

Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC)

Alaska LEPC
Newsletter



LEPC Funding - Available

The Alaska State Senate has approved the LEPC Funding under the AK Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Management (DHSEM) budget. This means that the LEPC Funding will be managed by DHSEM instead of the State Emergency Response Commission (SERC) Finance Committee.

This also means that the LEPC Funding will follow the state fiscal year, which is from July to June of the following year. LEPC Funding was approved on June 26, 2026 and applications for LEPC Funding was sent out on July 10, 2026 is due on **July 27, 2026**.

I appreciate all your hard work over the years trying to get LEPC Funding back. Hopefully the momentum can keep going and funding for next fiscal year will also be available. Please let me know if you have any questions.

WHAT'S NEW

NEW CO-CHAIR SEAT OPEN

Brenda Ahlberg – KPB Emergency Manager has left her position at KPB and as the LEPCA Co-Chair. More on page 2.

ALASKA HOUSE/SENATE BILL - UPDATE

Status of House Bills that are applicable to LEPCs and Emergency Management.

<https://akleg.gov/index.php>

DHSEM WORKSHOPS

Information on the Rural Resilience Workshop and Geologic Hazard Workshops. More on page 3.

Alaska House/Senate Bill - Update

Alaska House Bill 335 (HB335), introduced in the 2025-2026 session, proposes to establish a pet and service animal disaster emergency plan. The bill amends existing laws to include companion animals in statewide evacuation, transportation, and co-sheltering processes, ensuring animal safety and reunification.

Key Aspects of HB335 (34th Legislature):

- **Disaster Planning:** Requires the development of a comprehensive pet and service animal emergency plan.
- **Evacuation and Sheltering:** Focuses on improving evacuation processes, transportation, and temporary housing for pets and servicing animals during emergencies.
- **Change to AS 26.23.071:** (b) The commission consists of the commissioners of commerce, community, and economic development, environmental conservation, fish and game, health, labor and workforce development, natural resources, public safety, and transportation and public facilities, or the designees of the commissioners, the adjutant general of the Department of Military and Veterans' Affairs or a designee, and eight [SEVEN] members of the public appointed by the governor, two of whom must be members of a local emergency planning committee for an emergency planning district that is predominantly rural in character and two of whom must be members of a local emergency planning committee for an emergency planning district that is predominantly urban in character. Two of the other four [THREE] members of the public who are appointed to the commission must be members of the governing body of, or the mayor of, a political subdivision that has a local emergency planning committee or a person who, in the opinion of the governor, is otherwise appropriate to represent the political subdivision. One of the other two members of the public who are appointed to the commission must be a member of a statewide association of animal control officers, animal shelter staff, and animal welfare professionals that operates in the state.
- **Change to AS 26.23.073:** (d) The commission shall appoint the members of a local emergency planning committee for each emergency planning district established under (a) and (b) of this section. In making appointments for a district that contains only one political subdivision, the commission shall follow the recommendations of the political subdivision if those recommendations would constitute a committee that meets the requirements of this subsection. In making appointments for a district that contains more than one political subdivision, the commission shall consider the recommendations of each political subdivision and follow the recommendations to the extent that the political subdivisions are in agreement, and their recommendations would constitute a committee that meets the requirements of this subsection. To the extent required under regulations that may be adopted by the commission, the political subdivisions in a district that includes more than one political subdivision shall follow a process under which they develop coordinated recommendations to submit to the commission under this subsection. In making appointments for a district that includes some area that is not contained within a political subdivision, the commission shall consider the recommendations of emergency response organizations in the district. In making appointments for the district formed under (b) of this section, the commission shall attempt to achieve equitable geographical representation on the committee. Except as provided in (e) of this section, each committee must include, at a minimum, representatives of each of the following eight [SEVEN] categories:
 - (1) elected local officials;
 - (2) law enforcement, civil defense, fire fighting, first aid, health, local environmental, hospital, and transportation personnel;
 - (3) broadcast or print media;
 - (4) community groups;
 - (5) owners and operators of facilities subject to the requirements of 42 U.S.C. 11001 - 11005;
 - (6) representatives of a local or interjurisdictional disaster planning and service area if one has been established that includes part of the district;
 - (7) animal care and control personnel; and
 - (8) [(7)] members of the public that are not described in (1) - (7)

Status: Pending – 5/16/2025.



LEPCA Co-Chair Seat Open

Brenda Ahlberg, prior Kenai Peninsula Borough (KPB) Emergency Manager, has retired and thus giving up her seat at KPB and as one of the two LEPCA Co-Chairs.

Tom Vaden, current LEPCA Co-Chair, is taking Co-Chair applications for the vacant position, and will be voted on in the October 16, 2026, LEPC Meeting. Please email Tom directly if you have Co-Chair questions.



