and communications.

Activities such as walking through potential emergency and disaster scenarios, preparing paperwork in advance, and researching funding and training opportunities all help manage disaster debris before it is even created. In addition to providing access to these opportunities, creating a TERC that aligns with tribal governance allows environmental managers to get buy-in from leadership and community members, creating a "unified system," says Mr. Fronk, that is both recognized by the United States government and aligns with the way in which many sovereign nations have made decisions for millennia.

## Identifying Potential Debris Streams

Disasters and major weather events can produce a wide variety of debris – everything from items displaced by a flood to destroyed materials left in the wake of hurricanes, tornadoes, earthquakes, and wildfires. In the Mille Lacs example, the tribe responded to an immense amount of fallen timber by activating their forestry team and procuring the equipment they had already identified as necessary to remove and process such a large amount of fallen wood.

Specific types of debris may change according to the disaster, so it helps to have removal procedures in place for each type you anticipate. Identifying a wide variety of items and their effect on the built and natural environments can prevent potentially hazardous debris from becoming harmful in the event of an emergency. For instance, abandoned vehicles inundated by a flood may cause inorganic fuels, acids, and oils to leach into the soil. To know and understand your community's vulnerabilities – whether it is manmade or natural – will help to protect it from lingering effects of a major disaster.

## Finding Alternatives in Times of Limited Access and Capacity

In the wake of a disaster, many tribal communities can be cut off from support services given the rural location in which they often reside – as was the case for the Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe, where the single road that serviced the territory was blocked by fallen debris. Considering the special service needs of the community will help your team determine the quickest route to restoration if certain services become inaccessible.

Planning for other circumstances outside of your control will make your DDMP more nimble and versatile. For example, roads may not be accessible for debris collection and staging sites, or your roads may not be equipped to support heavy equipment. Look for alternatives that will be useful in situations of limited capacity for your team and your community partners. At minimum, using the Disaster Debris Recovery Tool will help to determine what waste and debris management sites are in your tribe's vicinity and how you will contact site managers both in normal circumstances and in times of an emergency.

## Emergency Declarations

In the extreme wind example, the Mille Lacs team prioritized applying for emergency assistance at the state and federal levels, and they were granted a disaster declaration at both levels. If a tribe has assembled a fast-working emergency response team, the DDM work may be done before the reimbursement payments reach the tribal nation's account, or maybe even before an official declaration has been made. On the other hand, if your team must depend on relief funds to carry out the DDM work, plan for a longer recovery period. The paperwork process can take some time.

You will also need to know the emergency declarations for which your tribal nation will be eligible. This may depend on jurisdiction (state or federal), the type and amount of disaster debris, the magnitude of the event and estimated costs of damage; and whether it's a Stafford Act- or non-Stafford Act-eligible disaster. Before preparing a declaration request, your team will need to conduct official damage assessments, which in many cases will determine the type of public assistance for which your tribe and its members are eligible.

For more detailed information about the disaster declaration process and how major events are categorized, refer back to the previous section of this journal. Forms to make official declaration requests can be found in the Resources section. Documenting emergency declarations procedures and including them in an Emergency Operations Plan will help to reduce your recovery period by receiving critical funding in times of uncertainty.

## Factoring in Climate Adaptation as a Key Part of DDM

Thrust to the front lines because of the location and lay of their lands, tribal communities are often the first to feel the effects of our rapidly changing climate. According to Mr. Fronk, rising waters, unbalanced forest ecosystems and erosion have already caused tribal nations to lose land and housing where there are few options to relocate and limited investment to build. He cites the example of Spirit Lake, a Mille Lacs community losing ground to rising waters.

This spring, federal funding was approved to assist in the relocation sought by three Native American coastal tribes whose lands were threatened by regular flooding in Washington state. At the January 2022 Tribal Summit held by the Bureau of Indian Affairs, the current administration reinforced its commitment to providing consultation, technical assistance, grants, funding and training for more support and collaboration with tribal nations across the U.S.

> ***"Climate justice, climate equity, and climate change – [in] Indian country these are the really hot items across all federal agencies...We're seeing increases in wildfire concerns, erosion, and flooding caused by these torrential rains – like four inches in an hour,"*** **noted Mr. Fronk.**

*An eagle flying over Alaska's Grewingk Glacier.*

Facing limited capacity, resources, and fewer alternatives than many communities in the U.S., tribal nations have turned climate adaptation planning into a safety net for future disasters, particularly those that threaten to create more debris than current infrastructure can handle.

