



Get Tech Ready! ***Technology-Related Guidance & Tools for Hurricane Readiness: Questions & Answers***

This Emergency Management (EM) Geo Forum was conducted virtually on June 30, 2020, and focused on preparing for future hurricanes in the midst of COVID-19. The following questions and answers were addressed during the session.

Question: Are there existing data standards for information about hurricane shelters? This information comes from many different sources, often in PDF, and it would be helpful to have a common way to structure it for sharing among systems.

Answer: (1) The [National Shelter System](#) is available and is being revamped to better meet state and local needs. Note that not all shelters make it into this feed and locations need to be verified. NSS/OpenShelters web service:

<https://gis.fema.gov/arcgis/rest/services/NSS/OpenShelters/MapServer>

(2) Esri provides a template with a fairly simple data model for working with shelter information: <https://solutions.arcgis.com/emergency-management/help/shelter-locator-wab/>.

(3) Lastly, NAPSG is working on a project right now with a 10 county region in Colorado to meet in the middle of the National Shelter System and typical systems of record (PDFs, Spreadsheets, etc). Stay tuned as we are preparing to release a "sandbox" where you can test this out. Become a member of the NAPSG Foundation [on our website](#) to receive our newsletter and hear more.

Question: One very big issue that impacts the decision to evacuate versus stay in place is not just the evacuation but a plan for the return of the residents after the event. Post Florence, many people in Brunswick County, NC, were unable to return due to the road closures. I have heard from many of them that they do not plan to evacuate unless the hurricane is a Category 4. How can we better serve those residents so they can make a better decision?

Answer: This is probably best answered by your local government colleagues, especially public information officers (PIOs). But maps and photos can go a long way. Help people visualize what a Category 2 hurricane impact can look like or describe what the experience will be like if they are stuck on-site. You may find more resources at <https://www.ready.gov/evacuation>.

Question: Does the Visible Infrared Imaging Radiometer Suite (VIIRS) Floodwater Fraction Map have historic data available (beyond the last 5 days)? Can the information be exported?

Answer: No, right now it only shows live data. Historic data may be available from NASA or NOAA.

Question: Since FEMA is supporting the United States National Grid (USNG), is there a reason latitude/longitude is being used for the public damage assessments (PDAs)?

Answer: Great question! Many programs still report latitude/longitude on approved Office of Management and Budget (OMB) forms. Culturally, latitude/longitude is more comfortable for many staff who are not familiar with GIS and geospatial tools.

