



2024 ANNUAL REPORT

***Massachusetts Emergency
Management Agency***

[Mass.gov/MEMA](https://www.mass.gov/MEMA)

Letter from the Director

01

Dear Friends and Partners,

It is with great pride that I present the Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency's (MEMA) Annual Report for 2024. This document captures the extraordinary work accomplished by our dedicated team, in collaboration with partners across the Healey-Driscoll Administration, federal and local government, private industry, and the community. Together, we have navigated incredible challenges, including an unprecedented fall fire season and drought, and advanced our mission to ensure the Commonwealth's preparedness and enhance our collective resilience.

This past year, we faced numerous tests to our preparedness, response, and recovery systems. From managing the impacts of severe weather events to strengthening our readiness for emerging threats and hazards, MEMA's commitment to excellence has remained steadfast. Our efforts have included enhancing our facilities with critical upgrades, securing the future of the State Disaster Logistics Warehouse, expanding training opportunities for emergency managers across the Commonwealth and New England, and evaluating the impacts of climate and cultural change to strategically position the agency and align our efforts with the evolving needs of the future.

Looking ahead, MEMA is committed to building on this progress. We will continue to lead with strategic foresight, prioritizing accessibility and equity in our emergency management program, and will strengthen partnerships that serve to enhance our shared preparedness. As we develop new strategies to address the evolving landscape of risks, we invite you to join us in fostering a culture of preparedness that spans every corner of our great state.

I also want to highlight the remarkable work of our local emergency management directors and staff. Disasters begin and end locally, so it is these emergency managers who directly assist survivors during disasters and ensure our communities are prepared and resilient. They do an exceptional job of it. Thank you for all you do, every day, year in and year out for our communities, citizens, and visitors.

I extend my deepest gratitude to our staff, partners, and all those who have supported MEMA's mission this year. Your dedication and collaboration have been instrumental to our success. Together, we will continue to ensure that Massachusetts remains strong, resilient, and ready for whatever challenges the future may bring.

Thank you for taking the time to review this report and for your continued support of MEMA.

Respectfully,



Dawn Brantley
Director
Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency



MEMA's Mission

02



Mission

The Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency's mission is to support the state and its communities through coordination and leadership to prepare for, mitigate against, respond to, and recover from all disasters.

Vision

- Address resource constraints and develop creative approaches to align funding with strategic goals. Plan for increasing operational costs and resource needs at a time when resources are becoming more constrained.
- Foster alignment of efforts across divisions and regional offices to ensure shared objectives are met effectively.
- Strengthen advocacy efforts to deepen understanding of emergency management capabilities and garner increased support for the vital role and critical importance of emergency management.
- Ensure technology supports compliance and enhances operational capabilities, as able given existing constraints.
- Prepare for a shifting regulatory landscape and potential legal challenges, particularly in light of changes to interpretation and application of federal policies.
- Foster a proactive culture to address burnout and manage workload effectively amidst growing demands.
- Strengthen relationships with local communities and partners to ensure equitable and inclusive program delivery.
- Strengthen and expand partnerships with state agencies to enhance the preparedness and resilience of the Commonwealth.

Securing Federal Disaster Assistance for 2023 Flooding

03

Recovery

On May 15, 2024, Massachusetts received a Major Disaster Declaration to support individuals and households in Worcester and Bristol counties that experienced flooding September 11-13, 2023, which caused extensive flooding across the state, with more than seven inches of rain falling in some communities. The severe weather required evacuations, sheltering, water rescues, and the construction of temporary roadways to allow residents and first responders access to homes.

Governor Healey initially requested a federal disaster declaration [in December 2023](#), and when that request was denied, filed an appeal asking the President and FEMA to reevaluate the request, including all identified, eligible costs.

MEMA's Recovery Unit and Regional staff played a critical role in supporting communities impacted by the flooding during the response, conducting damage assessments and developing the application for federal assistance, staffing the Disaster Recovery Centers, and ensuring ongoing communication with local emergency management directors regarding available assistance. MEMA also developed a website to centralize flood recovery information from multiple federal, state and nonprofit agencies to help residents navigate available resources.

