

Montezuma County Office of Emergency Management
August 2026
Monthly Situation Report



Photo of a burned tree in the forest

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REPORT DATE / TIME: 09/1/26 1200 MST

NEW FORMAT

COUNTY LIFE LINES

Meaning of key Lifeline colors:

Green stabilization;

Yellow solution ID and plan of action in progress;

Red services were disrupted.

Safety and Security – Green

- Law Enforcement: Normal Operations.
- Search and Rescue: Normal Operations.
- Fire Services: Normal Operations.
- Community Safety: Stabilized.

Food, Water and Shelter – Green

- Food: Normal Operations.
- Agriculture: Normal Operations.
- Water: Normal Operations.
- Shelter: Normal Operations.

Health and Medical - Green

- Medical Care: Normal Operations.
- Patient Movement: Normal Operations.
- Public Health: Normal Operations.
- Hospital: Normal Operations.
- EMS: Normal Operations.

Energy, Power and Fuel – Green

- Power (Grid): Normal Operations.
- Fuel: Normal Operations.
- Natural Gas: Normal Operations.
- Propane: Normal Operations.
- CO2: Normal Operations.

Communications – Green

- Alerts, Warnings, and Messages: Normal Operations
- 911 Dispatch: Normal Operations.
- Responder Communications: Normal Operations.
- Finance Services: Normal Operations.
- Public Information: Normal Operations.
- Infrastructure: Normal Operations.

Transportation- Green

- Transit: Normal operations.
- Railway: None.
- Aviation: Normal operations.
- Maritime: Normal operations.
- Airport: Normal operations.

Hazardous Materials - Green

- Facilities: Normal Operations.
- Hazmat, Pollutants, and Contaminants: Normal Operations.



STATE LIFELINES

State Emergency Operations Center (SEOC) Status

Response Level 2: State EOC fully activated with multiple state agencies and FEMA staff.

Recovery Level 1: State Recovery Task Force (SRTF) activated on June 30.

Debris and Watershed working groups activated.

July 29 and 30 | Aspen Acres Fire Joint Preliminary Damage Assessments.

Statewide Drought Emergency Declaration 6/5/26

Statewide Emergency Disaster Declared in Response to Ferris Fire in Dolores and Montezuma Counties
7/8/2026



EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT

County EOC:

- No Activations
- All Lifelines are at "Green" Status. Web EOC reporting monthly.

Disaster Emergency Declarations:

- Statewide Drought Emergency Declaration by the Governor on 6/5/26
- Statewide Emergency Disaster Declared in Response to Ferris Fire in Dolores and Montezuma Counties
7/8/2026

Emergency Support Functions (ESF) Summaries

1. Transportation

- CDOT
 - Working on HWY 184 and Rd. 25 intersection. Planning process to fix the intersection.
- Air Services
 - Durango airport exercise scheduled for October 7.
 - Classis Air Medical have been busy, having had 22 flights in one week.
- Montezuma County Transportation (MOCO):
 - August was a busy month for both MOCO Transportation and Senior Services.
 - MOCO Transportation provided 794 rides during August. Ridership has increased significantly following the closure of a local NEMT transportation provider, and MOCO has stepped up to help fill this critical gap in our community. We anticipate this higher level of demand will continue in the coming months as residents rely on MOCO to access medical appointments and other essential services.
 - Senior Services delivered 660 Meals on Wheels meals to local seniors during August. These deliveries provide more than a nutritious meal—they help older adults remain safely and independently in their homes while also providing an important connection to their community.

2. Communications

- Dolores Tower Site:
 - Grant submission for a new generator at the Dolores tower site through Homeland Security (SHSP) grant for \$30,800 has been approved by FEMA. We will be sending out a Request for Quote (RFQ). Project is in progress.
 - Refurbishing CR V.6 from the cattle guard to the Dolores Tower site with gravel on county road and USFS road. Project is approved and will begin in October.

