

City of Alton

EMERGENCY OPERATIONS PLAN

After September 11, 2001 the President of the United States directed that all municipalities develop or revise their emergency disaster plans to incorporate the National Incident Management System (NIMS). The Alton City Council passed a resolution adopting NIMS on December 8, 2004. By executive order of the mayor, a standing committee has been established for the purpose of revising the comprehensive Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) for the City of Alton. This committee consists of the Fire Chief, Police Chief, Director of Public Works, Deputy Fire Chief, Deputy Police Chief, and Deputy Director of Public Works. It is the responsibility of this committee to develop a NIMS compliant Emergency Operations Plan, maintain and update the plan, and conduct an annual drill to test the readiness and effectiveness of this plan.

The City of Alton's NIMS compliant Emergency Operations Plan was completed in October of 2006. The plan was submitted and approved by the Madison County Emergency Management Agency. The Alton City Council formally adopted the plan in November of 2006.

The City of Alton maintains a full-time, professional staff of emergency responders. The police department is staffed with sixty-seven (67) sworn officers and twenty-eight (28) civilian employees. The fire department is staffed by sixty-four (64) uniformed personnel and one civilian employee. The fire department provides advanced life support paramedic service to the community. Ambulance transport is provided by two private ambulance services located in the city. The City operates its own park & recreation department and sewage treatment facility. The public works department is staffed with fifty-four (54) full-time and five (5) part-time employees and provides a fully functional maintenance garage for all city apparatus and vehicles.

PURPOSE:

The purpose of a comprehensive Emergency Operations Plan is to plan for measures to be taken which will preserve life and minimize damage to property during a response to emergencies, to provide necessary assistance to the citizens of this city, and to establish a recovery system in order to return the City of Alton to its normal state of affairs.

Since response organizations are trained to operate within their organization's command structure, but are rarely called upon to perform their duties as part of a unified and integrated multi-organizational response, the need for a comprehensive Emergency Operations Plan exists.

The Emergency Operations Plan is written in a straightforward manner regarding who, what, when, where, and how to respond to any natural, technological, or national security emergency or disaster. The EOP consists of three segments that establish an emergency management strategy designed to ensure that the City of Alton is better prepared to respond to disasters. These segments are: (1) Emergency Operations Basic Plan, (2) Functional Annexes, and (3) Incident Specific Annexes.

SITUATION:

The City of Alton is exposed to many hazards, all of which have the potential to threaten the health, safety and welfare of the citizens of the community. These hazards are classified as natural, technological, and national security in nature. All disasters create the potential for injuries, death, property damage, and disruption of a community. Some disasters have the potential to include the evacuation and/or sheltering of people. These include, but are not limited to, major fires, hazardous materials incidents, flooding, severe winter storms, transportation accidents, severe weather and/or tornadoes, and terrorist attacks.

City officials and staff recognize their responsibilities with regard to the health, safety and welfare of the public and will assume their responsibilities in the implementation of any section or part of the Emergency Operations Plan. If properly implemented, this plan should reduce or prevent disaster related losses, and reduce recovery time.

CONCEPT OF OPERATIONS:

Alton's first responders are usually the first to know of an impending disaster/emergency. They will notify the Police Chief and/or Fire Chief, who will contact the Mayor. The Mayor will decide what personnel or agencies need to be contacted and if the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) will be activated. The City of Alton will utilize the Integrated Emergency Management System for overall direction and control of the City's disaster response and the Unified Incident Command System structure for purposes of on-site direction and control.

It is the basic concept that emergency operations will make primary use of all normally available resources to combat the effects of a disaster. Because city government will be the primary resource for disaster operations, appropriate emergency functions are assigned to city departments, and various public and private agencies, based on their normal day-to-day responsibilities. Routine City functions, which are not essential to disaster response, will be suspended once the Emergency Operations Plan is implemented and emergency assignments will be made for all City personnel.

The City of Alton has a fully functional Emergency Operations Center strategically located within the city. In addition, secondary and tertiary Emergency Operations Centers have been identified and prepared for occupation. The location of these centers will be announced in the event of a declared city-wide disaster.

Should the resources of the city prove insufficient in a disaster situation, the Fire Chief or his designate, will function as the city's coordinating official in requesting disaster assistance from the Madison County Emergency Management Agency and the Illinois Emergency Management Agency. Damage assessment information on the disaster will be promptly reported to the Illinois Emergency Management Agency through Madison County EMA, which is responsible for the coordination of state resources. This will facilitate a more effective state response. Should the resources of the state prove insufficient in a disaster situation, federal disaster assistance will be requested through the Illinois Emergency Management Agency.

No matter how many levels of response are involved, local officials will always maintain ultimate control and responsibility. It is also recognized that government cannot respond to all disasters alone. Volunteers will be accepted, when doing so will not put them at extreme risk, and utilized to the full extent of their capabilities in accordance with the Illinois Emergency Management Act. Citizens should listen to local radio stations and watch local television newscasts for information on how to volunteer.

Prudent homeland security practices mandate that we not publish the detailed contents of the City of Alton Emergency Operations Plan on our website. Citizens can rest assured that the Mayor and the Emergency Operations Committee have worked diligently to prepare a comprehensive, workable plan of operations in the event of a disaster striking the City of Alton. In addition, first responders in all departments of public safety will continue to train and prepare for any type of situation that may arise. Regular disaster drills will be conducted annually and the Emergency Operations Plan will be continually updated and maintained.

In the event of a city-wide disaster, citizens are asked to tune in to local radio and television news services, as well as The Telegraph, for information and instructions from government leaders.

Citizens are encouraged to visit the FEMA and IEMA websites for further information on disaster preparedness.