1,490

Registrations for
FEMA assistance

\$7.5M+

FEMA assistance
paid to homeowners
and renters

123

Applications for
Small Business
Administration
low-interest loans

\$1.3M+

Home and
business loans
disbursed



Centralizing Recovery Resources

04

2024 Recovery Resource Centers

6

Recovery Resource Centers

1

Business Recovery Center

400+

Individuals assisted

After a disaster or an emergency impacts a community, survivors may need a variety of state and local resources to help get back on their feet. When there is a need, MEMA works with the emergency management director in the impacted city or town and local leaders to establish a Recovery Resource Center (RRC). An RRC can help deliver essential services directly to those affected by bringing together local, state, and nonprofit partners to connect survivors with essential supplies, resources, and services in a centralized location.

In 2024, MEMA stood up six RRCs following apartment fires in the towns of Lynn, Randolph, Worcester, Chelsea, Peabody and Southbridge. More than 400 individuals were served. Agencies that supported the RRCs provided resources such as: housing, medical, and food assistance, elder services, replacement of lost driver's licenses/IDs, legal services, and mental health resources.

Businesses have unique recovery needs. On September 10, 2024, a fire destroyed a strip mall in Lynnfield. The six-alarm fire caused extensive damage to multiple businesses. The U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) approved Governor Maura Healey's request for federal assistance to support the impacted small businesses with low-interest, long-term loans, and established a temporary Business Recovery Center where business owners could apply for assistance and receive support.



Training

05

National Emergency Management Basic Academy

In 2021, MEMA's Training & Exercise Unit introduced the National Emergency Management Basic Academy. The goal of the Basic Academy is to support the early careers of emergency managers through training and experience, combining knowledge of all fundamental systems, concepts, and practices of cutting-edge emergency management

89 GRADUATES

Emergency management professionals in Massachusetts who have graduated from the Basic Academy.

MA Professional Emergency Manager Program

In 2022, MEMA launched the Massachusetts Professional Emergency Manager (MPEM) program - a professional development tool and recognition program for emergency managers designed with a combination of pertinent online and classroom courses and hands-on experiences that will enable emergency managers to demonstrate their commitment to the profession and mastery of the field.

95 APPLICANTS

Emergency management professionals have applied for the MPEM program.

TRAINING BY THE NUMBERS

116 Courses offered in 2024

1,754 Class Participants

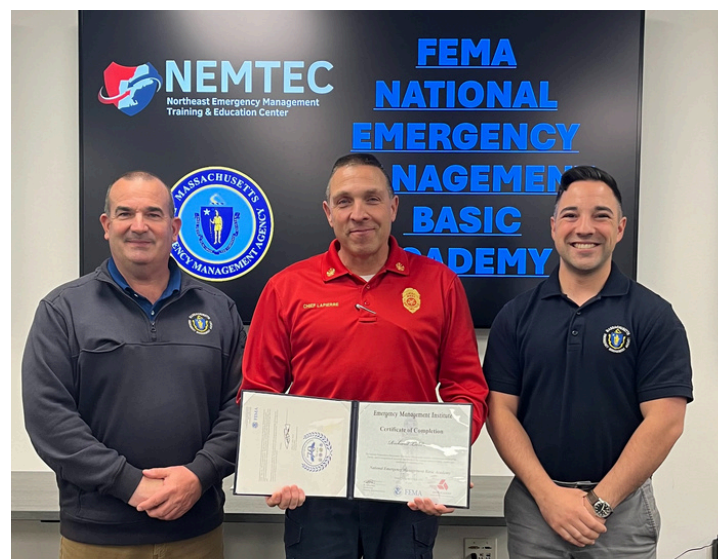
NORTHEAST EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT TRAINING & EDUCATION CENTER (NEMTEC)

In 2024, NEMTEC offered 120 in-person and virtual courses, with a total of 1,811 student completions.



Northeast Emergency Management
Training & Education Center

*A collaborative training center for a
more prepared region.*



Women in Emergency Management

State agencies launch new meeting series to support women in emergency management

06



In a field traditionally dominated by men, women across Massachusetts are performing essential roles in emergency management and leading disaster planning, response, and recovery across public, private, and nonprofit sectors. In May 2024, MEMA and Massachusetts Department of Public Health's Office of Preparedness and Emergency Management launched a new quarterly meeting series to bring together women emergency managers from all sectors, career stages, and corners of Massachusetts for transformative learning, connection, and empowerment.

