



Presentation to the Senate Committee on Veterans, Emergency Management, and Federal and World Affairs Committee

# Overview of the Office of Resilience and Emergency Management

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Oregon Department of Human Services

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# Turning point: The 2020 wildfires

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- In September 2020, ODHS emergency management staff consisted of just **three Salem-based positions**, two of which were half-time.
- As the fires took hold, **ODHS emergently built the Office of Resilience and Emergency Management (OREM)** through job rotations, intergovernmental agreements, reassignments, volunteers and limited duration appointments.

# Why we do our work

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- Every day, we work to **reduce the impact of disasters on people**
- We **focus on the human beings and the systems that support them**, before, during and after disasters.

# Vulnerable populations most impacted by disasters



**United Nations**

**Impact of Natural Disasters Increasingly Affecting Those Most Vulnerable, Speakers Say as Commission for Social Development Continues Session**

News // California Wildfires

**Tragic but familiar narrative in Camp Fire: Most victims were older, disabled**

SCIENTIFIC AMERICAN

**Natural Disasters by Location: Rich Leave and Poor Get Poorer**

Each big catastrophe like a hurricane increases a U.S. county's poverty by 1 percent, 90 years of data show



Scorched landscape four years after the Paradise Calif. wildfires

# Who we are

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The Office of Resilience and Emergency Management **focuses on the human beings and the systems that support them**, before, during and after disasters.



**We support the safety of the people we serve every day, in every part of the state** during wildfires, smoke-filled air situations, public safety power shutoffs and more.



**We help meet local needs** when disasters exceed local's mass care and shelter resources and we help communities be better prepared for the future.



**We help people and human services systems recover.**

**Across all these roles, ODHS develops and relies on partnerships and coordination** with public and private organizations at the local and regional levels and with our state and Tribal Nation partners.

# Who we're serving

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## We serve people who:

- Displaced or evacuated their homes due to wildfires, floods and other emergencies
- Fled foreign countries due to violence
- Had wells go dry or were polluted
- Need a place to get warm, or cool, or where they could breathe healthy air
- Need a safe place to heal wounds or recover from illness
- Depend on a safe, staffed, long-term care and other settings for day-to-day help

## Who we do this by, with and through:

- Counties
- Cities
- State agencies and federal partners
- Tribal Nations
- ODHS programs
- Community-based organizations
- Businesses
- Community Action Agencies
- Long-term recovery groups
- Faith-based organizations

# State structure

- 18 Emergency Support functions
- ODHS is one of 33 agencies with emergency management roles
- ODHS leads mass care
- ODHS also leads social services recovery