- Interagency Dispatch:
 - Discussions and plans since 2021 on moving the Rocky Mountain Area Dispatch Zone Center in Durango to the Grand Junction area. The SW regional partners have been monitoring this decision since 2021. The move has been planned for 2027-2028. Further discussions are continuing as the opinion of several counties and tribes in the area are opposed to this decision.
- Park Point Site:
 - Early warning camera system will be purchased in the coming months and placed on NPS property for wildfire detection. Project planning is in progress.
- Regional:
 - SW Regional Infrastructure Group have been meeting since 2025 developing a strategic regional communications infrastructure plan to enhance the 800MHz system. The group is in the final stages of completion, listing the gaps in our areas with recommendations and costs. Once this is completed, we will seek funding from the State to ensure sustainability for the equipment, then we will seek funding from the federal government. Project in progress.
- Information Technology:
 - County held online security awareness training for all employees.

3. Public Works/Road and Bridge

- Montezuma County Road and Bridge:
 - Still working on road projects and repairing several culverts in the county, some due to the “Down Burst” that occurred on July 21, 2026.

4. Fire Fighting

- Fire Ban Stages:
 - Montezuma County: Fire Ban still in effect.
 - Town of Dolores: Burn Ban in effect.
 - Town of Mancos: Burn Ban based on the Town code 7-9-50.
 - City of Cortez: Open fires by permit only. Still in effect.
 - Dolores County: Stage 1 fire restrictions
 - Ute Mt. Ute: Stage 1 fire restrictions.
 - BLM: Stage 1 fire restrictions
 - USFS: Stage 1 fire restrictions lower zone 1 <https://www.fs.usda.gov/r02/sanjuan/alerts/stage-i-fire-prohibitions-zone-i>
 - National Parks Service: Stage 1 fire restrictions
- Fires:
 - 8/2/26 – Finley Fire – Ute Mountain – 34.5 acres
 - 8/7/26 – House Fire – Rd. 43 – Accidental cause
 - 8/23/26 – House Fire – Rd. 25 – Electrical cause
 - Numerous single tree fires and some brush fires under 0.25 of an acre
- Total Fire bans/restrictions in all the county: – in 2025 = 8, in 2026 = 8

5. Information and Planning

- Colorado Emergency Management Association (CEMA) Legislation Committee:
 - We have been reviewing several bills over 2026. No current bills are being reviewed this month.
- Colorado Emergency Preparedness Assessment (CEPA):
 - The CEPA for 2025 is completed. Next one will be in 2028.

- Community Animal Response Team (CART) and Community Emergency Response Team (CERT):
Trainings are on the Thursday of each month at 18:00 at various locations.
 - Total Exercises and Events Deployed:
 - Volunteer Expo
 - Red Cross Regional Shelter Exercise
 - Team used for 4th of July event in Cortez
 - Ferris Fire assisted in the EOC, Sheltering Center and Evacuation Center
- Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP):
 - 8 county buildings completed.
- Emergency Management Performance Grant (EMPG):
 - 2025-2026 EMPG Grant Submission: It is now from 10/1/25 to 12/30/26 for \$54,943. 5 Quarters.
 - We have received State approval for funding to the end of 2026.
 - NOTE: the last two quarters of 2026 have been approved, but these quarters have strong implications of supplanting language, which means there is a strong possibility that 2026 Budget funds cannot be used as a match. More to come after discussions.
 - 1st Qtr. 2025-2026 EMPG reimbursement October-December 2025 was submitted for \$28,111.48.
 - Received \$11,626.16 reimbursement.
 - 2nd Qtr. 2025-2026 EMPG reimbursement January-March 2026 was submitted for \$25,078.46.
 - 3rd Qtr. 2025-2026 EMPG reimbursement April-June 2026 was submitted for \$22,703.30.
- Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP):
 - The EM and the State are still researching funding opportunities through other grants and agencies. Cost of the project is projected at \$121,138. Project on hold.
- Integrated Preparedness Plan (IPP):
 - 2026 - 2029 IPP/TEP completed and submitted. Monthly updates to 2026 Training and Exercise Plan (TEP) based on the IPP and ongoing impute from the stakeholders.