In its first year, more than 300 women attended the MA Women in Emergency Management events, which were held in Franklin, Beverly, and West Springfield, and were all open to virtual participation to encourage participation from all parts of the state. Attendees represented federal, state, and local emergency management agencies, nonprofits, higher education, healthcare, private sector, and transportation and energy sector professionals.

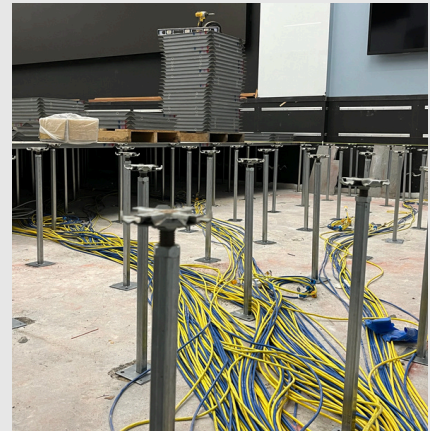
State Emergency Operations Center (SEOC) Accessibility

07

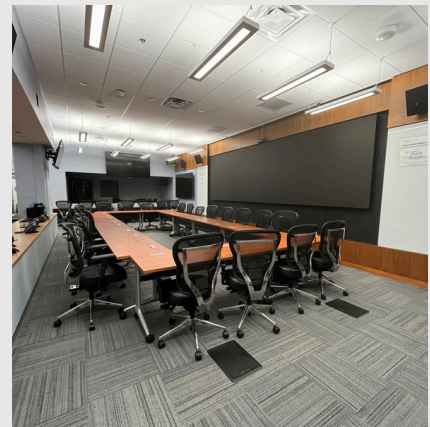
Before



During Construction



After



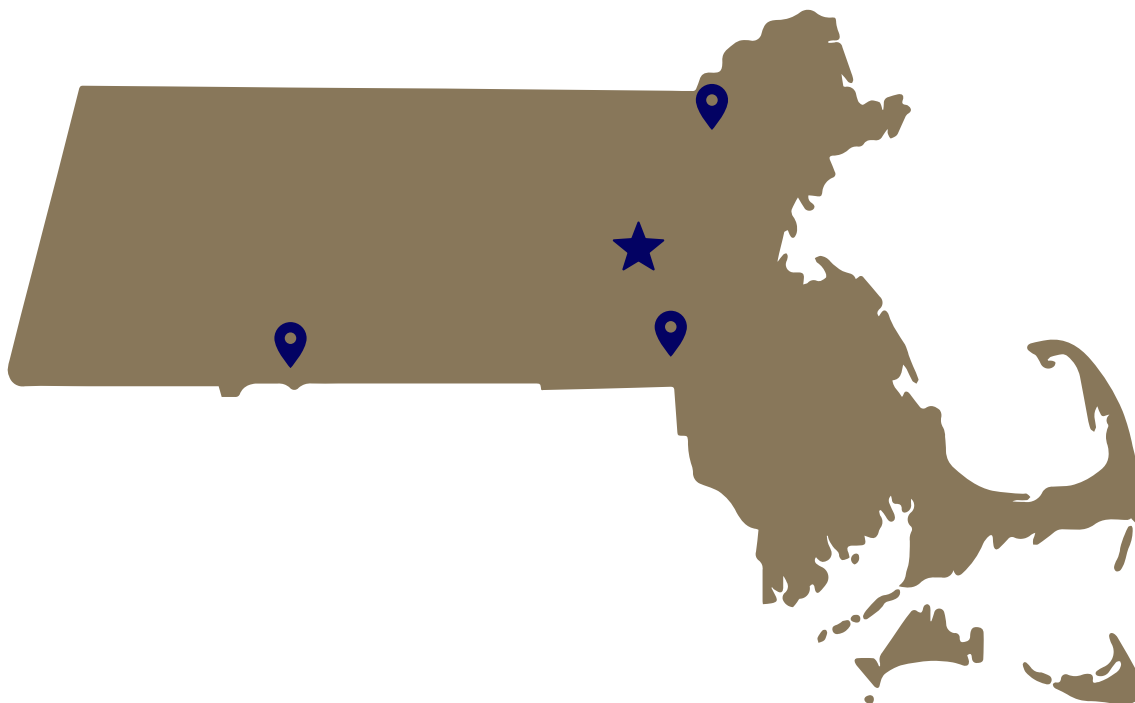
In 2024, the State Emergency Operations Center (SEOC) at MEMA underwent significant renovations to make it fully accessible. During the process, the SEOC floor was raised to a single level. Railings and two small sets of steps were removed to allow better access for all. This work follows a Memorandum of Understanding that MEMA and the Massachusetts Office on Disability (MOD) signed in 2023, formalizing a partnership to strengthen access and equity in emergency management. To learn more about the renovations and the commonwealth's commitment to accessibility visit tinyurl.com/seocupgrades.

