

PDA PROCESS

The Preliminary Damage Assessment (PDA) process is a mechanism to determine the impact and magnitude of damage and the resulting unmet needs of local governments, state agencies, the public sector, and the community as a whole caused by a disaster event. Information collected is used by the state as a basis for the Governor's request to the President for a declaration of Emergency or Major Disaster, and by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to document the recommendation made to the President in response to the Governor's request. It is in the best interest of all parties to combine State and Federal personnel resources by performing a joint PDA prior to the initiation of a Governor's request as follows:

1. **Pre-assessment by the State** - This is accomplished by Initial Damage Assessment Summary Reports and Situation Reports submitted by County Emergency Management Directors/Coordinators (CEMD/C) which are processed through the State Emergency Operations Center (SEOC) and by deployed MEMA representatives who provide assistance and assessments of disaster damages. Damage and impacts from the disaster are summarized on the Initial Damage Assessment Summary Form which is submitted to the SEOC. Information gathered will be used to help identify unmet needs and to determine if a request is made to FEMA Region III for a joint PDA.
2. **PDA Damage Assessment Teams** – Damage assessment teams will be composed of at least one representative of FEMA and one representative of the State. A local government representative, familiar with the extent and location of damage in their community is essential for an accurate assessment. Other State and Federal agencies and voluntary relief organizations may also be asked to participate as needed. FEMA and State officials will brief team members on damage criteria, the kind of information to be collected for the particular incident, and reporting requirements.
3. **Review of Findings** – At the close of the PDA, FEMA will consult with State officials to discuss findings and reconcile any differences.
4. **Exceptions** – In a catastrophic event, an expedited request for a Presidential disaster declaration from the Governor may be processed prior to conducting a disaster assessment; however, a PDA must be completed as soon as possible to assist with program planning and implementation.