California Local Energy Assurance Planning

The goal of the California Energy Commission (CEC)-sponsored California Local Energy Assurance Planning (CaLEAP) program is to assist local governments develop plans to become more energy resilient; ensuring energy supply to "key assets." The emphasis of "*key assets*" is to ensure functionality of essential services, thus protecting safety and public health, and minimizing economic loss. Meeting this goal will help local governments *prepare for*, *respond to*, *recover from* and *mitigate against* potential emergencies that impact energy.

CaLEAP will outline a planning process, and offer Technical Assistance, to assist local governments to build local energy expertise and awareness of impacts and interdependencies; help them identify deficiencies and vulnerabilities, and explore energy choices, including alternative resources, that are reliable, safe, diverse, affordable and environmentally acceptable. The project will also develop a tool to assist with the implementation of the planning process.

Despite many years of energy assurance funding directed to State governments from the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE), the concept did not filter down to local governments until recently. The CaLEAP program is designed to leverage DOE's efforts and build a process (and capabilities) for California local governments. The CaLEAP program is currently funded through July 2013.

CaLEAP Objectives

* Demonstrate how to prepare Energy Assurance Plans (EAPs) or incorporate energy assurance in other planning efforts
* Present new and evolving energy technologies
* Build local energy awareness/expertise (i.e. interdependencies and dependencies)

CaLEAP Importance

* Aging energy infrastructure
* Increase in frequency, duration, and impact severity from disaster events
* Public's perception of governments role during energy disruptions
* Community's higher reliance on energy

CaLEAP Deliverables

* California-specific Energy Assurance planning methodology
* Methodology implementation tool (web-based)
* Technical support (i.e., new and evolving energy, planning, other)

Why Local Governments

Local governments are the first line of defense when it comes to emergency response. Local governments have devoted significant time and effort planning for emergencies, but have spent very little time specifically addressing the loss of energy and energy interdependencies. Going through the CaLEAP methodology will help local governments better understand existing energy conditions, analyze potential energy impacts, and identify potential solutions to reduce or eliminate the impact from the loss of energy.

Components of an Energy Assurance Plan

An Energy Assurance Plan (EAP) is an emergency management plan that focuses on energy and the functionality of "*key assets*" within the community. The EAPs should incorporate an all-hazards approach, meaning that impacts from all potential disasters — manmade incidents (equipment failures, terrorism, sabotage) and natural events (earthquakes, wildfires, floods) — should be considered when analyzing the impacts of energy loss. Focus more on the effect; than cause. A comprehensive EAP should identify:

* Energy roles and responsibilities
* Sources and usage of energy
* Energy interdependencies

* Essential services "*key assets*"
* Vulnerabilities of "*key assets*" from various disaster events
* Solutions to reduce and/or eliminate the impacts on key assets

Benefits of Preparing an EAP

Developing an EAP will help local governments *prepare for*, *respond to*, *recover from* and *mitigate against* potential emergencies that impact energy. An EAP will help build vital relationships and partnerships; relationships that will be critical after a disaster event. By going through the energy assurance planning process local governments will build expertise on energy-related issues.
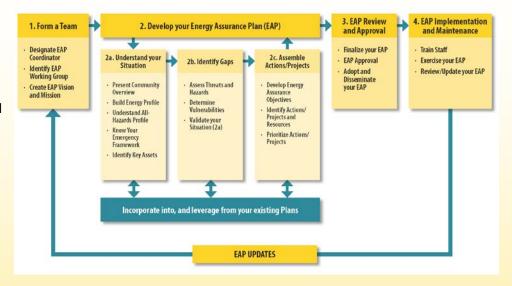
Anticipated Level of Effort

The exact staff level of effort will be dictated by the weight your local government places on energy assurance and the availability of information. A rough estimate of the time required to develop an EAP is a three (3) month period for data collection and analysis, and followed by another two (2) month period to finalize your plan.

Getting Started

The first step is to determine if you desire a standalone EAP or whether it will be incorporated into an existing process (i.e., Emergency Operations Plan, Hazard Mitigation Plan, General Plan). Next, the CaLEAP Methodology flowchart should be reviewed to obtain a better sense of the stages and steps.

As part of this project, the CaLEAP Project Team is also available to assist local governments to begin the process and to work through the different stages and steps. Additionally, CaLEAP is developing a Methodology Guidance document and tool to assist local governments through the EAP process.

A project website has also been established to present more project information, to assist local governments to get started and to provide contact information. The project website is www.CaLEAP.org.

Contact Us

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