2026 Session Operating Budget Amendment

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Offered In: The House Finance Committee
To: HB 263 / HB 265
Offered By: Representative Foster
Agency: Military & Veterans' Affairs
Appropriation: Military and Veterans' Affairs
Allocation: Homeland Security & Emerg Mgt

Transaction Details
Title: Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC) Funding
Section: Section 1
Type: Inc

Line Items (Amounts are in thousands)
Personal Services: 0.0
Travel: 0.0
Services: 35.8
Commodities: 0.0
Capital Outlay: 0.0
Grants: 264.2
Miscellaneous: 0.0
300.0

Positions
Permanent Full-Time: 0
Permanent Part-Time: 0
Temporary: 0

Funding (Amounts are in thousands)
1004 Gen Fund 300.0

Explanation
Restores Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC) funding to 2019 levels. The expectation of the amendment is to provide LEPCs funding through grants/services.

Given the alarming rate of natural disasters in Alaska, this funding will benefit the 21 Local Emergency Planning Committees throughout the state.

Alaska House/Senate Bill - Update

Alaska Senate Bill 195 (SB 195) proposes amending the state's Disaster Act to explicitly define and manage "slow-onset disasters" – gradual, long-term environmental changes like permafrost thaw, erosion, and sea-level rise. Introduced in 2025, this legislation forces state agencies to create mitigation strategies for climate-driven damage to infrastructure and communities.

Key Details of SB 195 (Slow-Onset Disasters):

- **Definition:** Defines slow-onset disasters as environmental changes that occur gradually, such as drought, coastal erosion, permafrost degradation, and ocean acidification.
- **Mitigation Efforts:** Directs the Alaska Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management to identify and develop mitigation plans for these ongoing events.
- **Expert Inclusion:** Requires the inclusion of climate scientists in emergency planning processes.
- **Local Planning:** Mandates that local emergency committees evaluate their vulnerability to these gradual changes.

Status: Pending – 5/16/2025.

Alaska Senate Bill 192 (SB 192) proposed to amend the Alaska Disaster Act to include standardized evacuation language and colors for maps and public messaging. Standardized evacuation maps clearly demonstrate closed areas for the public, something that becomes even more important when there are multiple wildfires in close proximity. The language proposed in SB 192 would indicate evacuations stages on maps using the following designation levels:

- (1) **Level 1 Ready**, indicated in green, to alert the public that an emergency may exist in the area;

- (2) **Level 2 Set**, indicated in yellow, to alert the public that evacuation of the area is imminent.

- (3) **Level 3 Go**, indicated in red, to alert the public that a dangerous hazard exists and that an individual in the area should immediately evacuate the area.

https://www.akleg.gov/basis/get_documents.asp?session=34&docid=13598

Status: **Approved** – 4/24/2026.

DHSEM Workshops

By Jeremy Agee



The Alaska Division of Homeland Security & Emergency Management (DHS&EM) partners with communities across Alaska to deliver Rural Resilience Workshops (RRWs) that bring together local, Tribal, regional, state, federal, and nonprofit organizations to discuss preparedness, response, recovery, and community resilience.

Each workshop is developed in collaboration with the host region. Rather than following a predetermined curriculum, RRWs are shaped by local priorities and the hazards most relevant to participating communities. Depending on regional interests, workshops may also include specialized sessions, such as tsunami or geologic hazard awareness.

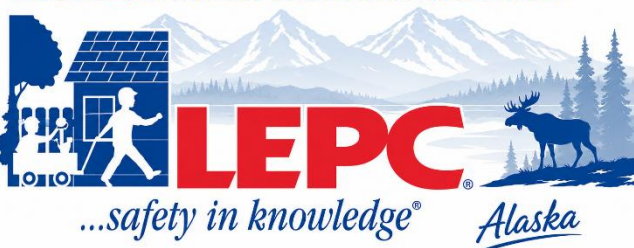
Local Emergency Planning Committees (LEPCs) can play an important role during the planning process by sharing information about regional concerns, local capabilities, and community priorities. This helps ensure workshops reflect the needs of the communities they serve and connect participants with the most appropriate partners and resources.

For more information about Rural Resilience Workshops or Geologic Hazards Workshops, contact **Jeremy Agee** at

jeremy.agee@alaska.gov or visit

<https://ready.alaska.gov/Plans/Resilience>.

LOCAL EMERGENCY PLANNING COMMITTEE



Upcoming Events

Unofficial LEPC Meeting – Virtual, 10:00 AM, July 21, 2026

LEPC & SERC Bi-Annual Meeting – **Virtual, October 16, 2026**

Alaska Seismic & Tsunami Operation Workshop – Wasilla, October 26, 2026

Rural Resilience Workshop – Nome, September 25, 2026