## Oregon Emergency Support Functions (ESFs)



ESF 1  
Transportation



ESF 2  
Communications



ESF 3  
Public Works



ESF 4  
Firefighting



ESF 5  
Information and  
Planning



ESF 6  
Mass Care



ESF 7  
Resource  
Support



ESF 8  
Health and  
Medical



ESF 9  
Search and  
Rescue



ESF 10  
Hazardous  
Materials



ESF 11  
Agriculture, Animals,  
and Natural Resources



ESF 12  
Energy



ESF 13  
Law Enforcement



ESF 14  
Business and  
Industry



ESF 15  
Public  
Information



ESF 16  
Volunteers and  
Donations



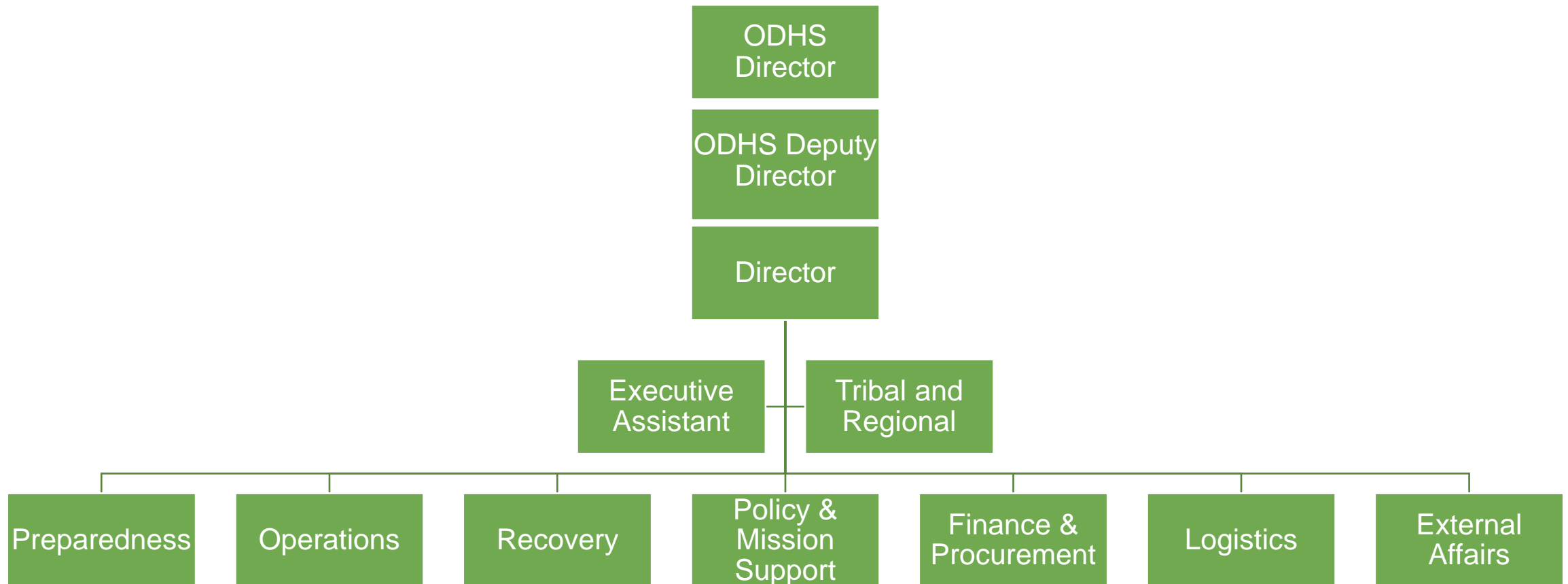
ESF 17  
Cyber and Critical  
Infrastructure  
Security



ESF 18  
Military  
Support

# How we're organized

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# How we're organized: Across the state

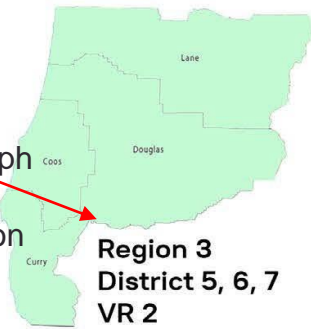
**Region 1:**  
**ODHS REC:** Jeff Gilbert  
**ODHS SSEL:** Darlene Thao  
**HSPR REC:** Marleen Zytniowski  
**OEM REC:** Tom Jenkins



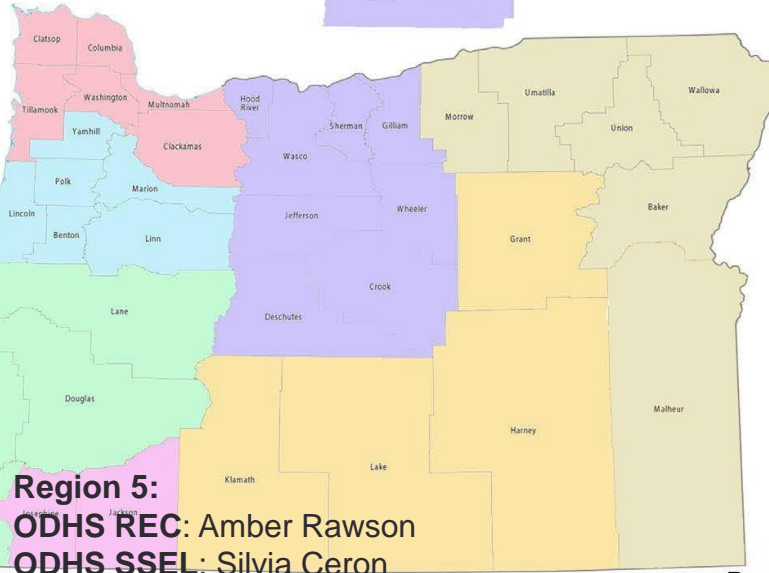
**Region 2:**  
**ODHS REC:** Jeff Gilbert  
**ODHS SSEL:** Ivonne Mora Hernandez  
**HSPR REC:** Neva Anderson  
**OEM REC:** Alaina Mayfield



