

Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)

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The **Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)** is a United States government agency with the purpose to coordinate aid and respond to disasters around the nation when local resources are insufficient. Commanding a budget of approximately \$14 billion annually, the agency is headquartered in Washington, D.C.

FEMA was created in 1978 as part of the Presidential Reorganization Plan No. 3, and implemented in 1979 under executive orders signed by President Jimmy Carter. One of the early projects of FEMA was to create a series of tunnels and bunkers for the protection of U.S. government officials. The agency was shown in action in responding to the dumping of toxic waste into the Love Canal in Niagara, New York in 1978 and the Three Mile Island nuclear incident in Pennsylvania in 1979.

The agency was made to coordinate response to crises that would otherwise overwhelm resources of local and state authorities. In order to get FEMA assistance, the governor of a state must declare a state of emergency and make formal contact to the president of FEMA. This declaration is necessary to receive aid, except in the case of states that contain property or assets of the federal government.

FEMA coordinates with other federal agencies, non-profit organizations and private sector companies when responding to disasters. When a disaster hits, FEMA collaborates and helps manage operations on the ground with agencies and organizations like the Department of Homeland Security, U.S. Coast Guard, American Red Cross, Housing and Urban Development, Health and Human Services and Defense departments.

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