Regional Programs

Building strong local/state partnerships for a more resilient Massachusetts

MEMA's Regional Offices, comprised of Local Coordinators and Regional Managers, are MEMA's direct connection to the 351 local emergency management directors across the Commonwealth. These professionals support communities during both emergencies and steady state operations.

08



During 2024...

115

The Regional Offices helped cities and towns complete 88 Local Comprehensive Emergency Management Plans (CEMPs), as well as 27 other emergency management related plans.

150

Local Coordinators from the Regional Offices responded to communities to assist during emergencies 150 times.

264

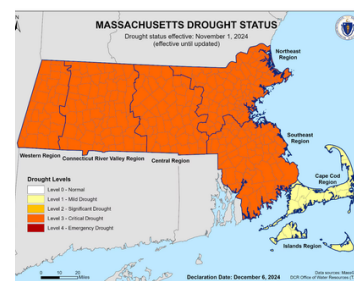
MEMA's Region Offices supported 181 training events and 83 exercises

200+

Local Coordinators organized two Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) conferences, offering training and networking opportunities for more than 200 CERT volunteers across the state.

Wildland Fire Response

09



Fire Support

Rapid statewide drought conditions during the fall of 2024 resulted in an unprecedented wildfire season across MA. In October and November, more than 500 brush and wildfires burned across the commonwealth. In an average year, this total is 36. The fires impacted every county in the state, and required MEMA to support multi-agency coordination with the Executive Office of Public Safety & Security, Department of Fire Services, Massachusetts National Guard (MANG), State Police, and the Department of Conservation and Recreation. This work resulted in more than 20 requests to deploy assets through the Statewide Fire and EMS Mobilization Plan, and requests to the MANG to support helicopter water drop operations for more than 12 days. MEMA's GIS Unit developed a [GIS Dashboard](#) to share data on wildfire response, including data on reported fires, local burn bans, and the evolution of the drought status over several months. MEMA's agency meteorologist supported weather decision support daily, and the Planning Unit distributed more than 17 situational awareness statements to share a common operating picture statewide of the scale and scope of these fires. MEMA field staff deployed to multiple fires, such as those in Monson, Montgomery, Chicopee, Middleton, and Great Barrington to provide incident command and logistics support. MEMA's Mobile Emergency Operations Center served as the unified command post at the Middleton Pond Fire for 16 straight days.

660+

Brush and wildfires burned more than 4,000 acres across the state in October and November

20+

Requests to deploy assets through the Statewide Fire and EMS Mobilization Plan fulfilled by MEMA's Communications Center

EMAC

MEMA deployed six personnel in 2024 to assist in the response and recovery efforts for Hurricane Helene in North Carolina, South Carolina and Virginia, as well as wildfires in Idaho. The deployments came in response to requests from the Emergency Management Assistance Compact (EMAC), a national mutual aid agreement that facilitates the sharing of resources and personnel during emergencies.

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Marybeth Groff

Hazard Mitigation and Climate
Adaptation Coordinator

- MEMA's Hazard Mitigation and Climate Adaptation Coordinator Marybeth Groff deployed to South Carolina's State Emergency Operations Center to help request, coordinate, and track EMAC resources.