**Region 3:**  
**ODHS REC:** Amber Rawson  
**ODHS SSELs:** Terra Ralph  
 Phillip Nel  
**HSPR REC:** Ericka Mason  
**OEM REC:** GT Auch



**Region 6:**  
**ODHS REC:** Cory Jones  
**HSPR REC:** Dean Marcum  
**ODHS SSEL:** Hayley Riach  
**OEM REC:** Interim Audrey Dewittie



**Region 5:**  
**ODHS REC:** Amber Rawson  
**ODHS SSEL:** Silvia Ceron  
**HSPR REC:** Ericka Mason  
**OEM REC:** GT Auch



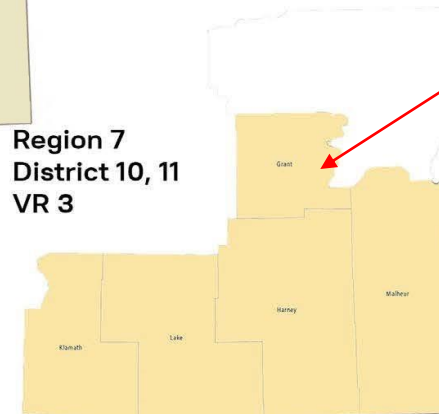
**Region 6  
 District 9  
 VR 3**



**Region 9:**  
**ODHS REC:** Cory Jones  
**ODHS SSEL:** Shelley Wight  
**HSPR REC:** Dean Marcum  
**OEM REC:** Tim Seymour

**Tribal:**  
**ODHS Tribal REC:** Eli Grove  
**ODHS SSEL:** vacant  
**OHA Tribal REC:** Carey Palm  
**OEM Tribal Liaison:** Kevin Jefferies

**Region 7  
 District 10, 11  
 VR 3**



**Region 7:**  
**ODHS REC:** Cory Jones  
**ODHS SSEL:** Rhonda Nyseth  
**HSPR REC:** vacant  
**OEM REC:** Tim Seymour / Chris Sutton

# After action reports have shaped OREM

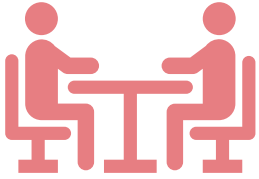
| <b>Lack of ODHS ownership of mass care function*</b>  | <b>Need to develop relationships with partners*</b>  | <b>Not prepared for mass displacement events**</b>  |
|---|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• OREM was established and staffed, but primarily with unfunded positions</li><li>• Investing in local capacity</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• OREM placed staff throughout the state to develop local relationships and developed relationships with statewide entities through its central office</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Emergency evacuation point planning</li><li>• First round of equipment was deployed to Tillamook County in May 2023</li></ul> |

\*State of Oregon 2020-2021 After-Action Review Wildland Fire and Wind Events

\*\*Mass Care and Mass Displacement After a Cascadia Subduction Zone Earthquake, Oregon Seismic Safety Policy Advisory Commission, 2018

# OREM focus areas

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## Preparedness:

- Partnerships
- Planning
- Pre-incident contracts
- CBO contracts
- Training, exercises
- Mass Care Response Team
- Business continuity planning



## Response:

- Information
- Evacuation assistance
- Emergency shelter
- Family reunification
- Feeding
- Distribution of emergency supplies



