

**PHA Disaster Readiness, Response, and Recovery Webinar Series:
Wildfires
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Jodi Speer 00:07

Hello and good afternoon everybody. We're going to give it just about 20 seconds to let everybody get joined and then we'll begin. Okay, so good afternoon and thank you all for joining us today for the Public Housing Authority Disaster Readiness Response and Recovery Webinar Series. Today we'll be talking about wildfires. A few housekeeping items really quickly. This webinar is being recorded so that we can make it available at a later time on the HUD Exchange. All participants are muted. You are able to post questions in the q&a section. There's also a chat box. So just a reminder, if you have questions to go ahead and put it in the q&a section and the chat box for other dialogues happening. So I am pleased to introduce today Dr. Felicia Gaither Deputy Assistant Secretary for field operations in Public and Indian Housing at HUD, Dr. Gaither and her staff have been pivotal in advocating for PHAs before and when disasters strike. This webinar series and trainings is just one example of that work. Dr. Gaither, go ahead.

Felicia Gaither 02:07

Thank you. Good afternoon, and good morning to some. First of all, I want to thank you for joining this webinar. This is the third webinar in our six part series, HUD PIH PHA Disaster Readiness and Response Recovery webinar series. The webinar series directly aligned with the HUD and White House priorities to equitably improve the nation's disaster recovery and building long term inclusive resilience to the impacts of climate change, particularly for historically marginalized communities. Given some of the recent natural disasters and feedback from you all, PHAs around the country, we launched a series as a resource to help prepare PHAs prior to potential events, so that an equitable inclusive recovery is possible. In our first two webinars, we discussed hurricanes and extreme temperatures. In this webinar, the focus will be talking specifically about the impacts of wildfires and the risk they pose, especially in rural communities and PHA serving in rural communities. A little bit of context for you on the size and number of wildfires across the US. From the year 2012 to 2021, there were an average of 61,289 wildfires, and an average of 7.4 million acres burned annually. In 2021, there were 59,968 wildfires that burned 7.1 million acres. As you can see, there's been an increase in wildfires if we just look at what happened in 2021, versus the span of more than nine years. To get the on the ground PHA perspective. Today we will hear from Ed Meyer, the executive director of the Housing Authority of the county of Butte, California, on his PHAs readiness, response and recovery from the 2018 Camp Fire in California. I want to personally thank him for being willing to share his experience with all of you today. In the coming weeks, we will also discuss tornadoes, flooding and building fires. Another very important webinar topics that we want to bring to you because these are also events that have impacted PHAs across the United States. We know that vulnerable communities bear the brunt of natural disasters. And our goal with the webinar series is to ensure your PHA is ready to respond to, and recover from, any disaster that may impact the families you serve and the properties that you are responsible for. Knowing the Federal, state, local and nonprofit resources prior to an event is a fundamental step in being ready. This webinar will help you to build or grow your foundation and knowledge in those resources, as well as in disaster readiness, response, and recovery more broadly. I want to thank you again for joining us today. We look forward to your participation in this webinar and future webinars in this series. I'll turn it back to Jodi. Thank you.

Jodi Speer 05:43

Thank you, Dr. Gaither. We also wanted to let you know that the PHA Disaster Readiness and Preparation Guide is currently being updated and will include new sections on roles and responsibilities, communications, short- and long-term housing options, recovery timelines, funding strategies and financial management. The new guide along with a series of one page fact sheets are expected to be released in a few months. This webinar series and the updated guide provide resources for housing authorities to support planning for disaster readiness, response, and recovery. So today's agenda, we will be a quick overview of wildfires. We will have an opportunity to hear from Ed Mayer to talk about the town of Paradise campfire in 2018. And then we will go over readiness response and recovery as it relates to wildfires. Your presenters for today's webinar include Brittany Kelly, who has been a leader in disaster recovery with the state of South Carolina's Emergency Management Division. Brittany, now with Cohnreznick, supports multiple state and federal grant recipients in disaster recovery and grant management. Fred Tombar is a nationally recognized expert in housing and disaster recovery, who has been appointed to advise presidents, HUD and Homeland Security secretaries, and governors during his over 25 years career. Traci Brasher has worked in FEMA recovery since 2016, serving as the recovery division director in Region Six, and has led recovery efforts through some of the most complex disasters in recent memory including hurricanes Harvey, Laura and Ida. In 2020 she served as the acting SCS Director of Public Assistance and was responsible for leading much of the decision making and policy for FEMA support to the COVID 19 pandemic. Traci is currently serving as the acting SCS director for individual assistance at FEMA. Ed Mayer is the executive director of the housing authority of the county of Butte in Northern California, where he's been the Executive Director for the past 13 years. An architect and planner by training, Ed has extensive housing authority experience both in California and Montana and has provided leadership through several disasters, including the Lomo earthquake in Santa Cruz in 1989, the town of Oroville Dam spillway damage in 2017, and multiple wildfires in the county of Butte, including the 2018 Paradise fire that we will hear about today. In the webinar today, we will share some ideas and best practices to get you thinking about developing, or hopefully enhancing, an action plan for responding to wildfires, both when they can be anticipated and unpredictable events. These are best practices and not HUD mandates unless otherwise indicated. So, a few things about wildfires super quickly. Wildfires are unplanned fires, they spread quickly, they cause massive devastation not only in natural uninhabited areas, but also in communities as the communities expand into wildfire prone areas. These areas are known as the wildland urban interface or WUI. Drought conditions and homes located in close proximity to one another increase the spread of fire in those communities. You heard a little bit of these statistics earlier, but from 2012 to 2021, the annual average exceed 60,000 wildfires annually and have an impact on over 7.4 million acres. Most wildfires are human caused, though they can also be caused by lightning. So, in addition to property damage, wildfires also increased air pollution. And this can cause long term health impacts for vulnerable individuals in addition to the massive destruction that we see on physical property. So today, we have the opportunity to hear about the 2008 fire in the town of Paradise in Northern California. I'm so pleased to have Ed Mayer here today to talk with us about his experience. Before I turn it over to Ed, just a few quick facts, so the town of Paradise recorded over 26,000 residents in the 2010 census. I think there was around 40,000 residents at the time of the fire. The next census in 2020, recorded just over 4000 residents. So that just as an example of the massive devastation that that was seen. The Camp Fire, named after Camp Creek Road, started on November 18, was fully contained on November 25, and was the deadliest and most destructive wildfire in California history. It was caused by a faulty electric transmission line, and there were a number of fatalities. 95% of the buildings in Paradise were either damaged or fully destroyed. So now I would like to introduce and invite

Ed Mayer, the Executive Director of the Housing Authority of Butte County, to talk with us about his experience and his housing authority's experience with the Camp Fire in 2018. Welcome, Ed.

