

# Preparing for Disaster Events



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NSGIC is committed to providing common sense approaches to the real-world problems experienced by individual states during major disasters. This document was created by NSGIC's Geospatial Preparedness Committee. It provides some of the issues identified by Gulf and East Coast states during Hurricanes Katrina and Sandy. The suggested actions are applicable to every type of major disaster event.

Please determine how you can apply these recommendations in your state and attend NSGIC meetings to learn about the latest issues.

Our meetings provide excellent networking opportunities where you will meet the managers of state and Federal GIS programs that are constantly improving geospatial preparedness.

<http://nsgic.org>

## Map Books and Data

**Issue** - There is a need to quickly and efficiently distribute Federal, state and local data, and map books, to responders from outside the affected area during an event.

### State Coordinators Should:

- Work with their emergency management agencies to ensure that responders from outside the impacted areas (e.g. USAR teams) will have access to suitable data and maps.
- Where necessary, develop an "emergency response" agreement with state, county and local governments to allow the distribution of data and map books during emergencies as required.
- Populate statewide and local data on the NSGIC GIS Inventory by establishing a harvesting account from their ArcCatalog or State Clearinghouse Sites to meet emergency response needs.
- Work with their emergency management agencies to gather, store on external hard drives, and immediately make state and local data available to USAR teams and other first responders upon their deployment.
- Have standardized map books developed and made available for emergency responders. Missouri's example can be found by [clicking here](#).



**NSGIC**

National States Geographic Information Council

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## Mobile Devices

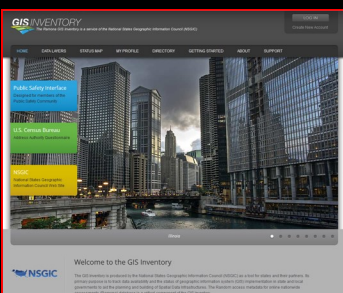
**Issue** - Emergency responders and the general public increasingly rely on the use of mobile devices to obtain information in their daily lives. Dynamic data such as locations of: power outages, gas stations with gas (and power), road closures and the location/status of shelters are not quickly available during major events. Applications and other communication tools need to be developed to provide that information via mobile devices.

### State Coordinators Should:

- Work with their State emergency management agencies to develop and/or use mobile applications to get information to and from cell phones and other mobile devices on water, shelter, gas, food, places to charge their devices, etc.
- Work with their Public Service agencies and utility companies to develop mechanisms for reporting power outages/restorations to emergency responders and the general public via mobile devices.
- Work with their State DOT's to develop mobile applications for reporting state and local road closures to the public.

**NSGIC** is a 501 (c) (6) organization committed to efficient and effective government through the prudent adoption of geospatial information technologies. Voting members include the senior state geographic information system managers and coordinators. Other members come from federal agencies, local government, the private sector, academia and other professional organizations. NSGIC members include nationally and internationally recognized experts in geospatial information technologies and policy. NSGIC provides a unified voice on geographic information and technology issues, advocates State interests and supports its membership in their statewide initiatives.

NSGIC reviews legislative and agency actions, promotes positive legislative actions and provides factual information to public and private decision-makers. It also provides services such as the GIS Inventory.



<http://gisinventory.net>

## Dynamic Data

**Issue** - Dynamic event data needs to be provided as quickly as possible when an emergency occurs.

### State Coordinators Should:

Work with their EOC's to establish web feature services prior to an emergency that can deliver dynamic data when required during an emergency.

## Volunteers

**Issue** – GIS volunteers are often needed to provide GIS services at state, county and/or municipal Emergency Operations Centers (EOC's).

### State Coordinators Should:

Work with their state, county and/or municipal EOC's to determine their needs and then develop a list of GIS volunteers who are, or can be trained to respond to emergencies within their state, as well as qualified individuals who may be available in other states via the [Emergency Management Assistance Compact \(EMAC\)](#).

## Information Access

**Issue** - Disagreements sometimes occur over information access (conflicts over security concerns vs. providing useful information to the public). An example is the need to inform the public about shelters with available capacity versus exposing/publicizing the locations of "vulnerable populations."

### State Coordinators Should:

Work with their emergency management agencies to develop a communication plan that will determine appropriate access to all required information prior to an event.

## Emergency Contacts Information

**Issue** - Emergency events are not the time to discover that you don't know how to contact people on a 24/7 basis.

### State Coordinators Should:

Provide their emergency management contacts when requested by NSGIC to ensure that the Emergency Contacts List of state and federal staff is current. When updated lists are distributed by NSGIC, State Coordinators should redistribute them as appropriate within their state.