## Closing the Gap with Community Collaboration

Ideally, the DDM annex (the DDM component of an Emergency Operations Plan) will also lead to collaborative success with a wide range of sites and community partners. EPA Solid Waste and Pollution Prevention Coordinator Dolly Tong has seen great collaboration in pockets of the Midwest.

"At the Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribe In Michigan, for example, we saw great relationships between the tribal and county governments," says Dolly. "They shared the county emergency operations centers and shared staging sites... if there is a good relationship, it just makes collaboration so much easier."

Tribal leaders interested in collaborating with the federal government and receiving training and emergency response can reach out to their regional Emergency Management Specialist at FEMA. (See the Resources section of this journal for more information).

*Timber is cleared following a storm.*

## VI DISASTER DEBRIS MANAGEMENT PLANNING IN ACTION:
# Sac & Fox Nation

Mark Junker, a former teacher, works as a Tribal Response Coordinator with Sac & Fox Nation. The Sac & Fox Nation covers 25 square miles, in both Kansas and Nebraska. The tribe faces challenges in meeting environmental management needs because land ownership is checkerboarded. Due to the Dawes Act, many tribal members were forced to sell their land to outsiders and the tribe has no jurisdiction over this property within the boundaries of the reservation.

The Sac & Fox Nation does not have a formal emergency response team, making it difficult to provide consistent service to the entire nation across its territories. Finding personnel to staff the tribal office can be hard, so each team member takes on multiple responsibilities and plays many roles. All of Mr. Junker's colleagues in his department have taken the 40-hour training in hazardous materials management which prepares them for planning and responding to disasters.

The Sac & Fox Nation collaborated with the EPA on five-year environmental plans as part of the tribe's General Assistance Program (GAP). Since DDM annexes can be incorporated into those GAP work plans, it's only natural that Mr. Junker leads the tribe's DDM efforts. While he makes sure to keep a good record of his DDM planning,

he is not afraid to conduct informal research whenever the opportunity arises. "Every now and then, I'll ask a colleague, 'Hey, what if that one tree over there falls in the next storm?'" says Mr. Junker with a wry smile. "Are we going to have a big enough saw to cut through it?"

When he is not encouraging his colleagues to consider the response to different disaster scenarios outside of their control, Mr. Junker actively works to prevent avoidable disasters from ever taking place. In his primary role, he serves as the Tribal Response Coordinator in charge of brownfield remediation. Managing projects funded by the EPA's 128(a) grant program, Mr. Junker combs through abandoned industrial sites and identifies potentially hazardous materials that pose a risk to the community. He then works to remove them (or mitigate risk when removal or containment aren't possible). In many ways, it is a proactive version of DDM, removing or sequestering materials before they become a problem.

### What is Brownfield Remediation?

When "legacy" infrastructure and forgotten industrial sites are unused or abandoned, their materials remain, posing an environmental and health risk to area residents. EPA's Brownfields Program provides grants and technical assistance to communities, states, tribes, and others to assess, safely clean up, and sustainably reuse contaminated properties. As intense natural disasters threaten communities with greater frequency, so does the risk of contaminating the soil and the local water supply with corrosive materials and chemicals stored in vulnerable brownfields. Remediating brownfields can be a crucial part of DDM, particularly in the context of climate change adaptation.

> ***"What it all boils down to is this: We're protecting human health and the environment. It's about resilience, Mr. Junker says, adding that forward planning and quick actions allow communities to get back to daily life and focus on what matters."***

The Sac & Fox Nation have proven their resilience several times over. Based in the Midwest, the tribe typically deals with recurring winter storms and, in the summer, straight line winds that tear through the region with gale force, downing trees and power lines across hundreds of acres. When straight line winds wreaked havoc in the summer of 2021, the tribal response team anticipated the entire community would be without power for 36 hours, a real threat to the health and well-being of an elderly community affected by the outage. However, pre-planning, road clearing and keeping virtual lines of communication open cut that lead time in half.

"There were other places that could've had their power on before us, but they couldn't be accessed because of debris on the roads," says Mr. Junker. "Our roads were cleared...once [line maintenance crews] got done in Hiawatha, they came and helped us." Power was restored just 18 hours after the outage began, in large part due to the preparation and forward-planning of the tribal response team.

