

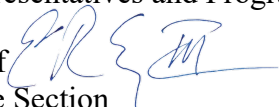


FEMA

**US&R GENERAL MEMORANDUM – 2019-049**

May 31, 2019

**FOR:** National Urban Search & Rescue Response System  
Task Force Representatives and Program Managers

**FROM:** Buddy Ey, Chief   
Admin / Finance Section  
Urban Search and Rescue Branch

**SUBJECT:** US&R General Memorandum 2019-049 – Introduction to Community Lifelines

Following the 2017 hurricane season, FEMA revised the National Response Framework to emphasize stabilization of critical lifelines and coordination across the critical infrastructure sectors. One change is the focus to outcomes-based response through the prioritization of the rapid stabilization of lifesaving and life sustaining lifelines. In addition to the federal government, most state and local emergency management agencies have embraced the lifeline construct. The seven lifelines are: 1) Safety and Security, 2) Food, Water and Sheltering, 3) Health and Medical, 4) Energy (Power and Fuel), 5) Communications, 6) Transportation, and 7) Hazardous Materials.

The National Urban Search and Rescue (US&R) Response System (the System) plays a unique role in response and recovery efforts as it is often one of the first federal resources deployed to assist areas impacted by a disaster. Concurrent with its primary US&R mission, System resources can provide invaluable situational awareness to FEMA leadership critical to successful “fact-based” decision making and better prioritization and implementation of response and recovery efforts.

One method the US&R Branch will use to reinforce the importance of Community Lifelines will be the inclusion of the lifeline icons at the bottom of all Program Directive and General Memorandum documents. Attached for quick reference is the Community Lifelines fact sheet and poster. The complete *Community Lifelines Implementation Toolkit* can be found at: <https://www.fema.gov/media-library/assets/documents/177222>. It is imperative that all System members become familiar with the Community Lifelines construct.

**Attachment:** Community Lifelines Fact Sheet  
Community Lifelines Poster

**Cc:** US&R Strategic Group  
US&R Advisory Group  
US&R Branch Staff  
FEMA Regional/Federal/International ESF #9 Representatives  
US&R Incident Support Team





## COMMUNITY LIFELINES

A lifeline enables the continuous operation of government functions and critical business and is essential to human health and safety or economic security.

### Why a lifelines construct?

Decision-makers must rapidly determine the scope, complexity, and interdependent impacts of a disaster. Applying the lifelines construct allows decision-makers to:

- Prioritize, sequence, and focus response efforts towards maintaining or restoring the most critical services and infrastructure.
- Utilize a common lexicon to facilitate unity of purpose across all stakeholders.
- Promote a response that facilitates unity of purpose and better communication amongst the whole community (state, tribal, territorial, local, regional, Federal, private sector, non-profit and other community partners).
- Clarify which components of the disaster are complex (multifaceted) and/or complicated (difficult), requiring cross-sector coordination.

### How will lifelines be used?

- Enhance the ability to gain, maintain, and communicate situational awareness for the whole community in responding to disasters.
- Analyze impacts to the various lifelines and develop priority focus areas for each operational period during response.
- Identify and communicate complex interdependencies to identify major limiting factors hindering stabilization.
- Update the National Response Framework to reflect use of community lifelines in response planning.

### What are the opportunities of lifelines?

- Enable a true unity of effort between government, non-governmental organizations, and the private sector, including infrastructure owners and operators.
- Integrate preparedness efforts, existing plans and identify unmet needs to better anticipate response requirements.
- Refine reporting sources and products to enhance situational awareness, best determine capability gaps, and demonstrate progress towards stabilization.

### Community lifelines



Visit us at <http://www.fema.gov/national-planning-frameworks>

If you have any questions or feedback, please email them to: [Lifelines@fema.dhs.gov](mailto:Lifelines@fema.dhs.gov)

# Community Lifelines

## Definition

A lifeline enables the continuous operation of **government functions** and **critical business** and is essential to **human health** and safety or **economic security**.

## Purpose

Root Cause Analysis

Interdependencies

Prioritization

Ease of Communication

## Assessing

Status ———> What?

Impact ———> So What?

Actions ———> Now What?

Limiting Factors —> What's the Gap?

COMPONENTS of Lifelines



Safety and Security



Law Enforcement



Search and Rescue



Fire Service



Government Services



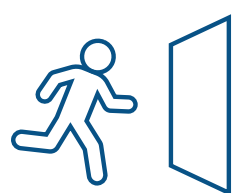
Responder Safety and Security



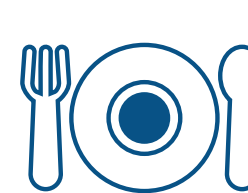
Imminent Hazard Mitigation



Food, Water, Sheltering



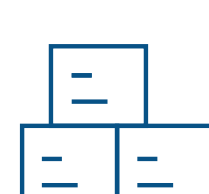
Evacuations



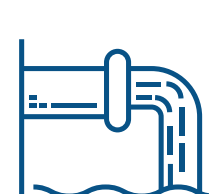
Food/Potable Water



Shelter



Durable Goods



Water



Agriculture



Health and Medical



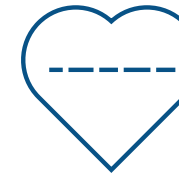
Medical Care



Patient Movement



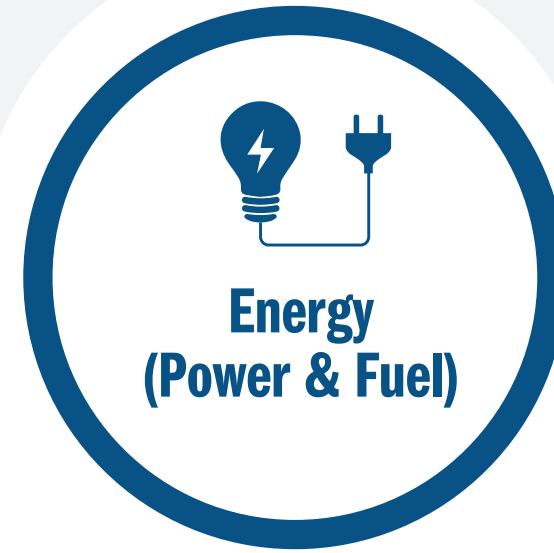
Public Health



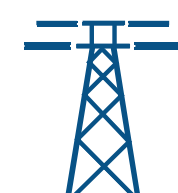
Fatality Management



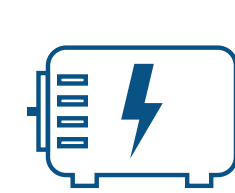
Health Care Supply Chain



Energy (Power & Fuel)



Power (Grid)



Temporary Power



Fuel



Communications



Infrastructure



Alerts, Warnings, and Messaging



911 and Dispatch



Responder Communications



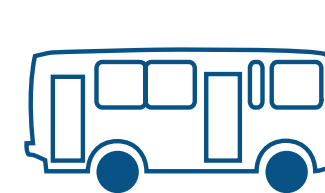
Financial Services



Transportation



Highway/Roadway



Mass Transit



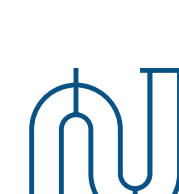
Railway



Aviation



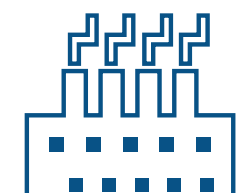
Maritime



Pipeline



Hazardous Material



Facilities



Hazardous Debris, Pollutants, Contaminants