Sara Porter

Public Information Program
Supervisor

- MEMA's Public Information Program Supervisor Sara Porter deployed to North Carolina's State Emergency Operations Center to assist in providing public communications support in the state's Joint Information Center.

Allen Phillips, Sr.

Regional Manager, MEMA East

- MEMA East Regional Manager, Allen Phillips, Sr. deployed to Virginia's State Emergency Operations Center to support logistics and EMAC requests.

Justin Shrair

Public Information Officer

- MEMA's Public Information Officer Justin Shrair deployed to Virginia to assist in providing public communications support to the Joint Information Center by gathering and disseminating videos, photos and other information to the public through social media.

Desiree Kocis

GIS Coordinator

- MEMA's Geographic Information System Coordinator deployed to Virginia's Emergency Operations Center to support damage assessment tools for field personnel, an interactive dashboard for tracking FEMA Individual Assistance actions, debris removal efforts, case management and story maps which highlighted damage, response and recovery efforts.

Communications System Analyst

- MEMA's Communications System Analyst provided dispatch support at the regional, unified fire dispatch center in Coeur d'Alene, Idaho during the region's summer wildfires.



Mitigation

MEMA's Hazard Mitigation Unit works to identify potential vulnerability to threats and hazards across Massachusetts and helps communities implement plans and projects to minimize the impact of disasters and other emergencies.

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Funding Awards:

MEMA secured nearly \$40 million in new mitigation grant awards in 2024, bringing the total mitigation grants currently managed by the agency to over \$300 million - the largest amount in any given year in MEMA's history. These grants support projects that help protect people, property and critical infrastructure from the impacts of disasters.

\$12,262,488

Federal Share in
2023

\$37,925,008

Federal Share in
2024

209%

Increase year
over year

Hazard Mitigation Planning

An approved hazard mitigation plan is required for municipalities to access federal hazard mitigation funding. In Massachusetts, cities and towns submit their hazard mitigation plans to MEMA for review and technical assistance before they are routed to FEMA Region 1 for approval.

48

Local Hazard Mitigation Plans reviewed by
MEMA in 2024.

Building Resilient Infrastructure & Communities (BRIC)

BRIC is an annual federal Hazard Mitigation Assistance grant funded by FEMA and administered by MEMA.

#2

MA ranked #2 nationally for BRIC submissions in
the FY23 cycle with 49 projects submitted.

ResilientMass Plan

ResilientMass is an innovative statewide hazard mitigation and climate adaptation plan that works to ensure the commonwealth is prepared to withstand, rapidly recover from, adapt to, and mitigate natural hazard events. MEMA is the lead agency responsible for maintaining and updating the state's hazard mitigation plan, working collaboratively with the Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs.

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ResilientMass is a five-year plan and roadmap for building resilience. It addresses vulnerabilities across all regions of MA.

The plan outlines the strategies and specific actions to increase resilience to climate change across the commonwealth.

Actions in Progress or Complete:

In its first year since implementation:

- 8% of actions are complete
- 82% of actions are either in progress or in development

Link to ResilientMass plan:
tinyurl.com/2023resilientmass

Local Hazard Mitigation Equity Planning Program:

MEMA administers funds for the Local Hazard Mitigation Equity Planning program, which has funded the development of new Local Hazard Mitigation Plans or plan updates for 27 communities with environmental justice populations. Started in 2023, this program has provided more than \$770,000 to qualified communities.

\$155M+

Statewide Resilience
Funding in 2024

96%

State agencies with climate
vulnerability assessments of
assets and operations with a
goal of 100% by 2028



Technological Hazards

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2024 SERC Conference

In November, the State Emergency Response Commission (SERC), led by MEMA, brought together a cross-section of local, regional, and state emergency managers, planners, public safety officials, public health professionals and members of private industry to hear from national experts and focus on critical aspects of emergency planning and EPCRA (Emergency Planning and Community Right-to-Know Act) compliance at the 2024 SERC Conference.

Attendees delved into topics including the legal consequences of EPCRA non-compliance, program requirements, Tier II reporting, and the operations of Local and Regional Emergency Planning Committees.