Ed Mayer 12:41

Thanks. Thank you, Jodi. And I just want to first offer thanks to HUD and its foresight in providing an opportunity to talk about the Camp Fire disaster and what has happened since our housing authority just by the start. We serve both Butte and Glenn County in Northern California. We're located about an hour and a half north of Sacramento and about three hours north of the Bay Area. We serve about 3000 households in Butte and Glenn Counties, about 2200 voucher holders, 345 public housing units and a number of other owned properties and programs. In November of 2018 we saw an early morning fire, fires are not uncommon in our area or in Northern California, but no fire had actually started that teed up such a precipitous set of events. Early morning the fire started and by the end of day one we had lost 14,000 units, housing units in the town of Paradise. The fire was literally a perfect strike, if you're a bowler, the fire couldn't have been set more perfectly to destroy the town 90% of the town fabric was destroyed in one day. It left about, from our estimation, 35,000 displaced households. Our area is very low income, is very rural, is a nexus for the elderly and disabled as a function of both relatively low housing cost in our area compared to the Bay Area or coastal regions of California. We have high concentrations of an elderly and disabled because they can barely afford to live there and yet still access services in Davis, Sacramento, and the Bay Area. The fire itself was ferocious, it left a large burn scar, it would likely have burned the city of Chico as well if it hadn't been for a backfire by Cal Fire and the city of Chico. Again, this fire was devastating in that, while our Housing Authority staff, we have 35 staff, seven of whom were maintenance workers, six of our employees lost their homes in the fire immediately and those employees could not return to work. They were both displaced, most of them left town, two of them decided to rebuild, but we lost them to our employment. Our Agency has highly skilled, long, long standing employees, it was a terrible loss. My own home was in the burn scar, I could not return home for over two weeks, I operated out of an associate's bedroom before I could find an apartment. But I had a pair of pants and two shirts available to me to go to work. So go to work we did. We had 318 Section 8 voucher holders who lived up in the Paradise area who were displaced. Three of them died for inability to evacuate, for failure to evacuate. The significance of the fire, our area has about 240,000 households altogether, the destruction of those 14,000 homes in one day compromised, or actually destroyed, 15% of our housing stock in the county. And our six employees who were lost to our employment, our 318 voucher holders who were displaced represented 15% of our Section 8 voucher program. So, our immediate challenge was maintaining continuity of business operations, coming to work every day, and our initial focus in association with FEMA, who had set up a Disaster Response Center, was to focus on rehousing and location of those 318 Voucher holders that have been displaced. That just gives you a picture for a moment of what happened. Happy to take questions, Jodi, where would you like me to go from here?

Jodi Speer 17:16

Thank you. And I think we're going to I imagine if we opened up questions right now, there would be a ton, so we're going to invite people to put questions in the q&a for the time being and then we will get to them later, after we've gone through the rest of the slides. That was a really substantial impact. How did your housing authority respond in the days and weeks following the fire?

Ed Mayer 17:42

Well, it was difficult. We had smoke from the fire which was passing directly over the city of Chico where our offices are located. When fires burn a house down in this day and age houses are extremely toxic. They're largely made of plastic. If you think of latex paint and polyester carpet, and plastic electronics, the smoke was horrendous, but we in our office itself, we operated. Our encouragement to staff was to show every day and that they did, have nothing but kudos and compliments for our staff. But it was extremely challenged. We did not lose any public housing in the events, our public housing is located in the urban areas of Butte County. While we're rural, we do have six jurisdictions, Paradise being one, and it was very interesting in the wake of the fire to see the different response from the different jurisdictions. And that unfolded over time. Again, our real focus was on our staff maintaining continuity of operations, and then service to those displaced, finding those displaced. This was very difficult. We had 35,000 households displaced. Most of them made their way to the Chico and Oroville jurisdictional areas. Some 20,000 people we estimate came to Chico they were located in temporary tent camps, relocated in RVs. One of the blessings of our area and of being rural and being as you say, environmentally oriented, many, many households, even low income, that came out of Paradise had trailers. So, we saw enormous numbers of trailers and RVs parked every which way. Immediate aftermath of the disaster because of all the displaced households. We saw every motel and hotel in Northern California occupied, every RV campground, every campground. But finding our clients was extremely difficult. The good news is they knew where to come to find their services and so by hook or by crook over about six months we saw most of those 318 who had been displaced, the voucher holders at least, show back up in our office. One of our immediate actions was to reissue vouchers to those households. We also opened up our waiting list twice in the next year to disaster displaced households by way of disaster response. But the most significant impact is when our jurisdictional area lost 15% of its housing stock, where did the displaced households go? There really was no housing in our area, so to speak, we had a heavily impacted rental market before the disaster less than a 1% vacancy rate for those holding vouchers. And in California, for those who know, we have had a really severe lack of housing opportunity. Butte County's considered a high cost area based on incomes available to pay for rents, and most of California is considered the same. So those displaced couldn't be relocated to adjacent communities like Redding, they couldn't be relocated to communities like Sacramento or San Francisco because those cities were so impacted themselves. So, and this stands today, we still are working very much with displaced households, we estimate there to be about anywhere from six to 15,000 households still in our area, who do not have housing. As we know it, they're living doubled up, they're living in cars, they're living in trailers, they're living in backyards, they're living in garages, they're living in, as I like to say, dog houses, wherever they can. The background homeless population that we had in our area, which was significant, was exacerbated by these displaced households. So we now have conflated populations we're working with. A great deal of our effort in the immediate wake of the disaster was to secure housing, find housing opportunity. And to that end, the housing authority on its own retained a housing navigator, whose job it was to look for housing opportunity and all possible forms of assisted low income, affordable housing, regulated housing from the Mississippi west. What we found is that very few of those displaced by our disaster were willing to go anywhere. These are local populations, they're indigenous populations, all they know, in our case, is Butte County and the local areas, they really were not suitable to move elsewhere and they didn't want to move elsewhere. So, this is why we are still working with these displaced populations today. So, again, with staffing, we lost that initial six staff to the disaster that created a human resources crisis for agency, we ended up retaining or shuffling 22 positions in the next year and a half by way of stabilizing our personnel. It was a constant battle of retention, and training, and

team building. Of course, we couldn't secure professional assistance or new employees from outside the area because there would be no place for those prospective employees to come move to, so we had to mine the local area. One of the great blessings that we enjoyed in disaster response was our relationship with area service providers. Those relationships have been built through our work largely through our work in with the Continuum of Care, the local homelessness Continuum of Care, which of course is an association of local service agencies dedicated to providing services to the homeless. That network was essential in both finding our clients as well as advocacy and securing housing opportunity for those with vouchers. So, one last thing here before a break for another question, thank you Jodi, is we did secure a HUD waiver early on, we were very concerned about the viability of our Section 8 program having lost 15% of our Section 8 capacity. Our utilization and expenditure rates were challenged. We secured a waiver from HUD, a SEMAP waiver, so that SEMAP scores would exempt the utilization and expenditure rates so that we can maintain the size of our program in attempting to continue to serve our communities despite the lack of affordable housing. One of our additional tools that we utilized was to open up our voucher program to ports. We have many, many clients with vouchers port to other areas. This presented its own set of problems. We're a relatively low cost area compared to the Bay Area, so for every voucher that we lease in Butte County, we see three times the payment standard to lease household in the Bay Area. So, despite the fact we were able to maintain utilization rates by allowing households to port other jurisdictions, if possible, that became problematic when those vouchers were finally absorbed by the receiving housing authorities. And for every voucher we allowed escape our jurisdiction, when they came back to us, we had to release three vouchers locally, in order to maintain program integrity. Again, the staffing throughout was a constant challenge, we still see challenges. Good news is we do have a university in the city of Chico, and so we do have households and a lifestyle, and a culture, in Butte County where typically households like to stay. We don't find that our professionals move to the Bay Area, they choose to live in our area because of the beautiful environment and the lifestyle provided.

Jodi Speer 25:51

Thank you for all of that. The impact is just unbelievable, both to your residents and to your staff. Can you talk a little bit about any financial resources that you all- so you've made it through, you've taken the story now through finding people's short term housing, rehousing voucher families and also, as you've talked through, have been talking about how your housing authority was really a part of the community response as a whole and not just your residents. But can you talk about any financial or other resources that were made available to you in for the long term in the recovery?

