



# Emergency Preparedness Policy

- Storms, wildfires, and drought caused loss of life and [billions](#) of dollars in damage in 2018.
- Tick- and mosquito-borne illnesses have [tripled](#) due to factors including [changing climate](#), and vaccine-preventable diseases are beginning to [re-emerge](#).
- National health security depends on a robust public infrastructure that can help keep an emergency from becoming a disaster.
- Clear, credible, and consistent information from state leaders can help calm a restive public during a crisis

| Resources and policy tools to address emergency preparedness   | What state agencies can address emergency preparedness   |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• State <a href="#">Emergency Operations Plans</a></li> <li>• State infectious disease protocols</li> <li>• State health improvement plans</li> <li>• State fire plans</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• State <a href="#">office of emergency management</a></li> <li>• State <a href="#">public health emergency preparedness</a> division</li> <li>• State department of public health</li> <li>• State laboratory</li> <li>• <a href="#">National Guard</a></li> <li>• State department of <a href="#">agriculture</a> (mosquito control)</li> <li>• State <a href="#">environmental protection</a> agency</li> <li>• State <a href="#">fire</a> agency</li> </ul> |

## State Policy Options

**Multi-agency response.** States can establish state [emergency management agencies](#) or offices and task them with establishing meaningful relationships, sharing information, and clearly defining roles and expectations across state government — as well as with local and private-sector partners — long before emergencies arise.

**Building codes.** States can require structures to be built to better [protect](#) people from earthquakes, hurricanes, floods, tornados, and other natural disasters. State building codes, such as [California’s](#), can also mitigate the risk of harm from wildfires.

**Public health infrastructure.** Robust disease-testing [laboratories](#), fast and effective data-sharing technology, vaccine [stockpiles](#) and distribution networks, and an ample and well-trained [workforce](#) can keep people healthy and ready to respond before emergencies become worse.

*This document is part of NASHP’s [Upstream Health Priorities for New Governors Toolkit](#). Explore the entire toolkit [here](#). <https://nashp.org/toolkit-upstream-health-priorities-for-new-governors/>*

## Evidence and Resources for State Leaders

| Policy                                     | Resource  | Notes  |
|--|---|--|
| <b>Building codes</b>                      | National Conference of State Legislators (NCSL), <a href="#">Natural Disasters Taking a Toll on States</a>  | Includes a table of natural disaster mitigation state statutes.  |
|  | Insurance Institute for Business & Home Safety, <a href="#">Rating the States: 2018</a> .   | Features an assessment of residential building code and enforcement systems in hurricane-prone regions.  |
| <b>Multi-agency emergency preparedness</b> | NCSL, " <a href="#">Natural Disasters Taking a Toll on States</a> "   | Includes a table of natural disaster mitigation state statutes, including those creating a state emergency management agency.  |
|  | National Academy for State Health Policy (NASHP), <a href="#">State Strategies to Prevent and Respond to Disease Crises through Medicaid and Public Health Partnerships</a> " | See also NASHP's <a href="#">From A to Zika</a> and conference presentations " <a href="#">State Levers for Protecting Health in Disasters</a> ," featuring Oregon, Florida, and Louisiana.  |
| <b>Public health infrastructure</b>        | Trust for America's Health (TFAH), <a href="#">Ready or Not? Protecting the Public's Health from Diseases, Disasters, and Bioterrorism</a> , 2017.                            | TFAH's comprehensive report includes <a href="#">state-level</a> fact sheets.  |
|  | Association of State and Territorial Officials (ASTHO), <a href="#">Preparedness</a>  | ASTHO's preparedness policy committee develops priorities and recommendations for different aspects of state public health emergency preparedness.   |
|  | ASTHO and the de Beaumont Foundation, <a href="#">Public Health Workforce Interests and Needs Survey (PH WINS)</a>  | This publication looks at the state public health workforce and the kinds of investments that would best support it.   |
| <b>Preparedness education</b>              | American Public Health Association, <a href="#">Get Ready</a>   | Educational materials for the public include <a href="#">Recipes for Disaster: An Emergency Preparedness Cookbook</a> and <a href="#">infographics</a> on <a href="#">flood</a> safety, <a href="#">winter storm</a> safety, and <a href="#">flu</a> .   |
| <b>Climate and health</b>                  | CDC and APHA, <a href="#">Climate Effects on Health</a> .   | Fact sheets examine the effects of climate on health, including impacts on air quality, increased insect-borne disease, and injury.  |
|  | US Global Change Research Program, <a href="#">The Impacts of Climate Change on Human Health in the United States: A Scientific Assessment</a> "                              | This interactive resource contains chapters and infographics on a range of topic, including the impact of climate change on mental health, and impact on vulnerable populations.   |
|  | <a href="#">CDC's Climate and Health Program – Adaptation in Action</a>   | This report details success stories from several state public health departments (IL, MA, MD, NC, NH, OR, WI, RI, NY) as they build climate change adaption plans and take action to address the health effects of climate change.   |
|  | NCSL, <a href="#">State Forest Carbon Incentives and Policies</a>   | Many states ( <a href="#">ME</a> , <a href="#">MN</a> , <a href="#">NC</a> , <a href="#">VT</a> ) have adopted tax incentives to encourage landowners to keep forested land undeveloped. States ( <a href="#">KY</a> , <a href="#">MI</a> ) also fund stewardship activities of forested land, and several have conservation easement tax credits. |