

2019 YEAR IN REVIEW



02/01/2020

Town of Surf City – Emergency Management

The Department of Emergency Management is pleased to present a summary of 2019's events as it relates to Emergency Management activities.

2019 Year in Review

TOWN OF SURF CITY – EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

HIGHLIGHT: ACCOMPLISHMENTS

From February 2019 until now, I have been working to bring as many of the goals and tasks highlighted during the February 2019 Council Workshop to fruition.

I would like to take a moment and thank all those that have assisted in EM's undertakings throughout this past year. We have worked, are working, and will be working on some big projects, and without the help from my coworkers, some of these projects would be insurmountable.

One milestone we have achieved in May was becoming a "Weather Ready Nation Ambassador". This achievement was a result of working with our local National Weather Service partners on the following areas:

- Promoting Weather-Ready Nation messages and themes to their stakeholders;
- Engaging with NOAA personnel on potential collaboration opportunities;
- Sharing their success stories of preparedness and resiliency;
- Serving as an example by educating employees on workplace preparedness



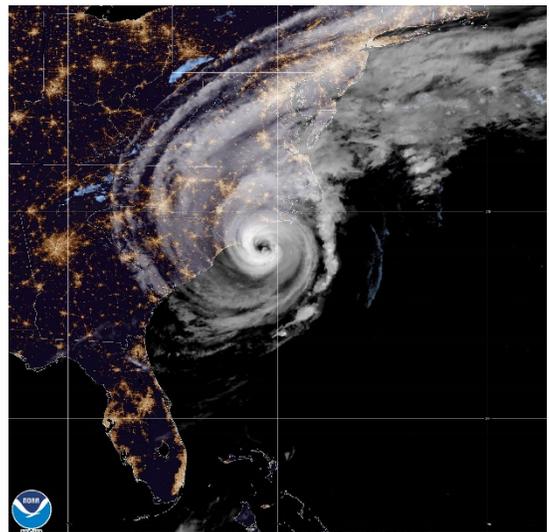
Our next step will be to earn the Storm Ready Community designation and we are well on our way to making it happen!

HIGHLIGHT: TROPICAL WEATHER ACTIVITY

2019 was an above-average year for tropical weather systems in the Atlantic Basin, with 12 named systems, 6 hurricanes, and 3 major hurricanes observed. Surf City EM followed three of those systems very closely (Andrea, Dorian, and Nestor) as they moved near our area.

As you know, Dorian was the only system to "impact" us here locally. While we suffered very little by way of physical impacts, the system still necessitated considerable preparation and response activities.

Throughout the season, over 60 Situational Awareness briefings were created and disseminated to staff and elected officials to keep everyone on an equal field of awareness. 31 of these briefings were issued in response to Hurricane Dorian alone.



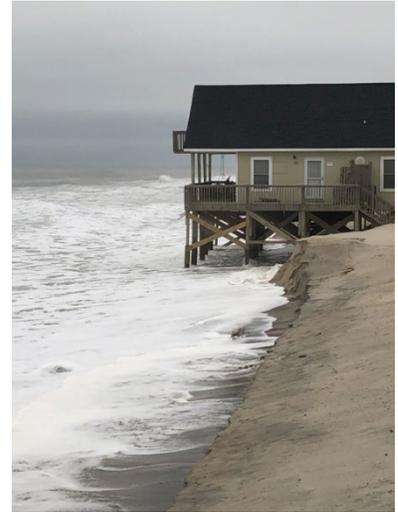
08 Sep 2019 02:40Z NOAA-NESDIS/STAR GOES-East ABI GEOCOLOR

HIGHLIGHT: NON-TROPICAL COASTAL STORMS

As we move into the final 40% of the “Nor’easter Season”, we have seen impacts from 2 out of 8 total systems so far this year. As we know, these coastal systems can wreak havoc on our beaches, sometimes as much as a tropical weather system can. The coastal low that impacted us in November did just that. With areas of moderate beach erosion and escarpment, the November system left far more of a mark on us than Hurricane Dorian did.

After the system moved out to sea, we were left with mild to moderate escarpment and erosion, damage to private oceanside stairs and decking, and dune over wash at several places of N. Shore Drive, between the 900 block and 9th St Beach Access. Parks and Recreation crews did a great job at preserving some of the public beach accesses by temporarily removing sections of the crossovers to keep from losing them in the encroaching surf. This was a last minute decision, and they performed exceptionally.

All in all, we took some damage, but are working through it to get back to where we should be.



HIGHLIGHT: SEVERE WEATHER

We experienced a meteorologically average severe weather pattern for most of 2019. Not average however, was the occurrence of not one, but two, actual tornados on August 5th. First believed to be what are called fair weather waterspouts, both were eventually reclassified as classic EF-0 tornados.



Impacts from these two incidents were relatively small, with approximately \$2,000.00 worth of damage to personal property in Blackbeard’s Campground, along with requiring two people to seek medical treatment after being injured. Both individuals were injured while trying to keep personal belongings from blowing away.