While scenarios like power outages can be expected and planned for each year, other debris-producing disasters seemingly come out of the blue. Close collaboration with neighboring communities and local governments can help your community bounce back from unforeseen circumstances. Mr. Junker recalls a recent train derailment, after which two train cars worth of pressure-treated wood lay scattered across an agricultural field on Sac & Fox lands."Everyone in the area who had plans to build a backyard deck got word of what was scattered at the scene of the wreck," Mr. Junker says. "People were coming from non-reservation lands, and it was turning into a bit of a security issue for the tribe." Fortunately, the local county emergency manager secured a perimeter to stop hordes of curious onlookers and opportunists. Working closely with neighboring and local authorities, the Sac & Fox response team was able to get the tracks serviceable within 24 hours of the accident.

On the other side of the coin, working with environmental and emergency managers from neighboring communities can be a challenge. Mr. Junker recalls being in trainings, conferences, and meetings in which local counterparts in environmental management viewed tribal customs as a hurdle to get past rather than a way of life. "Sometimes emergency managers can roll over the tribes or treat their wishes as a nuisance," says Mr. Junker, adding that it's up to people in the room to speak up and advocate for the best interests of the tribe.

Getting more involved in regional pollution and waste prevention committees and disaster response teams can aid in relationship building. Mr. Junker sits on several boards in neighboring counties of Nebraska, Missouri and Kansas. He says these groups tend to meet infrequently and serve as ad-hoc committees that take action only when the situation calls for it.

Before even worrying about relationship building, Mr. Junker notes that anyone can begin work on a DDMP just by starting small and asking simple questions. Even if you are not broadcasting the needs for a disaster plan in the community, you can gain relevant information just by talking with members or employees of the tribe. As is the case with Mr. Junker and his colleagues at Sac & Fox, it most likely can be done within the constraints of your current work plan. "Something is better than nothing, so even if it is determining a large field where waste will go, that's more than you had planned before," says Mr. Junker.

"Shorter is better when you're talking about disaster debris management plans. The people doing the work won't have time to sift through your rationale and standard operating procedures. Those are great for you to have [in your files]," says Mr. Junker, "But make [your disaster debris management plan] something that anybody can read – short, sweet and to the point."

# Spotlight: Backhaul Alaska

What do we do with household electronics (e-waste), batteries and fluorescent light bulbs when they have reached the end of use? Regular household items that seem harmless in our homes carry the potential to become hazardous to the environment upon being discarded. Until recently in Alaska, many rural communities lacked the infrastructure to properly dispose of these materials and resorted to improper storage, disposal and landfilling.

These wastes create numerous environmental threats, such as contamination of water supply and degradation of air quality. In a disaster event, the threats are magnified. In 2016, the Solid Waste Alaska Taskforce (SWAT) developed the Backhaul Alaska program to address the need for a sustainable statewide materials collection and recycling program to divert these everyday items from entering the waste stream and the toxins they hold from entering the water and soil.

## How does it work?

Logistics coordinators at a central "control tower" communicate with a network of coordinators at the state, regional and village levels. Waste is packaged in a uniform way to reduce risk to handlers at each point in the removal process. Program administrators offset backhaul costs by recycling goods and receiving the best price possible in the commodity market. Bulk purchasing for the entire program reduces storage and transportation costs for the individual communities served by Backhaul Alaska.

This win-win collaboration for all involved parties resulted in a successful pilot program, followed by an official launch in Spring 2022. Backhaul Alaska now serves 40 rural communities across a vast network throughout Alaska, which is, after all, the state with the largest area in the U.S. Alaska native communities looking to participate in the program may contact the Solid Waste Alaska Taskforce via email at info@backhaulalaska.org or by phone at (907) 277-2111.

*Debris following a natural disaster.*

# VII Resources for Managing Disaster Debris

I. **Glossary**

II. **Technical Assistance Materials**

III. **Training, Funding, and Technical Assistance Opportunities**

## Glossary

**Brownfield Remediation** - The act of removing or sealing off points of contamination within a property that is considered contaminated in order for the property to be used again without health concerns. Because of the scale and severity of potential debris found in these areas, brownfield remediation programs provide an opportunity to fund DDM activities.

**Disaster Declaration** - Generally requested when a disaster exceeds the response capabilities of the state and local governments, and long-term recovery assistance is needed using federal resources.