- SW Regional ICS Training for 300 and 400 will be held in Aztec Fire Department, NM on September 28 thru October 1. Registration online with COTrain.
 - Planning Department:
 - County was working on Rubbish Ordinance, based on the public survey and the lack of funding to support it, it was not approved by BOCC.
 - \$50,000 planning grant for a short-term rental ordinance development.
 - Monthly discussions on adjustments to the land use code.
 - MOU Regional:
 - Meetings on developing a regional MOU for 6 counties and 2 tribes for resource sharing across the SW Region. In progress.
 - Training/Drills:
 - EM assisted in Active Threat Exercise Planning for the County
 - EM presented Active Shooter case study on 1998 Officer shooting for the Four States Peace Officer Association on 8/13/26
 - EM facilitated the AAR for the Ferris Fire with EOC/ESF Staff on 8/20/26
 - EM instructed Pleasant View Fire on Active Threat response and ICS structure on 8/25/26
 - EM attended TLO training 8/27/26
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- | | | |
|--|---------------|--------------|
| ○ Total trainings held - | in 2025 = 36, | in 2026 = 41 |
| ○ Total EOC training held - | in 2025 = 6, | in 2026 = 5 |
| ○ Total exercises/tabletops - | in 2025 = 9, | in 2026 = 15 |
| ○ Total training certificates received – | in 2025 = 16, | in 2026 = 9 |
-
- | | | |
|---|----------------|---------------|
| ● <u>Total planning/stakeholder meetings –</u> | in 2025 = 400, | in 2026 = 191 |
| ● <u>Total Committees/Boards representing –</u> | in 2025 = 24, | in 2026 = 24 |
| ● <u>Total MOU, IGA, MMAs completed –</u> | in 2025 = 4, | in 2026 = 1 |
| ● <u>Total COOP Plans Completed –</u> | in 2025 = 7, | in 2026 = 1 |

- Total plans/policies written – in 2025 = 17, in 2026 = 4
- Total grants involved with – in 2025 = 9, in 2026 = 5
- Total calls assigned to EM in 2025 = 51, in 2026 = 31
- Total deployments for EM Staff – in 2025 = 0, in 2026 = 1
- Total EOC activations – in 2025 = 1, in 2026 = 2
- Total declarations County wide - in 2025 = 1, in 2026 = 2

6. **Mass Care and Housing**

- Water:
 - Mancos Rural Water experienced 3 water line breaks affecting residents along CR 41 from CR H and CR G.
 - Water Storage report at of 8/26/26
 - Mc Phee – 9,595 af with 98 CFS inflow, and 191 CSF total outflow
 - Jackson – 4133 af with 0 CSF inflow, and 0 CSF outflow
 - Groundhog – 6400 af with 42 CSF inflow, and 75 CSF outflow
 - Narraguinnep – 4,000 af with 87 CSF outflow.
- Housing:
 - Red Cross
 - An After Action Review (AAR) for the response to the Ferris Fire was held on 20 August and included a review of sheltering and feeding operations. To recap actions, emergency shelters in Pleasant View and Dove Creek were opened several times for urgent evacuation orders. Out of 182 persons who registered as evacuees, approximately 20-25 were provided emergency shelter and feeding either at the Pleasant View Charter School or the Pioneer Center in Dove Creek.
 - The Red Cross representative thanked both Dolores and Montezuma Counties for the quick response of the (Red Cross trained) CERT/CART team to open and operate the shelter in Pleasant View over the 4th of July holiday when the simultaneous demands for mass care across Colorado due to other fires (in Pueblo, Lake, and Ouray counties) had stretched resources. The coordination

of Airbnb lodging for evacuees between Red Cross, United Way, and Airbnb allowed most evacuees to leave shelters and stay in much better conditions in Airbnbs within 12-24 hours of arrival at shelters, relieving the pressure to operate emergency shelters and providing much better accommodations to displaced residents.

- In September, American Red Cross volunteers will be contacting all existing shelter locations across Western Colorado to update shelter agreements, points of contact, surveys, and details regarding the accommodation of household pets. Additional shelter locations will be identified and added to the National Shelter System as needed.