Less than two days later, another round of tornadic weather crept into the area, this time forcing a shelter-in-place order to be issued for all town staff. Luckily, the tornado never touched down in town. These incidents just go to prove that while not a common occurrence, we should always strive to be prepared for as much as we possibly can.



HIGHLIGHT: OTHER EVENTS AND INCIDENTS

In March, 2019, EM assistance was requested in support of a missing juvenile that had ran away from the Surf City Middle School. Within 30 minutes of being requested, we had numerous resources on scene from a variety of agencies, including specialized search and rescue teams from PENSAR. Although the juvenile was found within an hour window, we were ready to operate over an extended period of time if need be.

Dolphin Dip, 4th of July Celebration, and Christmas Tree Lighting events went off with any issues arising. For the 4th of July, we utilized the Mobile Command Unit from Pender EMS and Fire to run event operations from. They also provided UAS (drone) support for both the Fireworks and the Christmas Tree lighting as well. They are a great partner to have and I am grateful to have the privilage to work with them.

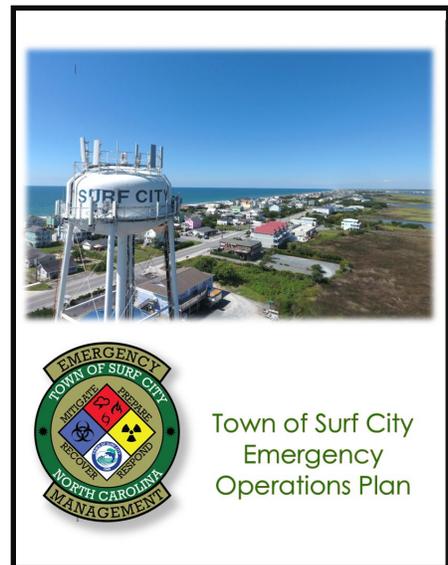
HIGHLIGHT: PUBLIC OUTREACH AND EDUCATION

We conducted several public outreach efforts throughout the year. We hosted our first Preparedness Day at the Community Center, where we had about 30 visitors. We had partners from the ASPCA, Onslow County EM, National Weather Service Wilmington Field Office, Hampstead Hams, American Red Cross, Pender Health Department, and New Hanover Regional Medical Center staff on hand. We also received a large amount of door prizes from local and regional preparedness gear retailers as well. While not a blow out event, I feel that if we are able to host one this year, turn out may be better.

HIGHLIGHT: PLANNING ACTIVITIES

The first ever version of the All-Hazards Emergency Operations Plan has been completed and submitted for peer review. As of this document's authoring, the feedback received has been very encouraging, with only minor modifications suggested.

Upon completion of the peer review, it will then go on to legal review where our attorney will review it and ensure it meets all legal requirements and standards. From there, it will be presented at the next scheduled Council Workshop for final review and discussion. Finally, promulgation by Council and adoption into the Ordinance.



HIGHLIGHT: THE YEAR AHEAD

2020 is going to be a good year for EM, and Surf City in general. We are currently researching and completing feasibility studies on such projects as:

- Replacement of the inoperable AM Alert Radio Station
- Single Site P25 Viper Radio System
- Municipal Fueling site (or bulk storage site)
- Incident Response Trailer (for use by ANY Town Department)

Also, in 2020, we will be expanding the Emergency Operations Plan to include incident specific annexes as well. As we add these annexes to the Basic Plan, we are getting closer to the highest goal, to have a Comprehensive Planning Package in place.

These incident specific annexes will be worked on in order of the threats and hazards we face, as highlighted in the Threat and Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment (THIRA). The THIRA is projected to be completed mid-year, with additional annexes added to the Basic Plan by end of year. While it may sound like a long time to get plans in place, we would like to stress the importance of taking the necessary amount of time to research and create these documents.

This is not something that we should rush into or hurry to complete. These are complex and interconnected topics that require analysis and research on many levels, which equates to elapsing considerable periods of time. When approached in a methodical manner however, the product is far superior to the product of an expedited project.

patient adjective

 Save Word

pa·tient | \ 'pā-shənt

Definition of *patient* (Entry 1 of 2)

- 1 : bearing pains or trials calmly or without complaint
- 2 : manifesting [forbearance](#) under provocation or strain
- 3 : not hasty or [impetuous](#)
- 4 : steadfast despite opposition, difficulty, or adversity
- 5 **a** : able or willing to bear —used with *of*

HIGHLIGHT: IN CLOSING

These are a few of the most notable activities that Surf City EM took part in over the last year. As we move into 2020, and well into the future, we are taking steps to make Surf City a more resilient community. A community that will be able to quickly and efficiently prepare for, respond to, recover from, and mitigate against, all hazards, natural and man-made.

Thank you for reading. As always, please feel free to reach out if you have any questions, comments, or concerns!

With Highest Regards,

James Horne
Director, Department of Emergency Management
Town of Surf City