**Debris Management Hierarchy** - A four-tiered hierarchy to guide waste management decision making. In order of highest to lowest priority: source reduction and reuse, recycling/composting, energy recovery, treatment, and disposal. An image of this hierarchy can be found at: https://www.epa.gov/homeland-security-waste/waste-management-hierarchy-and-homeland-security-incidents.

**Disaster Debris Management (DDM)** - Procedures and guidelines for managing disaster debris (e.g., building materials, sediments, vegetative debris, personal property, and other materials) in a coordinated, environmentally responsible, and cost-effective manner.

**Disaster Debris Recovery Tool** - Provides locations and information for 12 types of facilities to promote the proper and safe recovery, recycling, and disposal of debris. It allows users to search an interactive map by location or proximity and quickly create an inventory of debris management facilities.

**Emergency Support Functions (ESF)** - Fourteen categories outlining the capabilities of each government department and agency involved in a coordinated federal response to an emergency. For example, through ESF 10, the EPA provides planning, support, resources, program implementation, and emergency services related to Oil and Hazardous Materials Response.

**The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)** - The lead federal agency that responds to disasters and emergencies to help save lives and protect public health, safety, and property.

**Indian Environmental General Assistance Program (GAP)** - Assists tribal governments to plan, develop, and establish the capacity to implement programs administered by EPA and to assist in the development and implementation of solid and hazardous waste programs. GAP funding may be used to support activities related to natural disaster debris planning and management, as appropriate.

**Natural Disaster Debris** - The material and waste streams resulting from a natural disaster. Disaster debris often includes animal carcasses, building materials, household hazardous waste, sediments, vegetative debris, and personal property. The word "debris" is not synonymous with waste because many debris streams may be able to be reused or recycled.

**Public Assistance (as defined by FEMA)** - Public Assistance is a reimbursement program that provides federal funding to help communities respond to and recover from disasters.

**Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (Stafford Act)** - Federal law which sets forth federal disaster relief responsibilities, procedures, and conditions for federal assistance. The federal assistance available depends on the type of disaster that is declared. Disasters must incur an estimated minimum of $250,000 in damages to be eligible for Stafford Act assistance.

**Tribal Assistance Coordination Group (TAC-G)** - A unit of the Bureau of Indian Affairs Emergency Management Division, the TAC-G serves as a focused point of coordination or "one-stop-shop" for federally recognized tribes being impacted by emergencies or disasters.

**Office of Resource Conservation and Recovery (ORCR)** - Office within EPA that protects human health and the environment by: promoting the conservation of resources, ensuring proper waste management, preventing harmful exposure and overseeing the cleanup of land for productive use. Establishes and implements regulatory standards, incentive-based programs, and best practices in collaboration with communities, governments, businesses, and other organizations. ORCR implements the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA).

**The Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA)** - The public law that creates the framework for the proper management of hazardous and non-hazardous solid waste. Under this act, EPA issues regulations and guidelines to properly manage hazardous waste (Subtitle C) and non-hazardous waste (Subtitle D).

## Technical Assistance Materials

### DDM Annex to Emergency Operations Plan (EOP)

Annexes are the parts of the EOP that begin to provide specific information and direction. A DDM annex should focus on defining what DDM looks like for your tribal nation and who is responsible for carrying out specific tasks. URL: https://www.fema.gov/pdf/plan/5-ch-0.pdf

### Design a Tabletop Exercise

EPA's tabletop exercise (TTX) tool provides users with the resources to plan, conduct and evaluate tabletop exercises. Tabletop exercises practice, test and help improve emergency response plans and procedures. Use this tool to develop customized, scenario-driven tabletop exercises for your utility. Originally designed as a disaster response tool to protect water systems and wastewater utilities, the TTX methodology can be applied to a variety of emergency operations such as DDM. URL: https://ttx.epa.gov/index.html

### Disaster Debris Recovery Tool (DDRT)

An interactive mapping tool of twelve types of recyclers and landfills that manage disaster debris. The DDRT provides information and locations of over 20,000 facilities capable of managing different materials which may be found in disaster debris. URL: https://www.epa.gov/large-scale-residential-demolition/disaster-debris-recovery-tool

**Site collection categories include:**

- Construction and Demolition
- Recyclers
- Composters
- Demolition Contractors
- Electronics Recyclers
- Household Hazardous Waste Collection
- Metal Recyclers
- Tire Recyclers
- Transfer Stations
- Vehicle Recyclers
- Construction & Demolition Landfills
- Municipal Solid Waste Landfills
- Hazardous Waste Landfills