Ed Mayer 26:43

Absolutely. So, first of all, in the short term, we saw no financial assistance provided. But in the long term, we were able to create housing opportunity through new developments. And being specific, there were two tranches of special congressional allocations of 9% Low Income Housing Tax Credits that were made to California's disaster affected counties in 2019 and 2020. And those Low Income Housing Tax Credits we were able to leverage into new development opportunity in the area. Specifically, we had prior relationships with a number of nonprofit and for profit housing developers. Developers, of course, who in this day and age specialize in Low Income Housing Tax Credit development, we've had partnerships through a number of preexisting projects, and we were able to leverage the new source of Low Income Housing Tax Credits and a new opportunity using our Section 8 voucher program. We took Section 8 vouchers and project based them in a

number of projects in order to secure the funds. The funds were made available competitively through the state. And we were able to address special needs populations, the elderly, disabled, veterans, homeless, etc. and youth, through the deployment of project basing vouchers. The good news about project based vouchers in coordination with the Low Income Housing Tax Credit development is while we might have seeded projects with a percentage of that project being project based vouchers, for example, 100 unit initiative, would have 25 vouchers parked in that project, the balance of the project that did not have project based vouchers, taxpayer projects are highly motivated to take on Section Eight voucher holders because of the rental premium that can be realized. So, we're creating and leveraging housing opportunity through the development of new housing. We were able to secure through development partnerships and leveraging of project based vouchers, development of 1500 affordable housing units and 21 projects. Those projects are being delivered now through the next two years. So here we are four years after the disaster, the very first units that we were able to develop are coming online here at the end of this year, so it takes that long to develop the permanent housing opportunity. Also, the private sector and nonprofit sectors were able to take advantage of those special congressional allocations of tax credits, and additionally, access Community Development Block Grant Disaster Recovery funds to create even more projects. So right now, in our county area, in our jurisdiction, we have about 3000 units of affordable housing being built in the next two years. Which is extraordinary considering our background population is 220,000 in Butte County, that may be the largest single investment in affordable housing in the history of America. We're very curious to see how that regulated housing is placed into service and what it might do to our local rental markets. So that was really an important piece to disaster recovery.

Jodi Speer 30:29

Thank you, again, so much for sharing your story. I just as a closing question, you, you've taken us from the beginning to where we're at today, and recovery is no short term event. Are there any best practices or lessons learned that you would like to share with the audience here today?

Ed Mayer 30:54

Thank you. I think that the concluding thought here is that there's really two threads that have to be considered and one is the short term thread, what happens to those displaced? And if you don't have a place to put them, whether that's emergency shelter, transitional shelter, or permanent housing, the question becomes, what do you do with those populations? And we've watched our local communities gyrate over that question. The city of Chico, for example, is now under federal judicial oversight because of how it has managed its, quote, homeless populations. The city of Oroville has had a different response, the city of Gridley had, again, a different response. So, the first question is, how do you triage the immediate situation? The second is okay, what do you do if you see such a demolition of your significant demolition of your county's housing stock, jurisdictions housing stock? What do you do for the permanent solution? And so, the long term is to develop housing like crazy. So, we have on one hand triage, and it was kind of interesting to see how human beings will create their own triage opportunities if you give them a chance. And secondarily, the development opportunities provided by the project based and the Section 8 vouchers, special allocations and 9% credits and CDBG-DR monies makes the permanent housing piece viable. More immediately, just for example, the town of Paradise is being rebuilt under a lot of reconsideration for urban fabric. Now, one of the lessons learned Paradise had very few egress, very little egress. Evacuation was responsible of our California Fire system and for egress routes from Paradise during the day of the disaster, they all saw traffic jams. One of the lessons learned is that you don't put wooden

power poles next to roadways, because when a wooden power pole burns, the power line falls into the street. So, I had a number of friends and associates in Paradise, they learned of the coming fire, not just by the smoke overhead, but by the oncoming explosion of propane tanks as the fire advanced. And again, this fire was being pushed by 50 mile an hour winds. So, it was really kind of a holocaust. And if you see pictures of Paradise in the wake of this fire, it really does look like a bomb went off. There's really nothing left. It created an enormous environmental issue also, every house, every building that had to be cleared, had to be cleared environmentally because of the toxins involved.

Jodi Speer 33:55

Again, thank you so much for sharing all of those, your experiences, your best practices and lessons learned. I think that it will be so beneficial as we go through our next educational pieces to tie back to your experience. You did a phenomenal job. I'm excited that that the community is being rebuilt in this year, even though it's four years later, is beginning to have the affordable housing community rebuilt. So now as we shift into talking about disaster readiness, we have a polling question for our audience. At your current PHA Have you encountered a wildfire emergency? And second, have you developed a plan for preparing or responding to a wildfire? We'll give folks about 30 seconds to submit a response. Just a few more seconds Okay, so have our audience here with us today. The majority of you have not encountered a wildfire emergency. So, 12% said yes and 88% said no. And have you developed a plan for preparing or responding to a wildfire? 10% of you said yes, and 54% said no and 37 "I'm not sure". Thank you. So, I am going to turn the microphone over to Fred Tombar to talk with us about wildfire readiness.

Fred Tombar 36:11

Thank you, Jodi. And thank you Ed for sharing your story, it sets us up quite well for the discussion ahead. As you can tell from Ed's experience, having a plan to respond to a wildfire, and disasters more broadly, it's critically important to how well you are prepared to respond and ultimately recover, from the disaster event, from the wildfire. There are a few things that you can do to get yourselves ready and we'll talk about these in more detail in a second. You can one, conduct a risk assessment, secondly you can develop partnerships with others in a local community. You can as a PHA begin to organize your resources, both staffing resources and other equipment and systems that you may have. And then you want to conduct different types of planning exercises and prepare your organization and the people who serve for the potential wildfire. And one way to do that is to conduct education and training. So, we'll talk more about each of those goals. Next slide, please. So, another quick poll question. Do you know your local emergency manager, do you have a relationship with the local emergency manager? Let's take 30 seconds to get a response here. Okay, we'll check the results. All right, the overwhelming majority, 60% of you all don't. But fortunately, about a quarter of the people, 25%, do and 14% are unsure. So that is critically important. We'll explain why going forward. There are responsibilities throughout your organization and your community, for preparing for and responding to local disasters. The city has roles, your parish or county has a role, your organization as a PHA has a role and the people you serve, both the landlord's and your residents, all have roles and responsibilities. And so, it's important to identify all of these partners, all of these stakeholders and what their roles and responsibilities are as you plan and prepare for a wildfire. So, they're also appointed as at the state level. So, your state emergency management agency, I asked the question about do you have a relationship with the local emergency manager, your emergency manager that's important. But also, after disaster you will find out the coordination is, at a federal level, is through your

