



## **Steps to Take for State Damage Assessments**

The best resource for disaster recovery is the Texas Division of Emergency Management's [Disaster Recovery Manual \(DEM-62\)](#).

Damage Assessment occurs in two areas. Assessment of homes/businesses and assessment of infrastructure. Communities need to be prepared for assessment of these two areas.

### **Before Assessment Teams Arrive**

Local governments perform a rapid assessment by surveying both areas as mentioned above. Typically, people used for this effort have included individuals with familiarity in assessment of homes and businesses, i.e. human services officers, building inspectors and tax assessors. People who can be utilized for infrastructure losses, may include city/county engineers, council members, commissioners, department heads or managers from departments such as public works, utilities, etc.

Based on the assessments, local governments should perform the following:

- Prepare maps locating damages
- Secure large capacity vehicles for damage assessment teams. The vehicles should be able to accommodate up to six passengers.
- Assign a local representative to each team who is familiar with the damages, i.e. public works director for assessment of infrastructure losses or a human services officer for damages to homes and businesses.
- A county representative will need to accompany the assessment teams throughout the county and cities, serving as a liaison with each jurisdiction.
- Determine the percent of insurance coverage for the impacted homes/businesses
- A Public Property Site Assessment Worksheet (DEM-25) should be utilized along with a map in local assessment of infrastructure losses.

The importance of the initial local assessment cannot be over emphasized. Since speed and accuracy are essential in obtaining the maximum amount of help in the shortest amount of time, established workable procedures and trained personnel should be in place beforehand, if at all possible.

### **After Assessment Teams Arrive**

The assessments will occur in the following order:

1. Teams will meet with county officials first to discuss the current disaster situation.
2. Teams will break into the two assessment groups (infrastructure and homes/businesses) and review damages by looking at maps and discussing losses with local team representatives.
3. Teams will begin surveying worst affected areas and slowly move to less damaged areas as time allows.
4. Teams will return to the original county location to discuss the assessments and to de-brief local elected officials.