### Planning for Natural Disaster Debris

A comprehensive EPA guide that assists communities, including sovereign tribal nations, in devising effective debris management plans before a natural disaster occurs. URL: https://www.epa.gov/sites/default/files/2019-05/documents/final_pndd_guidance_0.pdf

### FEMA form 010-0-13 Declaration request form (for Tribal Chief Executives)

If estimated damages to tribal lands amount to a minimum of $250,000 as a result of a natural disaster, tribes may request relief funds as granted by The President of the United States. While it does not guarantee funding, this form ensures that your tribal nation's declaration request includes all legally required information necessary to receive public assistance.

Tribal executives often attach a cover letter to this form upon submission.

> URL: https://www.fema.gov/sites/default/files/documents/fema_presidential-declaration-request_fema-form_010-0-13_2022.pdf
>
> COVER LETTER URL: https://www.fema.gov/sites/default/files/2020-04/tribal-declaration-request-cover-letter-template.docx

### National LEPC-TEPC Handbook

EPA developed this national handbook as a resource for local and tribal emergency planning committees (LEPCs and TEPCs) to strengthen community preparedness for accidental chemical releases, which can be triggered by natural disasters and constitute as disasters themselves. URL: https://www.epa.gov/epcra/national-lepc-tepc-handbook

### Tribal Waste Management Peer Matching Program

This EPA-coordinated program aims to strengthen tribal capacity and develop sustainable waste management programs through voluntary, inter-tribal communication. This structured program is built on the ethos that, in many circumstances, tribal leaders are best positioned to provide specific instruction to their counterparts of other sovereign nations who seek to become more resilient to disasters. URL: https://www.epa.gov/tribal-lands/forms/national-tribal-waste-management-peer-matching-program

Contact information for EPA Tribal Waste Coordinators: URL: https://www.epa.gov/tribal-lands/forms/contact-us-about-tribal-waste-management

### Federal Disasters Tool and Resources

A comprehensive list of disaster response and DDM resources provided by key agencies in the federal government. URL: https://www.epa.gov/homeland-security-waste/tools-and-resources-homeland-security-incidents

## Training, Funding, and Technical Assistance Opportunities

The following table aims to categorize a wide variety of training, funding and technical assistance related to disaster debris management activities offered by various federal agencies. Readers may click through or visit the corresponding URL links that follow the table to learn more about each opportunity and determine their tribal nation's eligibility as well as any other conditions that may apply to a given program or resource.

Note that all opportunities identified in the section below, while active at the time of publication of this journal, may change, be unavailable or discontinued in the future.

$ - Funding  A - Assistance  T - Technical Resource

| Federal Agency | Program | Before Disasters | During Disasters | After Disasters |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) | Water and Waste Disposal Loan and Grant Program | | | $ |
| | Community Facilities Program | | | $ |
| | Emergency Conservation Program | $ | | $ |
| | Emergency Watershed Protection Program | | | $ |
| | Emergency Support Function #11 - Agriculture and Natural Resources | | | A |
| | Emergency Support Function #3 - Public Works and Engineering | | | A |
| | Disaster Resource Center | T | T | T |
| U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) | Emergency Support Function #3 - Public Works and Engineering | | | A |
| Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) | Climate Resilience Program | $ T | $ T | |
| | Emergency Management Division | | A | A |
| | Emergency Relief for Federally Owned Roads Program | | | $ |
| U.S. Coast Guard (USCG) | National Response Framework & Disaster Funding | | A | A |
| | Oil Spill Liability Trust Fund | | | $ A |

| Federal Agency | Program | Before Disasters | During Disasters | After Disasters |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) | Indian General Assistance Program | $ T | $ T | $ T |
| | State and Tribal Response Program | $ | $ | $ |
| | Local Government Reimbursement Program | | | $ A |
| | Emergency Support Function #10 - Oil and Hazardous Materials Response Annex | | | A |
| | Emergency Support Function #3 - Public Works and Engineering Annex | | | A |
| | Disaster Debris Recovery Tool | T | T | T |
| | Enforcement and Compliance History Online | | T | T |
| | Planning for Natural Disaster Debris Guidance | T | T | T |
| | Disaster Debris Planning website | | T | T |
| | Managing Materials and Wastes for Homeland Security Incidents | T | T | T |
| | Pre-Incident All-Hazards Waste Management Plan Guidelines | T | T | T |
| | All-Hazards Waste Management Decision Program | T | T | T |
| | All-hazards Waste Management Planning Tool | T | T | T |

