



Geographic Information Systems

OEM relies on accurate geographic information for emergency response and planning operations.

Through its Geographic Information Systems (GIS) division, OEM can easily map and access data — from flood zones and local infrastructure to population density and road closures — before, during, and after an emergency.

GIS combines layers of information about a location to give users a better understanding of the expected conditions. By linking maps to databases, GIS enables users to visualize, manipulate, analyze, and display spatial data.

OEM's GIS division plays an important role in all stages of an emergency. In the planning stage, GIS can provide a range of information, including data on flood zones, buildings, and concentrations of affected populations.

During emergencies, GIS staffers provide data and analysis to OEM's commissioner and executive staff to support decision making, and to Watch Command and emergency responders to help them assess the incident. GIS can help provide information on buildings and infrastructure in affected areas, determine optimal restricted zones, and identify resources for sheltering.

After an emergency, GIS can help recovery workers make decisions about the priority order for demolition, plan reconstruction of an area, and determine which property owners qualify for grants or loan programs.