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5 Steps to Disaster-Proof Your City as FEMA Pulls Back.

FEMA is stretched thin, a GAO report warns. Its author offers advice for local leaders to respond strategically and build resilience now.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency has long been the insurance policy cities rely on when disaster strikes. But with its workforce shrinking and a new federal push to shift responsibility for disaster preparedness and recovery to state and local governments, that safety net is starting to fray, according to a U.S. Government Accountability Office [report](#) released earlier this month.

Local governments need to prepare now for the possibility of less support when the next hurricane, flood or wildfire hits, said the report's author, Chris Currie, a director with GAO's Homeland Security and Justice Team, in an interview.

When the 2025 hurricane season began on June 1, only 12% of FEMA's incident management workforce was available to respond to disasters because most staff members were already in the field supporting more than 91 major disasters and emergencies across the country, the report states.

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