



## THE NEW EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT PROFESSIONAL

If, as suggested in this analysis, emergency management is to become a critical part of the process of sustainable community development, the profession must come to see itself in a new context. Emergency managers must see themselves as participating with all political and social institutions in a coordinated effort. The primary focus must be on the building of sustainable communities as the fundamental public value to be served by the emergency management function. But the question remains how, in the performing of their specific tasks, can emergency managers organize their work to serve this public value?

As a first step, emergency managers must be trained and prepared to articulate and develop a role for themselves as a participant in the local consensus building effort in their community and to perceive themselves as working on a common agenda with other community institutions and leaders. All relevant public and private stakeholders, as defined in the context of sustainable development, must be brought into the emergency management planning process. Emergency managers, in turn, must be brought in as stakeholders to the network of community leaders and policymakers involved in community planning and development activities.

A second step, to be accomplished as the emergency management function is integrated into the process of community planning, is the definition of the technical components in each phase of the function (risk assessment, mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery) as a part of a holistic system. This entails, as the most fundamental ingredient, the integration and consistency of all technical components with integrated policies and programs related to disaster mitigation and sustainability within the community. Hazard or disaster mitigation, in essence, must be the preeminent task that ties emergency management into the value of sustainability and defines its role in the context of community planning and development. It must therefore be elevated to the level of first or primary responsibility for the emergency manager. It must also be elevated to the level of an essential or necessary component in all community planning and development activity.

A third or final step necessary for the new emergency management to succeed as a component in sustainable development is the linkage of all public policies within the community to the concept of sustainability. All policies necessary to promote the social, economic, and political stability necessary for a community to flourish, including emergency management policies, must be linked or integrated in the process of community planning. The end product of emergency management must be understood as fundamentally connected to all facets of community life in a coordinated effort to promote sustainability.

To accomplish the three steps briefly outlined above, emergency management needs to move from the traditional tendency to be reactive and disaster specific. It must broaden its orientation beyond efficient disaster response and recovery operations. Everything we have discussed requires that emergency managers be more proactive by emphasizing hazard mitigation. This ultimately means they must work to become networked in partnerships that involve all community leaders associated with the concept of sustainable development. This is to suggest that they must become public actors in the context of a broader involvement in community planning. To make the necessary and