| Federal Agency | Program | Before Disasters | During Disasters | After Disasters |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)** | Assistance for Governments and Private Non-Profits After a Disaster | $ | | $ |
| | Public Assistance Debris Management Guide | | T | T |
| | Technical Assistance Program | A | | |
| | Hazus Damage and Loss Estimation Tool | | T | T |
| | Emergency Management Institute Training Courses | T | T | T |
| | Hazard Mitigation Assistance Grants | $ | | |
| | Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities | $ | | |
| | Flood Mitigation Assistance Grant | $ | | |
| | Mitigation Ideas | T | | |
| | Local Mitigation Planning Handbook | T | | |
| | Tribal Mitigation Planning Handbook | T | | |
| | Mitigation Funding Resource Guides | T | | |

| Federal Agency | Program | Before Disasters | During Disasters | After Disasters |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Federal Transit Administration | Public Transportation Emergency Relief Program | | | $ |
| U.S. Housing and Urban Development (HUD) | Indian Housing Block Grant Program | | | $ |
| | Community Development Block Grant Program | | | $ |
| | Community Development Block Grants Disaster Recovery Program | $ | | $ |
| | Disaster Recovery Toolkit | T | T | T |
| National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) | Marine Debris Emergency Response Guides | | T | |
| | U.S. Climate Resilience Toolkit | T | T | |
| Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) | Disaster Site Worker Outreach Training Program | T | | T |
| | Health and Safety Guidance Manual for Hazardous Waste Site Activities | T | | T |

# Training, Funding, and Technical Assistance Opportunities URL List

## U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE (USDA)

**Water and Waste Disposal Loan and Grant Program**
https://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/water-environmental-programs/water-waste-disposal-loan-grant-program

**Community Facilities Program**
https://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/community-facilities-direct-loan-grant-program

**Emergency Conservation Program**
https://www.fsa.usda.gov/programs-and-services/conservation-programs/emergency-conservation/index

**Emergency Watershed Protection Program**
https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/national/programs/landscape/ewpp/

**Emergency Support Function #11 Agriculture and Natural Resources**
https://www.usda.gov/sites/default/files/documents/ESF11.pdf

**Emergency Support Function #3 Public Works and Engineering**
https://www.usda.gov/sites/default/files/documents/ESF03.pdf

**Disaster Resource Center**
https://www.usda.gov/topics/disaster

## U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS (USACE)

**Emergency Support Function #3 Public Works and Engineering**
https://www.usace.army.mil/Missions/Emergency-Operations/National-Response-Framework/Debris-Management/

## BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS (BIA)

**Climate Resilience Program**
https://www.bia.gov/service/tcr-annual-awards-program

**Emergency Management Division**
https://www.bia.gov/bia/ojs/emd

**Emergency Relief for Federally Owned Roads Program**
https://highways.dot.gov/federal-lands/programs/erfo

## U.S. COAST GUARD (USCG)

**National Response Framework & Disaster Funding**
https://www.uscg.mil/Mariners/National-Pollution-Funds-Center/About-NPFC/NRF-Disaster-Funding/

**Oil Spill Liability Trust Fund**
https://www.uscg.mil/Mariners/National-Pollution-Funds-Center/About_NPFC/OSLTF/

## U.S. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY (EPA)

**Indian General Assistance Program**
https://www.epa.gov/tribal/indian-environmental-general-assistance-program-gap

**State and Tribal Response Program**
https://www.epa.gov/brownfields/state-and-tribal-response-program-grants

**Local Governments Reimbursement Program**
https://www.epa.gov/emergency-response/local-governments-reimbursement-program

**Emergency Support Function #10 - Oil and Hazardous Materials Response Annex**
https://www.fema.gov/sites/default/files/2020-07/fema_ESF_10_Oil-Hazardous-Materials.pdf

**Emergency Support Function #3 - Public Works and Engineering Annex**
https://www.fema.gov/sites/default/files/2020-07/fema_ESF_3_Public-Works-Engineering.pdf