state emergency management agency and they will be the ones communicating with the federal government should there be some interaction about what the needs are more broadly for you and the people you serve in your community. The governor's office obviously has that role and responsibility for communicating with federal government about resources that are necessary. And if there is a declared disaster, the Federal Emergency Management Agency will be there coordinating at both the state and local level and ultimately with you in your residents. And HUD clearly is a partner, as evidenced by this training today wanting to get you all prepared for disaster. But also, as the event happens, HUD will be there to help provide connection for you all at both the local and federal level to resources and helping with assistance as needed. It is critically important that you conduct a risk assessment. One of the things that Jodi mentioned earlier is that there's increasingly building in what's called the wildland urban interface. That is geographic areas that are near forest, and increasingly we find that as building is being dispersed throughout the country that we have come in more and more on the edges of forest and as we experience drier temperatures, the risks are greater for wildfires. And so, it is critically important that you at your housing authority conduct a risk assessment to see if you are in one of these areas that's more susceptible. And know that that could change from year to year based on the conditions, if it's drier in in your area than it typically ordinarily would be you may be more at risk and vulnerable for a wildfire. Know where your buildings are, which buildings are more susceptible than others to destruction from wildfire. Understand your portfolio, not just your public housing portfolio, but also where your vouchers are being used. And if people like some of Ed's residents are in communities like Paradise where they are most susceptible. Now, as a best practice, HUD encourages that PHAs conduct a Physical Needs Assessment every five years as a part of your overall strategic planning process. And HUD fortunately has tools and resources available to help you with that, we have those linked here in the slide and will be available to you all, they'll be up on the web subsequent to this training for you all to access those. You have a requirement from HUD to have insurance and it's vitally important that you review your insurance policies, know what they say and understand what your insurance company is, what you have insured, what you have covered, how much your coverage is, and if it's sufficient. It is your primary funding resource for recovery after any type of catastrophic event, certainly after a wildfire. Your Consolidated Annual Contribution Contract requires that you have insurance on your public housing developments. It is a requirement and here we link to that requirement on HUD's website, where you can find the details of what is required. But know that beyond those requirements, there may be a need to insure your properties even differently for continuing operations, loss of funding and other things that may be important to you if you experience a wildfire. HUD is updating its guidance and tools to help you with understanding your insurance requirements. But here too, you can link to those requirements as a stand-in and see the updates when they're available. You can't go it alone if a disaster happen, certainly if a wildfire that impacts your entire community happens, everybody in a community is going to have to be involved. And so, in planning for wildfire, you want to develop relationships with others in your community. If you serve an elderly population, connect with the Council on Elderly. If you have a number of disabled folks in residence in your portfolio, know who are the community partners who can help you with assisting your residents with disabilities. But more broadly, knowing who your partners are your emergency managers, your nonprofits, your city and county leaders, knowing who they are and the assistance that they can provide. The great thing is, is that there is a requirement for your emergency managers to do things, and we'll talk a little bit more about this, like run drills. And so there is an opportunity for you all to plug into an already pre-scheduled activity that would bring together community partners in a substantial way to plan for any type of disaster that might happen. You want to make sure that you have all your resources and guidance developed that would help you in responding

to a disaster. Your people, your staff, make sure they're trained that they know what their roles and responsibilities are. Your facilities understand what the requirements are for sheltering in place, if people were to shelter in place, it could be that your developments are built to withstand fire, and that they are safer actually in the unit than they would be leaving. And so understanding and knowing that is important. The systems that you're going to use, how your communication systems, your IT systems, making sure that should your business operation center, somehow your headquarters gets damaged, that you actually have data that is stored somewhere off site that you will be able to access so that you can still continue to operate as a PHA. And making sure that you have the necessary equipment, from radios to smartphones to first aid supplies and flashlights and generators. And if you have generators, making sure those generators have the fuel and resources that they need to continue to operate. You need to make sure that your staff understands their roles and responsibilities post-disaster, and filling in for one another should your staff be unable to respond because of dealing with the emergency themselves. As Ed mentioned, many of his staff were impacted by the wildfire that hit his community. And so understanding how you're going to continue to operate, who's going to fill in. And potentially even having a relationship with a housing authority that's outside of your area that might be able to supplement your staff if in fact you all are impacted and unable to operate. That they can help you with responding to your disaster when it happens. I mentioned that it is important not just to have the plans but also to know how these plans are supposed to operate and doing that, the best way to go about doing that is through conducting training and exercises. You want to partner with your local emergency management staff, the fire and police departments, all of the emergency responders, in planning to train and conduct exercises for you and your staff, and for and for others who you serve, your residents and landlords. You want to clearly communicate what those roles are, when an emergency happens, and you want to practice- practice, practice, practice. Make sure that staff understand all of the challenges that they may have during an emergency. And make sure the residents understand what they're supposed to do. Again, I mentioned if they are better off sheltering in place than trying to evacuate, making it clear to residents that that's the expectation, that they stay there until someone comes to get them. You want to regularly review and update your policies and procedures, knowing that situations change. And so there should be a schedule on which you routinely will go back to and review the plans that you have, and make sure that they are sufficient. And that everyone is updated on those changes, staffing changes in your organization, people's roles in your organization change, and so you need to make sure that that's reflected in the way that you are planning to respond to a wildfire. And then you also want to make sure that you regularly check all of the equipment and supplies that are identified for disaster, for responding to a wildfire. Communication is important, and communication. before during and after an event, but prior turn to an event you want to make sure your staff, your residents, your landlords all understand what might happen if there's an event. If there's an increased likelihood of an event, make sure that you are communicating to staff and your residents and landlords well in advance. Some of the things that you might consider as best practices are to maintain current information on your residents, your staff, and the key community partners. For your residents, you also want to, in addition to having phone numbers and email addresses where you might be able to reach them if they happen to have email addresses, you want to also have that information on an emergency contact, because when displaced, it might be easier to reach an emergency contact than it might be to reach your residents. Hold meetings in advance of an event. There is a so called fire season, right, although we now see with the time of what is supposed to be the fire season is increasing, but in advance of the fire season if you happen to be in one of those areas that is increasingly susceptible during the fire season to wildfires. hold meetings in advance with all of your stakeholders. You want

to post fliers and common areas of your residential buildings and administrative facilities and send materials out via email. Use social media if there are resident newsletters, posting information in the resident newsletters and on the website. Let people know where they can go to find information in advance. And tell them to expect to see that information in those places so that when an event happens they will know where to look. Now I'll turn it over to my colleague Brittany to talk to you a little bit about hazard mitigation and resilience.

Brittany Kelly 54:05

Thank you, Fred. So let's just high level think about, what is hazard mitigation and resilience. I think many times we hear that they go hand in hand, but they are technically different definitions. So looking at what is hazard mitigation, it is the effort to reduce loss of life or property by lessening the impact of disasters. And then looking at a definition of resilience, that community resilience is generally defined as the ability to adapt to, withstand, or rapidly recover from a disaster, or catastrophic event. So what we're seeing here is mitigations that reduce the loss of life and property and resilience is the ability to adapt, withstand or overcome. So why is mitigation important? Hazard mitigation, or mitigation in general, is something that we can be talking about prior to any potential event, or any different type of threat or disaster. Specifically today talking about wildfires. Well, we know that wildfires, while there is, as Fred mentioned, a wildfire season, they can happen anytime and at any place. We understand that the human and financial consequences of disasters are hard to predict. We do not know how bad the impact or how critical the impact will be. The number of disasters continue to increase each year. And we're seeing that a lot with wildfires specifically, and that not all events trigger federal assistance, something we're going to get into in later slides. And so it's very important to be thinking about now, what can we be doing to mitigate from the potential impacts of, specifically today, wildfires. So the importance of mitigation. Here is some of the statistics that we see from FEMA from HUD and other specialists talking about mitigation in general, of the return on investment or the national benefit-cost ratio per peril. That for every \$1 invested in mitigation funding, or for projects, you can get a \$6 return from that impact or from that investment. Look at going through these, as we see wildland urban interface fire, it's usually a \$3 return on investment for every dollar that is invested. And talking about the mitigation process, it's really an ongoing process, the lifecycle is continuous. But something you can be doing now is looking at your risk assessments, looking at your vulnerabilities within your footprint, within the facilities or infrastructure that you're responsible for. You can start mitigation planning, what projects, if you're able to acquire the funding, would you want to be talking about or being able to acquire. Now whether it's specific to wildfires, maybe whether it's sprinkler systems or alert systems, certain types of shelters or firebreaks, so if there's lots of trees around. Then you can get into your next portion of okay, these are the types of projects that will be potentially most beneficial for us, so what mitigation grants are available? And then again, this cycle is continuous looking at different types of disasters, impacts and vulnerabilities. So again, looking at a little bit more into what a risk assessment is. A thorough risk assessment is the foundation of mitigation, planning and access to potential grant funds. So what are your vulnerabilities of your people, your buildings, your infrastructure specific to, today, wildfires? What would the losses look like? Do you have an inventory of what your assets are? What would the potential loss be and identifying what hazards would be impacted if there again, today would be wildfires. So here are the some of the mitigation grants that are available under FEMA's grant programs. Hazard Mitigation Grant Program, that is funding that is provided after a Major Disaster Declaration, it is a percentage of the total public assistance grant funding, is how that cost estimate or budget is kind of provided. However, one thing that's unique is, you do not have to be impacted by that declared disaster or that specific peril to submit requests for grant funding for that