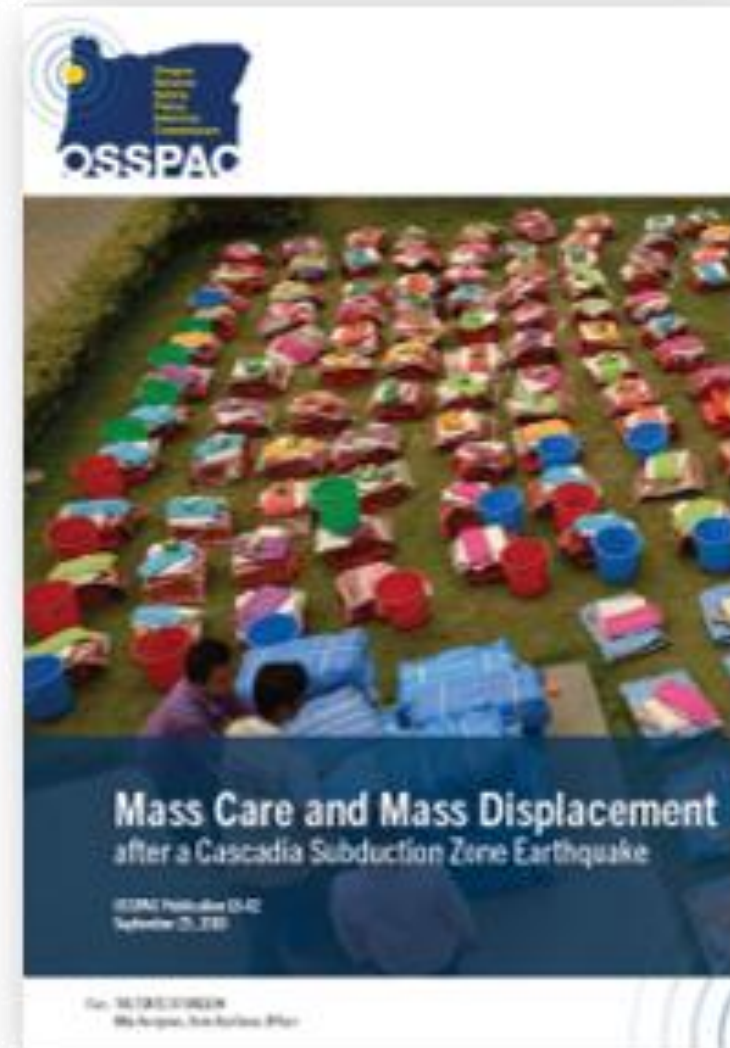
## Recovery:

- Human services
- Long-term shelter
- Social services sector recovery

# Preparedness: Why it matters



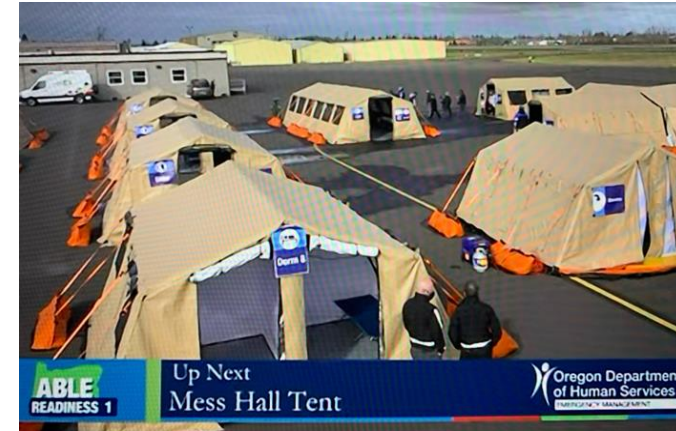
- Vulnerable populations are most at risk in disasters
- Local governments do not have mass care staffing
- People deserve a well planned and effective response from their governments when disaster strikes



# Preparedness: Overview



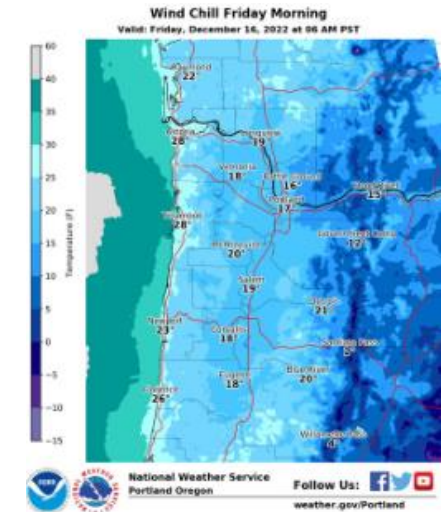
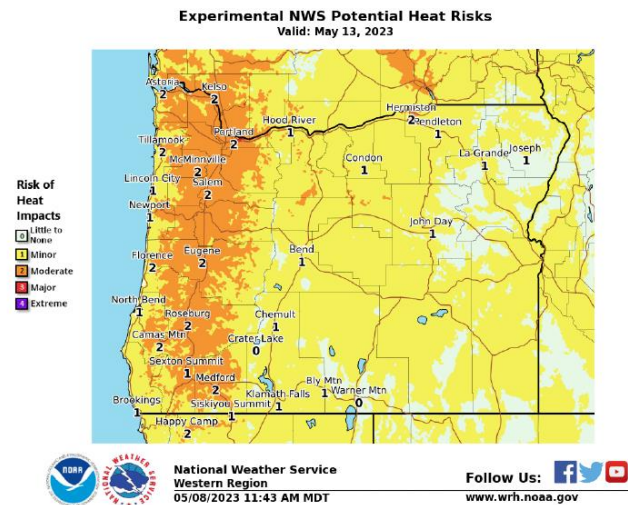
**Mass Care  
Response  
Team**