- Mass Care:

- No report

- Access Functional Needs (AFN):

- The state is planning for an AFN training this year. Date to be determined.
 - Ongoing registration on the county's web site for AFN registration.

7. Logistics Management

- Emergency Operations Center (EOC):

- The Alternate EOC at the Fairgrounds has received a Congressional Spending grant for re-modeling the upper rooms in the indoor arena. Planning process was submitted for approval. Project in progress.

- Grants:

- SWAHAC grants (SHSP) for 2022 will be closing out, 2023 grants need more board discussions for funding allocations, and 2024 will be working on a large project based on the board approval.

- Region 9 grants (SHSP) for 2025. County submitted and received \$30,800 for a communications generator.
- SRS funding will be used to purchase an early alert and warning camera system for fires. In the process of purchasing and installing. Using SRS funding and the camera system will cost \$37,500.

8. Public Health and Medical Services

- Public Health
 - PHD been busy supporting back-to-school immunizations, with increased vaccine activity as students return to school. Currently, there are no significant infectious disease concerns or emerging outbreaks to report.
 - Colorado is launching the EPIC Grant, with two new staff members at the Health Department coordinating this prevention-focused initiative. Community partners and others interested in working in the prevention space are encouraged to connect with the EPIC team at the Health Department for opportunities to collaborate.
 - Public Health Emergency Preparedness (PHEP) activities have also commenced for the new grant cycle, with planning and preparedness work underway for the upcoming year.
 - CDPHE is involved in developing exercises and testing their distribution procedures. Crisis and communications plans are being reviewed and in the process of updating. Training and drills on resource ordering and distribution.
- Medical Services:
 - No report

9. Search and Rescue

- Total SAR missions in 2025 = 18, in 2026 = 6
- Montezuma County Search & Rescue

- Completed its annual SAREX (search & rescue exercise) this month. Training focused on working with Flight for Life, low- and high-angle rescue, medical, communications, and recovery efforts. 20 team members and guests participated in the 3-day exercise.

10. Hazardous Materials

- Local Emergency Planning Committee (From LEPC Chair):
 - Regional and Local Emergency Planning Committee meetings were held this month. There were 3 inspections of facilities for 2026 completed. Will be starting the annual facility tours. Still waiting on a few facilities to file their Tier II Reports.
 - Total LEPC facilities inspected in 2025 = 6, in 2026 = 3
 - Total Biomass facilities inspected in 2025 = 4, in 2026 = 3
 - LEPC conference on September 1 – 4 in Glenwood Springs at Hotel Colorado.
- Reports to CDPHE:
 - 08/24/26 - E Carpenter St, Cortez, Tree fell on sewer line, and sewage is leaking onto other properties.

11. Agriculture and Natural Resources

- CSU Extension:
 - Attending Dolores and Mancos WRAP projects, supporting technical questions on drought, responding to increasing questions about water quality and concerns with ponds with algae
- Natural Resources:
 - Attending and very involved in the Dolores and Mancos Watershed WRAP projects with the emergency manager assisting as needed.

12. Energy Services

- Electric
 - No report
- Gas
 - No report

13. Public Safety

- Cortez PD
 - Officers attended in-service training.
 - CPD had a multi-agency response to a barricaded armed subject. Less lethal munitions were used, and the man was taken into custody without any further incident.

14. Long-Term Community Recovery

- Recovery training by DHSEM will be held in late fall in the SW Region. Date to be determined.

15. External Affairs and Alert and Warning

- Alert and Warning:
 - Total Everbridge Alert and Warnings sent out - in 2025 = 685, in 2026= 1315
 - Working on setting up state training for emergency managers on alerts and warnings. Date to be set soon.
- Public Information:

- Public Information continues to support messaging for all County departments. Highlights for the month of August include parking upgrades at the Fairgrounds, job opportunities and road closures in Road & Bridge, Breastfeeding Support Month and Overdose Awareness Day in Public Health, and Child Support Awareness month in Social Services.
- Government:
 - On YouTube for all BOCC meetings for review.

END OF REPORT