grant allocation for HMGP. The next ones, the Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities Grant, or the BRIC grant is how many people explain it. This is a newer grant program, and it is annual, so this is not based on any specific disasters. However, it is nationally competitive, so this is something that it can be a little bit harder to apply for. However, there are a lot of great resources and additional information. So depending on your entity and the impact of the grants you're looking to go after and projects and the return on investment and how many people it impacts, it is something that could be potentially eligible to you. And then flood mitigation assistance is also an annual grant program, FEMA funded administered by the state. That is competitive, but it is state specific so that's something you can talk with your state Hazard Mitigation officer about. And so I high level just went over them but like I said, and Fred said, prior once these slides are available, we have went ahead and hyperlinked a lot of this information for you. Again, contacting your state Hazard Mitigation officer is a great first resource. Even if you're not sure exactly what type of projects you're looking to potentially apply for, you can say I'm interested to seeing if there's funding out there, and maybe having a conversation even if you've just identified vulnerabilities or concerns that you potentially have. And then in looking to maximize your funding, one thing that's important to notate with the theme of grant funds that were just highlighted, there is a cost share involved. However, there is the opportunity to be able to offset that cost share with certain other funds. A couple of the different opportunities for offset are right here. But also, if you do not apply for those funds, maybe you want to use existing funding types that you already have to be able to see if you can budget for some of the mitigation activities if you're not eligible for other grants that you maybe pursue. Alright, I'll turn it back over Fred for disaster response.

Jodi Speer 1:00:59

Thank you, Brittany.

Fred Tombar 1:01:02

So Ed shared with me a quote from Eisenhower that I think is very fitting going into talking about response it was that "plans are worthless, but planning is everything." And so you will find after you wildfire that, though you may have sufficiently planned, and it was great to hear that 10% of you all have plans but after this, I hope that all of you are encouraged to immediately get out and put together a plan. Know that those plans, going through the exercise of planning, will help you in responding to your disaster even if you find that there are things that you did not sufficiently cover in that planning exercise. Wildfires will cause, as we heard about the Paradise wildfires, multiple disruptions. And the first thing you need to do subsequent to a wildfire is conduct an assessment to find out the impact of that the wildfire on your community and on your properties and most importantly, on the residents and staff. You want to review and adjust the risk assessments that you conducted initially, during readiness, to the reality of the situation that you're dealing with, and then use that review of your risk assessment to prioritize the resources and to set the course for how you're going to respond going forward. First, have to assess your business operations, check on your staff, know who you have to work with and how your staff is doing. You want to gauge the impact of your essential functions and communicate with all of those who have been impacted by the wildfires. So your residents in particular, your landlords who service your residents, understand how they have been impacted. You want to follow all the recommendations from public officials, coordinate with public officials. In fact, it is likely that your local emergency managers will set up a base of operations and emergency operation center. If you can afford to, it is recommended as a best practice that you have someone on your staff assigned to that emergency operation center to be able to coordinate and

respond to what needs you have from your housing authority. You want to mobilize all of your staff to conduct the business that you need on a going forward basis for response. And then of course assess the damage to your offices and to your operational facilities. Again, check on your residents. Wildfire is greatly impactful should it hit your community, and so you want to make sure that your residents are safe, that they have evacuated if they need to evacuate, if they've sheltered in place, that they have and that there's a plan to go and evacuate them if necessary. If people have evacuated, find out where they are, if you can't reach them directly through their emergency contacts, try to identify where they are. And then understand how your property is set to operate in terms of utilities and key functions. And then any supplies that you need, understand where they are and make them available to your residents wherever you potentially have to relocate them. And we talked about coordinating with local partners, one of the things that you might be able to get through coordination with the local partners is transportation to help relocate your residents if necessary. You must identify the impact on your housing stock. Starting first with your Housing Choice Voucher portfolio, get in touch with the owners, your residents, have them to contact, notify them in advance, one of the things you can do is to tell them to expect to contact you following the wildfire to let you know about the impact of the wildfire on the unit. If it's still habitable if possible, you would go to the place and conduct an inspection just to make sure that the damaged unit does continue to meet HQS requirements. If you find that the business is uninhabitable, the landlord can repair the unit if possible so that it can be habitable again. If not, then you can move to abate the HAP payment if ultimately the landlord is unable to repair or doesn't respond to repair. One exception, and there are details about this on HUD's website, if it is a homeownership voucher unit HQS is not a reason to terminate mortgage payments as most of those units don't have inspections, so keep that in mind. When it comes to rehousing your residents first communicate with the residents then with the local and state government. This is why it's critically important to have that relationship with your emergency managers and with the State Office of Emergency Management. Because after a wildfire you're going to need help, as Ed said he hired someone, a housing navigator even, to help them with trying to identify units throughout the western part of the United States. You are going to want to coordinate with local nonprofits, with the emergency management organization, which Red Cross usually sets up the shelters, and any other community relief partners. There may be nearby PHAs or other affordable housing providers that can help you with this, again, coordinating with your local HUD office, they can help also with some of this coordination through other PHAs, to help you identify available units for any people that are in your portfolio that need to be rehoused. But you want to coordinate in advance again with all of the necessary partners, both the state and local emergency management organizations, Council on Aging, others that might be able to help you with transportation should mandatory evacuation be ordered. And then you want to work with transportation companies that can provide buses to move people. And for a time, it could be a way to temporarily get people out of harm's way as a fire passes and then get them back to their residences subsequently. Some other things to consider in terms of rehousing for public housing. There are some options. You can temporarily use community space if it's in a place that is unaffected or safe from the fire. You can relocate them to another public housing unit should there be an available unit. You can apply to get tenant protection vouchers if necessary to relocate your public housing units, public housing residents from a damaged unit. And you can use disaster preference at another PHA sometimes PHAs have an administrative plan preference for people who have been impacted by a disaster. And then your residents, keep this in mind please, your residents are eligible for everything that everyone else in your community is eligible for. And so if FEMA is offering transitional shelter assistance, which means putting people up in hotels or paying for rent to live someplace else, that your residents will be eligible for those

resources, just like anybody else in a community, because they have been impacted by the disaster in a residence in the United States of America. Sometimes, local FEMA and even local state emergency folks will make a distinction because they say they were previously prior to the disaster, the wildfire, assisted by HUD and so HUD has to take care of them. Yes, HUD will help in the coordination and taking care of them, but they are every bit as eligible for FEMA assistance as everyone else in the community. So you should keep that in mind. And then, for your housing choice voucher residents, one of the things you can do and must do actually, if that unit is habitable is terminate the HAP contract. You can reissue the voucher and move them to another habitable unit, or they can even port. But as Ed said, porting might come with some challenges because if they move to a more costly area, the cost associated with it, and then they too would be eligible for FEMA's transitional shelter assistance. As Ed mentioned, there are waivers available to you as a housing authority should a disaster happen. Particularly in presidentially declared disasters, there are a list of waivers, I won't get into them, but it'll be important for you to communicate with your local HUD office following a wildfire. And there's a link to the federal register that explains what those waivers are that are available to you. So now I'll turn it back to Brittany to discuss disaster recovery.