Working with local communities, OREM:

- Helps identify and plan for mass care needs
- Plans and executes exercises with partners
- Pre-positions materials and supplies

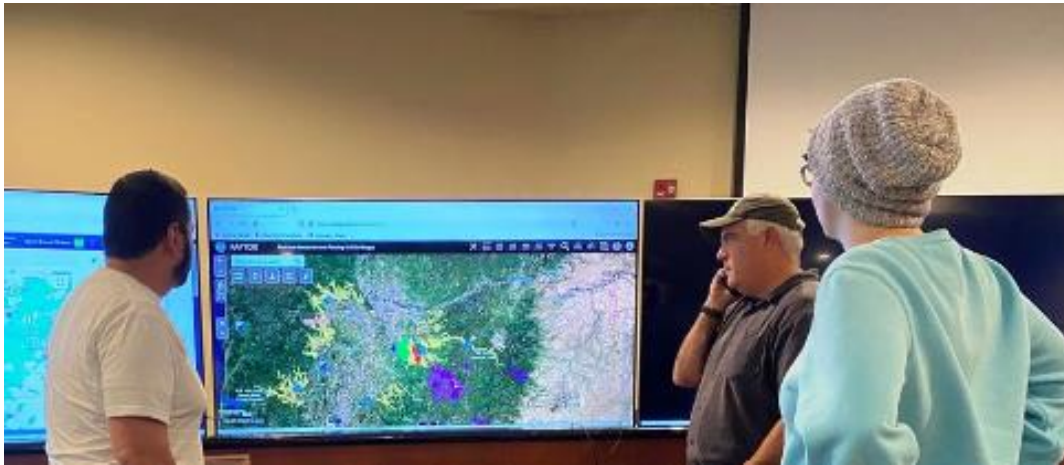
# Response: Why it matters



- Disasters and emergencies have become chronic situations, and will continue
- ODHS was unprepared for the 2020 wildfires, in its roles to support the people it serves and the whole community

- People most at risk, most challenged during evacuations, need quick responses and help
- Nearly 60,000 of the people ODHS serves may need focused attention in a disaster

# Response: Evacuation



- Special focus on people who need extra assistance to evacuate safely
- Locals need to know who to evacuate first, or early, and ODHS staff can help identify them, and may be able to assist with transportation and other needs

- Staffing and other supports to local evacuation efforts
- Mass care planning support at local emergency operations centers

# Response: Emergency shelter



- Traditional disaster shelters
- Respite centers for cleaner air, cooling and warming needs
- Support to disaster shelters when needs exceed the abilities of local governments



# Response: Water

Do you live in Morrow County and have high nitrate levels in your domestic well?

**Safe water for cooking and drinking is available.**



Visit [go.usa.gov/xJy4h](http://go.usa.gov/xJy4h) to find a temporary water distribution site near you.



¿Vive en el condado de Morrow y su pozo de agua doméstico tiene niveles altos de nitrato?

**Tenemos agua que es segura para cocinar y beber disponible para usted.**



Visite el sitio web [go.usa.gov/xJy4h](http://go.usa.gov/xJy4h) para encontrar un sitio temporal de distribución de agua cerca de usted.