**Disaster Debris Recovery Tool**
https://www.epa.gov/large-scale-residential-demolition/disaster-debris-recovery-tool

**Enforcement and Compliance History Online**
https://echo.epa.gov/

**Planning for Natural Disaster Debris Guidance**
https://www.epa.gov/homeland-security-waste/guidance-about-planning-natural-disaster-debris

**Disaster Debris Planning website**
https://www.epa.gov/large-scale-residential-demolition/disaster-debris-planning

**Managing Materials and Wastes for Homeland Security Incidents**
https://www.epa.gov/homeland-security-waste

**Pre-Incident All-Hazards Waste Management Plan Guidelines**
https://www.epa.gov/homeland-security-waste/pre-incident-all-hazards-waste-management-plan-guidelines-four-step-waste

**All-Hazards Waste Management Decision Diagram**
https://www.epa.gov/homeland-security-waste/all-hazards-waste-management-decision-diagram

**All Hazards Waste Management Planning Tool**
https://wasteplan.epa.gov/

## FEDERAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY (FEMA)

**Assistance for Governments and Private Non-Profits After a Disaster**
https://www.fema.gov/assistance/public

**Public Assistance Debris Management Guide**
https://www.fema.gov/pdf/government/grant/pa/demagde.pdf

**Technical Assistance Program**
https://www.fema.gov/pdf/media/factsheets/2011/npd_ta_factsheet.pdf

**Hazus Damage and Loss Estimation Tool**
https://www.fema.gov/flood-maps/tools-resources/flood-map-products/hazus

**Emergency Management Institute Training Courses**
https://training.fema.gov/emi.aspx

**Hazard Mitigation Assistance Grants**
https://www.fema.gov/grants/mitigation

**Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities**
https://www.fema.gov/grants/mitigation/building-resilient-infrastructure-communities

**Flood Mitigation Assistance Grant**
https://www.fema.gov/grants/mitigation/floods

**Mitigation Ideas**
https://www.fema.gov/sites/default/files/2020-06/fema-mitigation-ideas_02-13-2013.pdf

**Local Mitigation Planning Handbook**
https://www.fema.gov/sites/default/files/2020-06/fema-local-mitigation-planning-handbook_03-2013.pdf

**Tribal Mitigation Planning Handbook**
https://www.fema.gov/sites/default/files/2020-06/fema-tribal-planning-handbook_05-2019.pdf

**Mitigation Funding Resource Guides**
https://www.greatlakescoast.org/great-lakes-coastal-analysis-and-mapping/outreach/mitigation-funding-resources/

## FEDERAL TRANSIT ADMINISTRATION

**Public Transportation Emergency Relief Program**
https://www.transit.dot.gov/funding/grant-programs/emergency-relief-program

## U.S. HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT (HUD)

**Indian Housing Block Grant Program**
https://www.hud.gov/program_offices/public_indian_housing/ih/grants/ihbg

**Community Development Block Grant Program**
https://www.hud.gov/program_offices/public_indian_housing/ih/grants/icdbg

**Community Development Block Grants Disaster Recovery Program**
https://www.hudexchange.info/programs/cdbg-dr/

**Disaster Recovery Toolkit**
https://www.huduser.gov/portal/disaster-recovery.html

## NATIONAL OCEANIC AND ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION (NOAA)

**Marine Debris Emergency Response Guides**
https://marinedebris.noaa.gov/emergency-response-guides-and-regional-action-plans#pub-term-144