Brittany Kelly 1:13:23

Thank you. So first, we're getting in again, to start with what are the definitions? Well, the National Disaster Recovery Framework, or the NDRF, describes recovery as those capabilities necessary to assist communities affected by an incident to recover effectively, including, but not limited to, rebuilding infrastructure systems, providing adequate interim and long term housing for survivors, restoring health, social and community services, promoting economic development and restoring natural and cultural resources. The NDRF, that National Disaster Recovery Framework, also talks about how recovery is a whole community effort. So one of the things as you're navigating potential disaster recovery is understanding your internal and external stakeholders, as well as your resources that you can be an advocate to or liaison with through the disaster recovery process. And so we'll hear from FEMA Traci Brasher, talk a little bit about the federal government resources after a potential disaster. The state should be managing the disaster, local and municipal governments. We talked about those local and county, emergency managers knowing who they are and seeing what their role is in the disaster recovery process. Your public officials, private sector, whether that's both private and not private nonprofits, Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster, the individuals and families also themselves. So also the NDRF talks about the recovery core principles, I'm not going to read each one. But other things that you might be thinking about through the disaster recovery process, understanding local primacy, knowing your public information, and that everyone is collaborating and communicating together. And I think this is one of the most important slides when we're just talking in general when it comes to both disaster response and recovery is understanding everyone's roles and responsibilities. So really, the federal government's there to provide resources, the state is there to support the local, but really, the one of the things that is very, very important is local primacy. You, and your PHA, and your residents, and your county and local governments need to be driving your own recovery. You need to be your best advocate, you need to be your best planners, and being able to coordinate the resources, and communicating when you have unmet needs or things that are not going well. In order to do that, the first thing you'd be doing is planning and assessing what those vulnerabilities or risks might be. But at the end of the day, it needs to be local primacy, you driving your own recovery. And now I'll introduce Traci Brasher with FEMA headquarters.

Traci Brasher 1:16:34

Great, thanks, Brittany. Before we get started, I think we were going to ask a poll question first. So we'll go ahead and post that for you to respond to. Has your PHA received any federal assistance because of a Major or Presidential Disaster Declaration? All right, and we can see the results as people are answering questions there. So right now we have 22% responding Yes, 35% No, and 43% "I'm not sure". Okay well to those of you who are not sure, hopefully I can shed more light on Major or Presidential Disaster Declarations and the other types of assistance that FEMA provides. So good afternoon, everyone. I appreciate the introduction, again Traci Brasher. I'm currently the acting Individual Assistance Division Director at FEMA headquarters. Typically, my role is a Region Six Recovery Division Director. So to just start out with wanting to cover what are Presidential Disaster Declaration. So there are two types of disaster declarations provided for in the Stafford Act. One is an Emergency Declaration and the other is a Major Disaster Declaration. Both of those declaration types authorize the President to provide supplemental federal disaster assistance. However, the events related to the two different types of declarations, and scope and amount of assistance differ quite a bit. And so in an emergency declaration, federal assistance is needed to supplement tribal, state, and local efforts and capabilities to save lives and to protect property and public health and safety, or to lessen or avert the threat of catastrophe in any part of the United States. One thing you'll see very common in emergency declarations is those are issued, quite frequently, pre-disaster. As an example, you'll see emergency declarations issued quite frequently for hurricanes, as one example, and in those assistance is limited in an emergency declaration. Public Assistance, only Categories A and B may be authorized. Authorization of our individuals and households program is very rare in an emergency declaration, and Hazard Mitigation Grant Program is not available in emergency declaration either. So you'll see a lot of these pre-event but it's extremely important to take note, if you see a declaration has been issued by the President, that you take note on what programs and what categories of assistance are available. And that is always subject to change. In a pre-event, landfall declaration as an example, it may be very limited. We've seen a lot in the last year or so, those being limited to emergency and sheltering, and direct federal assistance, which I'll explain a little bit in a couple of slides, but very important to just understand that an emergency assistance is very limited in those declarations. And actually there is a threshold on the amount of money that FEMA can spend an emergency declaration as well. A Major Declaration is an event that the President concurs with the state and FEMA's findings, that has caused damage of such severity that it is beyond the combined capabilities of state and local governments to recover. So assistance available under a Major Declaration is much broader than an emergency declaration. It can be public assistance, which could be all categories of work, and also can be individual assistance, and also hazard mitigation assistance. So a Major Declaration does make available more types of disaster assistance if a Major Declaration is declared. And I know there's probably questions on the difference between, since we're talking about fires, FMAGs and Majors. And we will get into that part in just a moment as well. One thing to note, though, if we could go back to the previous slide is I really want to make sure everyone understands that insurance is certainly the first line of defense, and it is important to have adequate insurance coverage to promptly repair and restore public housing as outlined in the ACC. As previously noted, HUD requires PHAs to have adequate insurance coverage, but I also want to address as it relates to FEMA funding, duplication of benefits. And so when FEMA determines the amount of federal disaster assistance an applicant may be eligible for, we will verify that there are no duplication of benefits. By law, we cannot provide financial assistance when any other source, such as insurance, has provided assistance for the same disaster-caused need or when such assistance is available from another source. So other disaster related funding providers, such as HUD, may look at the amount of aid a survivor