- Water is the most essential life-sustaining supply needed by everyone
- When disruptions like widespread dry wells or water contamination become emergencies, ODHS helps

# Response: Distribution of emergency supplies and equipment



- Distribution of life-sustaining equipment is a core response to unhealthy air, loss of power and supporting emergency evacuation centers.
- 28 entities across 18 counties are receiving ODHS grants to establish new cleaner air shelters. An unmet need of nearly \$14 million remains.
- ODHS, OHA and local Lane County partners delivered more than 1,000 air filtration systems to public locations and to individual homes to protect the community from wildfire smoke.
- Providing backup power provided cooling center and electrical charging support for a community resilience hub.

# Recovery: Why it matters



| Wildfire Survivor Opens the Door to a New Home- and a Start at a New Life



kgw.com

**Family moves into new home as Detroit rebuilds after wildfires**

# Recovery: Overview



## NEWS RELEASE



**FEMA awards ODHS \$6.3M grant for a disaster case management program.**

A single point of contact will coordinate a variety of services to address the unmet disaster-related needs of Sept. 2020 wildfire survivors.

### Affected by the Oregon wildfires?

Connect today to find resources to help you recover.

**CALL 1-833-669-0554**  
Open 24/7, every day.

- Information and referrals to local, state and federal resources.
- A case manager focused on you and your family, to help meet your disaster recovery needs.
- Interpreters available.

**wildfire.oregon.gov**

- Learn how to stay safe and find aid.
- Check for updates, new information and community events.

Find us on  [www.facebook.com/OMDOEM](https://www.facebook.com/OMDOEM)  
You can download the campaign flyer here: <https://open.stafo.us/forms/serviciod0802a.pdf>



### ¿Fué directamente afectado por incendios forestales de Oregon?

Contáctenos hoy mismo para encontrar recursos que le ayuden a recuperarse.

**LLAME AL 1-833-669-0554**  
Abierto las 24 horas del día, los 7 días de la semana.

- Información y conexiones con recursos locales.
- Un manejador de casos dedicado a usted y a su familia, para ayudarle a satisfacer sus necesidades de recuperación tras la catástrofe.
- Interpretes disponibles.

**wildfire.oregon.gov**

- Conozca más sobre cómo puede permanecer seguro y encontrar ayuda.
- Encuentra la información más reciente y eventos en su comunidad.

Escálate en  [www.facebook.com/OMDOEM](https://www.facebook.com/OMDOEM)  
Puede descargar el volante de la campaña aquí: <https://open.stafo.us/forms/serviciod0802a.pdf>



- Recovery is different for each person and family.
- Disaster Case Managers help survivors identify and overcome barriers to recovery, by working across all systems and needs.
- A review of disaster cases identified that the services survivors most need in order to achieve a sufficient level of recovery is housing.

# Recovery: Support to Social Services

More than \$10.5 million to local community-based organizations to provide outreach, case management and monetary support to survivors. Including:

**“OREM has been an unwavering partner in prioritizing the recovery of the Santiam Canyon, our partnership being vital in the recovery of 244 households that have successfully rebuilt or relocated. ODHS OREM has taken the admirable step to trust local organizations such as us, and to empower our team to do work in response to disasters that have affected our community. It is through this integration of State and local collaborates that we believe we are most effective.”**

-- Santiam Service Integration Team Director



Glide Revitalization



# Barriers to resilience:

## What we've learned from communities

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Oregon's communities of color do not have the **support they need during emergencies**.\*



Oregon's **culturally and linguistically appropriate emergency response** systems are deeply lacking.\*



Survivors need **ongoing support and advocacy** to connect successfully to the resources they're eligible to receive.

Programs are **siloed and unaligned**, creating barriers for survivors needing a range of services.

Recovery isn't one-size-fits-all. **We need different approaches** to help people who were experiencing challenges before the fires.



Community-based and culturally-specific organizations are **essential partners** in helping survivors recover.

# Where we're going

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## Traditional perspective:

- Prepare
- Respond to high-impact incident
- Return to preparation



## Today's reality:

- Chronic emergencies, principally driven by climate change
- Preparing and responding to ongoing crises takes a lot of time and resources



## Our obligations:

- We must simultaneously prepare for and respond to less intense, climate-driven emergencies, while also preparing for catastrophic disasters



Questions?

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