**U.S. Climate Resilience Toolkit**
https://toolkit.climate.gov/

## OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY AND HEALTH ADMINISTRATION (OSHA)

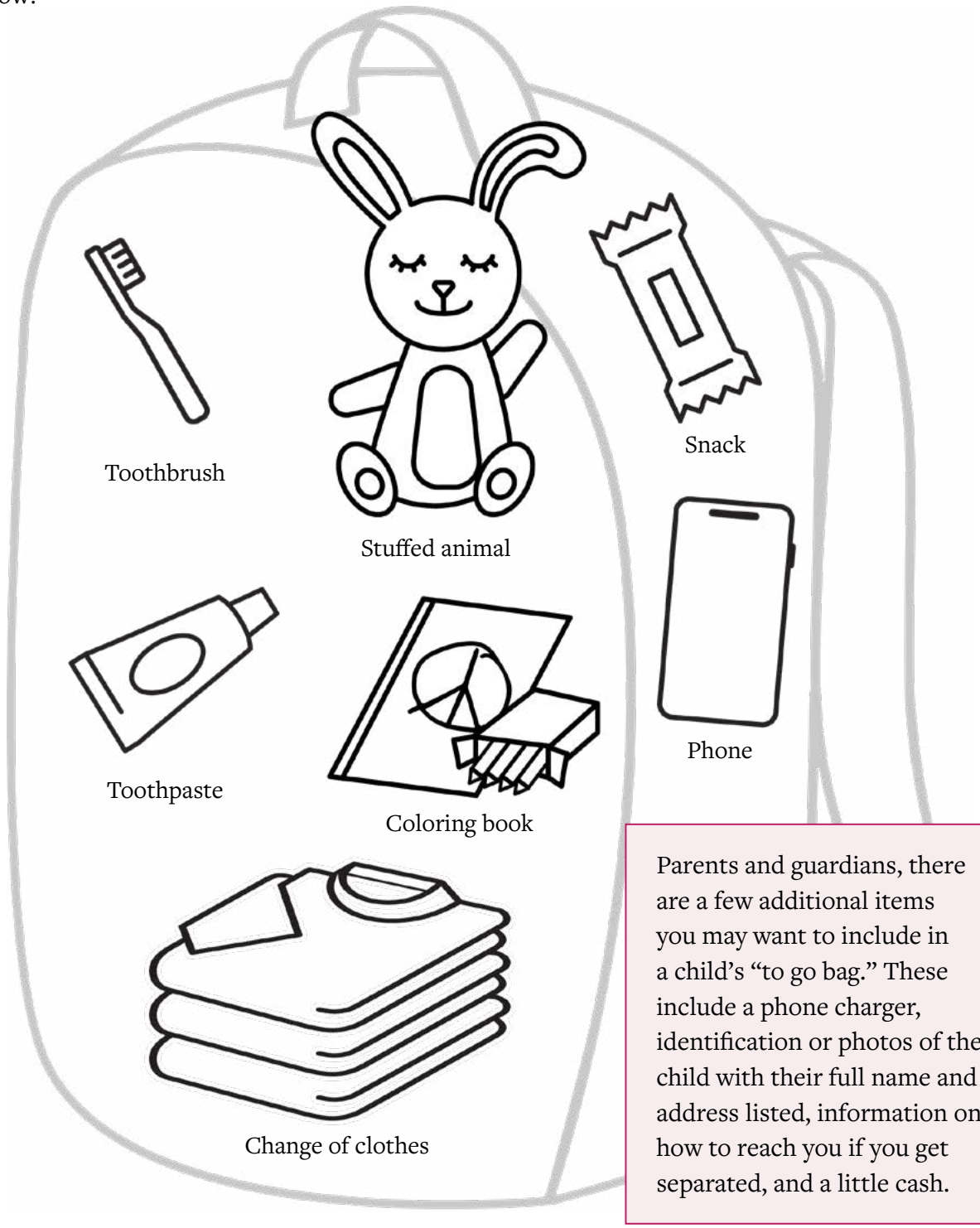
**Disaster Site Worker Outreach Training Program**
https://www.osha.gov/sites/default/files/DisasterSiteWorkerProcedures-2019.pdf

**Health and Safety Guidance Manual for Hazardous Waste Site Activities**
https://www.osha.gov/sites/default/files/publications/all-in-one.pdf

# Activity 1: What's in Your To Go Bag?

Big natural events – like storms, strong winds, or wildfires – can come at any time. When they do, sometimes we have to leave our usual space and go somewhere safe – but just for a while.

Color the things you want to take with you in your "to go bag." Then, ask an adult to help you pack this bag now!




Parents and guardians, there are a few additional items you may want to include in a child's "to go bag." These include a phone charger, identification or photos of the child with their full name and address listed, information on how to reach you if you get separated, and a little cash.

# Activity 2: People and Places to Protect

Sometimes big storms, strong winds and smokey fires can come through and change our communities in big ways. Before a natural disaster happens, it helps to think about what you would want to protect.

Make a list of the people and places in your community that you would want to protect during a disaster. Then, share this with friends, family, and members of your community to develop a protection plan.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
10. _____

**Cover Photo:** *The shore of Lake Michigan as a storm approaches.*

United States Environmental Protection Agency

U.S. EPA Office of Resource Conservation and Recovery

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www.epa.gov/tribal-lands