receives from FEMA and its intended uses. This is also to prevent duplicating benefits. So those who are receiving assistance, so those in a PHA who may be eligible for FEMA assistance, we urge them to keep receipts of their disaster spending for three years, in order to document the money was used to meet those disaster related needs. If a recipient, whether it be in public assistance or an individual assistance, receives an insurance settlement to cover the same expenses, then that is considered a duplication of benefits and would be required to reimburse FEMA. And applicant cases may be reviewed to confirm funds were spent properly, so it's vitally important one, to have insurance, but then also ensure that from a federal perspective and funding that we are not duplicating benefits. Okay, now we can go into the next slide. So as we know, a wildfires behavior is very unpredictable and can change direction unexpectedly, spread across fire breaks and highways and destroy or damage homes, buildings and any other structures in its path. Uncontrolled fires can rapidly turn into blazing infernos producing fear, economic loss, disrupted lives and loss of life and property. Controlling those fires is first the responsibility of the local community and then the state. However, at times, those combined efforts are not sufficient to stop the spread of the fire and mitigate fire risks to the built environment. When that occurs, the state can request federal assistance to supplement state, tribal, and local efforts. The Stafford Act authorizes the president to provide fire management assistance in response to a declared fire. That federal assistance is coordinated through FEMA under our Fire Management Assistance Grant Program. We provide that assistance in the form of grants for things like equipment, supplies, personnel cost for the mitigation, management and control of any fire on public or private forest land or grassland that threatens such destruction, as would constitute a major disaster. With an FMAG, there is mitigation post-fire assistance available to help communities implement hazard mitigation measures after wildfire disasters. The other item listed here is direct federal assistance. That is actually not available under an FMAG program, but it is available under both the EM and the Major Disaster Declarations. What direct federal assistance is, is it requires the state to make a request for what their needs are, what do they need federal assistance for? That could be personnel, equipment, supplies, evacuation assistance. Some examples are debris removal, search and rescue, things like that, where they might need direct federal assistance because they do not have the capability or capacity to handle that. And then of course, the hazard mitigation grant program is something available under a Major Disaster Declaration only and does require state to have a hazard mitigation administrative plan. And you can see in the note there, FEMA public assistance may be available, however, it has only been designated very few times, 16 times related to wildfires to date. Next slide. The Fire Management Assistance Grant FMAG Program that we talked about is a 75% 25% cost share program, may be modified per a governor's request and a president's discretion. And then, as far as an FMAG goes, there are four criteria from 44 CFR that are considered when evaluating a request for an FMAG declaration. Those criteria are actually considered in order of descending priority during the evaluation process of a threat of a fire or fire complex. So the first criteria for an FMAG is threat to lives and improved property, including threats to critical facilities, infrastructure and critical watershed areas. So that threat to lives and improved property must meet the criteria for a major disaster declaration. And again, a major is based on actual impacts, and FMAG is based on the threat to lives and improved property. So typically, we don't see the impacts yet. They do have to request that when the fires burning out of control, so there may be some impacts, but we certainly don't know the extent of the damage and the impacts of the fire. The second criteria is the availability of state and local firefighting resources. So have they requested out of state teams to assist, is there a resource shortage in the state, are there multiple fires burning where resources are limited? The next criteria is high fire danger conditions as indicated by the nationally accepted indices, such as the National Fire Danger Rating System. And then the last one is a potential major economic impact. And so are the fires threatening such

that there would be potential major economic impact if the threat was realized? And as I mentioned before, direct federal assistance is not currently authorized for FMAG declarations. Program eligible work directly related to the declared fire is documented really into three general categories. And that is Category B under the Public Assistance Program, which is emergency protective measures, is available for the most part in an FMAG declaration. And then Category H, firefighting activities, eligible work associated with fire related activities, which are provided under Section 420 of the Stafford Act. And then Category Z, which is our administrative costs, which is assistance provided for eligible costs associated with requesting, obtaining and administering a grant for a declared fire. And so under the FMAG Program, you can see in the bullets there. Basically, it's that response to the fire the emergency protective measures. So, under an FMAG PHAs are not an eligible applicant. The federal share is again 75% 25%, can be paid by the state, applicant, or combination of both, a lot of times it depends on whether that state passes down cost share or not. The eligible work that is performed under an FMAG, just like any of our other eligibility must be the legal responsibility of the applicant, whether it was performed by the applicant's own agents or through a secondary party, must be required as a result of the declared fire, and located within the designated area. Some of the eligible costs included in an FMAG, are equipment and supplies labor, travel and per diem, limited pre-positioning costs, emergency work, temporary repairs of damage caused by firefighting activities, and mobilization and demobilization. So, to the question of what's the difference between an FMAG and a Major Disaster Declaration. So in situations where a state has received an FMAG declaration, the state may ultimately deem it necessary to request a Major Disaster or emergency declaration in response to the wildfires or wildfire threat. Although our FMAG program is our primary vehicle to assist state, tribes, and local governments responding to wildland fires, FEMA generally does not recommend a Major Disaster Declaration for wildland fire, unless the fire has significant impacts and costs that cannot be addressed by the FMAG program. So at the regional and headquarters level, when we evaluate a request for a Major Disaster as a result of a wildland fire, we cannot use costs that are eligible, or could have been eligible, under an FMAG declaration to meet the state or the county wide per capita indicator for the Major Disaster Declaration. So they have to meet the indicators for a Major Disaster Declaration without consideration of the costs that are, or could be, eligible under an FMAG. So that is the primary difference. So you've probably seen or heard that in New Mexico, we recently declared a Major Disaster Declaration for the wildland fires that were occurring in New Mexico. And if you remember, a couple slides ago, FMAGs do not include individual assistance. So they had a significant number of homes that were destroyed. And so that would be one of those items that are not covered under an FMAG and can be included in a damage assessment for a Major Disaster Declaration. They also had some other items under public assistance that could not be covered under an FMAG as well, some of that being permanent work, which is not eligible under an FMAG, and would then count towards the threshold for a Major Disaster Declaration. So I hope that kind of gives you a little more detail on the difference between an FMAG and a Major Disaster Declaration for fire. Next slide. So the mission of FEMA's public assistance program is to provide assistance to state, local, territorial, or tribal governments and certain types of private nonprofit organizations so that communities can quickly respond to and recover from major disasters or emergencies declared by the President. So through the Public Assistance Program, FEMA provides supplemental federal grant assistance for items like debris removal emergency protective measures, restoration of disaster damaged publicly owned facilities and specific facilities of certain private nonprofit organizations. We also encourage the protection of these damaged facilities from future incidents by providing assistance for hazard mitigation measures through the public assistance program. I know we've talked a little bit about hazard mitigation, but there are two programs. There's a 406 Hazard Mitigation in public assistance, and

then the 404 Hazard Mitigation Grant Program. And so we provide that assistance based on our authorities and statutes, executive orders, regulations and policies. Again, the declaration will designate which areas, whether it be counties or parishes or tribal governments, are eligible to receive federal assistance and it will also designate the types of federal assistance authorized. If you hear there's a disaster declaration, pay very close attention to that but also understand that as a disaster is fast moving, there may be additions to that declaration, which make more categories of assistance and more areas eligible for assistance. So don't just look at the first one and say, oh, I'm not eligible, make sure you're keeping up with any additional add ons for that declaration. Again, in that funding for PA, the four basic components are PA eligibility are applicant, facility, work and cost, we refer to those components as building blocks of an eligibility pyramid. So we evaluate each building block to determine eligibility starting at the foundation of the pyramid, which we call the applicant, and working up to the cost at the top of the pyramid. And so all work must be a result of the major disaster event, you must be located within a designated disaster area, must be the legal responsibility of an eligible applicant, and the applicant is not under the specific funding authority of another federal agency. Remember, we talked about duplication of benefits. So, next slide, the categories of work under public assistance. Again, we grant work on a reimbursement basis. Therefore, typically, you would have to finance all work under Categories A, B, and E and then FEMA reimburses those eligible costs. So again, we're typically a reimbursement program. We have emergency work, which is typically a six month period of performance, that includes debris removal, and emergency protective measures. And then we have permanent work, Categories C through G. I won't read those off to you, but typically, you would fall under Category E for buildings and equipment. Permanent work has an 18 month period of performance, and of course, those all can be requested for extensions, with justification as to why work has not been completed within that associated timeframe. So those are the typical categories of work under public assistance for which you can request public assistance. If there is a declaration and you're eligible, pay attention to things like the announcement of applicant briefings. The request for public assistance is required before you can even get started with PA you have to have an approval of a request for public assistance. And then there will be applicant briefings and then you will also be contacted by both the state and FEMA to set up subsequent meetings and to walk you through the process for public assistance reimbursement. And I think that is all I have, pending anything else from me and we'll move into the next poll question. Thank you.