Radiological Emergency Preparedness

MEMA participates in a graded exercise drill every two years to test emergency preparedness at the Seabrook Station nuclear power plant in New Hampshire. The exercises involve multiple state agencies, local communities, and representatives from the plant's parent company and are designed to ensure good communication between partners. They are one of the largest Combined Federal Exercises in the country, with over 500 participants involved in 2024. The MA team had no findings identified by FEMA. FEMA commented, "All locations demonstrated excellent teamwork, collaboration, and situational awareness throughout the exercise, and demonstrated their commitment to protecting their communities."

140

Attendees at
the 2024 SERC
Conference

500+

Participants in the
multi-jurisdictional
Seabrook
Radiological
Emergency
Preparedness
Exercise

Emergency Management Grant Programs

Pending the availability of funds, emergency management grants are made available to all communities and Tribes in Massachusetts through their local emergency management department.

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Grants

Emergency Management Performance Grant (EMPG)

Hazardous Material Emergency Preparedness (HMEP)

Citizen Corp Program (CCP)

Emergency Operation Center (EOC)

Through EMPG, MEMA's goal is to assist local and tribal emergency management departments in building and maintaining an all-hazards emergency preparedness system. Citizen Corps Program (CCP) funds are made available to local Community Emergency Response Team volunteer programs and HMEP funds are made available to local and regional emergency planning committees certified by the State Emergency Response Commission. Thru Congressionally Dedicated Funding, the Emergency Operation Center (EOC) Program is intended to improve emergency management and preparedness capabilities by supporting flexible, sustainable, secure, strategically located, and fully interoperable EOCs.

Covering 11 different subgrants with towns, cities, and Tribes, MEMA's Grants Unit reviewed and approved 529 applications for funding.

500+

Applications for funding

Funding Amounts

Emergency Management Performance Grant (EMPG)

\$2.4+ Million

Hazardous Material Emergency Preparedness (HMEP)

\$180,000+

Citizen Corp Program (CCP)

\$136,000+

Emergency Operation Center (EOC)

\$700,000

Planning

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Planning Unit

MEMA develops and updates functional and hazard-specific plans for the Commonwealth.

Plans Updated in 2024:

- ESF-01: Transportation
- ESF-04: Firefighting
- ESF-07: Volunteers & Donations
- ESF-08: Public Health
- ESF-11: Agriculture
- ESF-12: Energy
- ESF-13: Law Enforcement
- ESF-14: Recovery
- ESF-16: Military Support
- Mass Care & Shelter Coordination Plan
- Statewide Evacuation Coordination Plan

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Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan Annexes and Plans updated in 2024

Sara Zalieckas

Special Events Planning Program Manager

During 2024, MEMA established a dedicated program to enhance preparedness for large-scale special events in partnership with public safety agencies, FEMA, and local communities. A new position was created to lead this program and develop guidance for Active Shooter Hostile Event Response (ASHER).

Coordinating the public safety planning of events such as:

- Boston Marathon
- The 250th Anniversary of Lexington and Concord
- FIFA World Cup 2026



Large, Planned Special Events

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Visit From Ottawa Police Service

In February, MEMA hosted a delegation from the Ottawa Police Service interested in learning about planning for the Boston Marathon. Over the course of three days, the delegation from Ottawa met with various local and state public safety partners and the B.A.A., who shared their best practices and lessons learned.



Boston Marathon

Last April marked the 128th Boston Marathon. The Unified Coordination Center (UCC) at MEMA HQ in Framingham was activated. Approximately 100 personnel from various local, state, and federal agencies and non-governmental organizations coordinated in the UCC on race day to support the event.



Public Safety Planning for Upcoming Large-Scale Events...

250th Event: Battles of Concord and Lexington

The year 2025 will mark the 250th Anniversary of the Battles of Concord and Lexington, the "shot heard round the world." The most significant planned activities and celebrations will occur over the weekend of April 19th, 2025. Scheduled events include but are not limited to tactical battle demonstrations, parades, concerts, a drone show, and ceremonies.



FIFA 2026 World Cup

The tournament will occur from June 11 to July 19, 2026. Public safety planning efforts are underway, and two members of MEMA have been selected to lead the National Emergency Management Association's World Cup 2026 Task Force!