Brittany Kelly 1:39:26

Thank you, Traci. So moving into our procurement and environmental reviews. Does your PHA have emergency procurement policies, and so do you have policies and or procedures currently at your PHA when it comes to procuring goods or services? Okay, so it looks like a little less than half do. And I'm very pleased to see here that about 19% have No and about 37% are not sure, there's something that might just fall under if you have a finance person or finance team. So that's something that they might have and you just might not be aware of, but we're just going to quickly, high level, go into why it's important. So in the event of a disaster impact, and when you're in the response phase, there's things that you usually need, whether it's debris removal, maybe it's repair services, maybe it's generators, fuel, there's a myriad of potential services or goods you may need to purchase or acquire and that usually falls under emergency procurement. Obviously, every PHA should follow your designated procurement policy if you have one. Well, we talk just high level about a lot of federal resources. We know that there's CARES capital funds with HUD, we learned about some of if a presidential declaration happens and certain federal financial resources or grants may be turned on, and it's very important

that you're ensuring you're following the 2 CFR 200 or the federal requirements for procurement in order to be eligible for those federal funds. Unfortunately, if you do not follow the 2 CFR 200 requirements, there is an opportunity to jeopardize all of the federal funding you have received. And we did hyperlink here the procurement handbook for public housing authorities that may be helpful as well. The biggest thing is an emergency procurement, understanding what's an emergent or exigent circumstance, and then understanding when you have to re-procure those services or goods, you cannot usually use the same one long term, once you get past outside of that emergent or exigent circumstance. And then something else just high level to be thinking about are environmental reviews. So again, when it comes to federal funding, both whether it's HUD or FEMA federal funds, there are environmental regulations that have to be followed. Specifically for PHAs with HUD funding, and that's the 24 CFR Part 58 that we have outlined here. But there's also additional acts, laws and regulations that FEMA also has to follow, and if the PHA does not follow those environmental review guidelines, laws, regulations and policies, it could also jeopardize funding, because again, the federal agencies have to follow the laws when it comes to utilizing their federal funding. So also, here are additional federal resources. These are mainly FEMA's additional disaster assistance resources. But these will be specific for residents. So as Traci Brasher mentioned, sometimes there is after major disaster declaration, IA, Individual Assistance that is potentially turned on. These are some of the additional resources that may be available to your residents, especially when they're coming to you and saying, I need help. We understand it's not necessarily your responsibility to provide these services or know about them, but at least here is another hyperlink where maybe you can point them in the right direction of additional services that may be available to them. And then moving into other disaster assistance. One thing that we can highlight here, the voluntary agencies. Earlier you heard that I use the phrase VOAD, or Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster. We've provided the website here, but these are the, whether it's your local houses of worship or religious organizations, it might be the United Way or Catholic Charities. There's also disaster specific VOADs that may come in whether it's Team Rubicon or different or SVP that might come in and be able to also support some of the unmet needs or resources that you need as the PHA for rebuilding and for your residents when it comes to food, water, shelter, relocation or unemployment assistance. And then to close us out with the other disaster assistance I'm going to turn it back to Fred Tombar for CDBG-DR and HUD.

Fred Tombar 1:44:26

Great, thank you, Brittany. As Brittany said there may be, subsequent to your wildfire, an allocation from Congress of HUD CDBG-DR funds. That again, these funds are only funded in certain presidentially declared disasters, and there must be a congressional appropriation, so coordinating with your state and local government is going to be essentially important. To understand if those funds are available know that they are eligible to you for unmet needs after insurance and other forms of assistance. If there should be FEMA assistance available other forms of assistance from your state local government, CDBG-DR funds would come afterward. There is a requirement in the administration of those funds from grantees to assess unmet needs, particularly for low and moderate income individuals, and so there is a priority given to your residents, the people you serve, if there are ongoing unmet needs when state or local government, whoever the grantee is, has to develop an action plan for the use of their HUD CDBG-DR dollars, But it is important that you all advocate and are at the table to help with the development of plans to meet the needs of your own that are ongoing for your PHA and for your residents. If there isn't a declaration, HUD does have some funds available to you, and there may be some other ongoing and state or local resources that are available. In particular, there is the

capital fund emergency and natural disaster funding. We'll talk a little bit more about this on the next slide. Sometimes local governments will offer tax abatements or reductions for damages that you have to properties. Brittany talked a lot about assistance from voluntary agencies helping with to rebuild after a wildfire and other types of disasters. And then sometimes state and local governments have a disaster relief fund and give priority to low and moderate income individuals impacted in in the community. And also your state may have a Housing Trust Fund. There are, at the state housing agency, dollars set aside through a Housing Trust Fund for extremely low income individuals, but there may be also a particular fund from taxes that is set aside at state or local level to assist to assist low income individuals and communities. I've mentioned that HUD capital emergency fund for natural disasters where there isn't a presidentially declared disaster could be an eligible resource. Know that annually, HUD reserves a portion of the capital fund for these emergencies and non-presidentially declared disasters, they are available on a first come first come first come first serve basis. So while there may be a need, the funds may not be available just because often, the needs outweigh the amount that Congress provides to HUD through this fund. There are some tips here and resources that are linked, that will help you in in terms of identifying what you would have to do to apply for these funds, a checklist, a helpful checklist, that HUD has made available on its website to help you with that with applying for those funds if you should need those. And finally, we give this slide with links to a plethora of resources that were mentioned throughout the training. So download this PowerPoint deck afterward and keep this as a resource for your agency should you face a wildfire going forward and I'll turn it back over to Jodi.

Jodi Speer 1:50:00

Thank you, Fred. And thank you to all of our presenters today. Thank you, Ed, for sharing your experience , Fred, Brittany and Tracy for all of huge wealth of information related to disaster readiness, response and recovery. As mentioned at the beginning, this is part of a series of webinars. Today, we talked about wildfires, our next webinar, we will be talking about tornadoes. Some of the federal resources will be the same, but there will also you know, some of them is are different. So if tornadoes are something that are part of your risk assessment in your PHA, we do encourage you to come to future webinars as well. There's, these are just a few extra hyperlinks, once the slides are posted on the HUD Exchange, for you to visit to get more information about the various things that we have talked about today. And that means we have time for questions. And I don't have any questions currently in the q&a section. So we will wait for a few minutes for folks that do have questions to go ahead and put them in there. The recording of this webinar, and the slides will be posted on the HUD Exchange, usually within about a week, they should be available. And you can go ahead and go onto the HUD Exchange and search in the training section and you should be able to find the webinar series. There are no questions. We really want to thank you for your time, we know that this is an extensive two hour webinar and a ton of information. We really encourage you and hope that you're going to take this information away and take it back to your agencies and either revisit, enhance your existing action plans, disaster readiness, response and recovery action plans, or to develop a new one. And we do hope to see you again for our next one. I do have a question, "late logging into the seminar trying to find out when the next one is". Let me go ahead and go back a slide to, here it is, and here's a link but I suppose you don't have the slide deck yet, but hovering on it you should be able to see the link there to register for future webinars. "Any quizzes or handouts that we have?" We do not have any quizzes or handouts directly related to this webinar, however, we do have a series of fact sheets that will be published in the upcoming months along with the updated Disaster Readiness, Response and Recovery Handbook for PHAs. And that will all be available on the same page on the HUD Exchange. Well, I'm going to

pause like someone is typing an answer in the q&a section. There are no more questions. Again, we will just thank you for sharing your afternoon with us today. We appreciate you being here. We hope that you can join us again for future webinars.