

# HOW TO USE THIS ADDENDUM



## PREPAREDNESS TOOL

The Hardwick Local Emergency Plan addendum establishes a sustainable framework built on the community's past experiences in supporting and coordinating resources during real emergencies. The information is enhanced by post-event insights and feedback along with extensive community and volunteer input.



## EMERGENCY ACTION GUIDE

This addendum is intended to provide community members with crucial information and actionable steps to take during emergencies or critical situations. The guidelines and protocols outlined here have been developed in coordination with the Town of Hardwick's emergency preparedness and response efforts. They are designed to enhance the town's capacity while enabling the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) to focus on overall oversight and coordination. By staying informed and prepared, the community can respond quickly and effectively during emergencies, ensuring the safety and well-being of community members.



## SELF-ASSESSMENT TOOL

As a community self-assessment tool, the Hardwick Local Emergency Plan addendum helps evaluate the community's response after an emergency, highlighting successes, areas for improvement, and the event's overall impact.

## KEY STAKEHOLDERS

The Hardwick Local Emergency Plan addendum brings together the collective expertise, perspectives, and insights of key stakeholders— including the Town of Hardwick government, the Hardwick Neighbor to Neighbor organization, community partners, local businesses, volunteers, and residents. This collaborative, grassroots approach, grounded in a deep understanding of the importance of unity during emergencies, is committed to strengthening response efforts. By fostering coordination and addressing challenges head-on, the approach outlined in the addendum ensures that the community remains strong, resilient, and prepared in times of crisis.



**TOWN OF  
HARDWICK**



**HARDWICK AREA  
NEIGHBOR  
TO NEIGHBOR**



**COMMUNITY  
PARTNERS**



**LOCAL  
BUSINESSES**



**RESIDENTS &  
VOLUNTEERS**

# INTRODUCTION & PURPOSE



## PROJECT BACKGROUND

The Town of Hardwick and its surrounding communities have long been committed to community disaster preparedness and response. Between 2020 and 2024, the Town of Hardwick faced significant emergency events, including a pandemic and multiple devastating floods. Throughout these crises, the community demonstrated its resilience and unwavering commitment to supporting one another. Town officials and community leaders united with a steadfast dedication to supporting their fellow community members.

Often isolated from outlying areas, with little expectation of state or federal assistance for weeks or even months, the people of Hardwick responded swiftly and effectively. They mobilized a "boots on the ground" disaster response using the Hardwick Neighbor to Neighbor organizational model and town government partnership, leveraging their deep sense of community to deliver vital services, including communications, shelter, volunteer coordination, and the distribution of essential supplies.

The emergency response efforts in Hardwick were nothing short of heroic. Since then, the town officials and community members have worked diligently to document and refine a sustainable framework based on the lessons learned from past disaster events. Hundreds of volunteer hours have gone into establishing the following comprehensive Local Emergency Management Plan addendum, which outlines the framework, committees, systems, and strategies that proved effective during past events. The work is ongoing, and the emergency response strategies will continue to evolve and expand. Still, the following framework is an effort to prepare and organize the Hardwick community and surrounding areas for future emergencies in a world where such events are increasingly the norm in Vermont.

## PLAN TIMEFRAME

This addendum outlines the continuous preparedness procedures and guidelines that apply during non-crisis, or "blue sky," periods—when no active disasters are underway—and extends to address the immediate and initial stages of disaster recovery, specifically the **short-term recovery phase**, which spans from days to weeks following an event.

**Ongoing preparedness** is recognized as a continual, proactive process designed to reduce vulnerabilities and ensure readiness for potential emergencies. The **short-term recovery phase** begins immediately after a disaster, focusing on initial recovery efforts to stabilize the community. This phase serves as a critical bridge to the more extensive intermediate and long-term recovery processes, which, while not covered in this addendum, remain a key priority for the Town of Hardwick administration.



# COMMUNITY FRAMEWORK



## LEMP ADVISORY COMMITTEE REPRESENTATIVES & FRAMEWORK



### TOWN OF HARDWICK REPRESENTATIVES

- Town Government
- Hardwick Fire Department
- Hardwick Police
- Hardwick Rescue Squad



### COMMUNITY PARTNER REPRESENTATIVES

- Hardwick Neighbor to Neighbor
- Hardwick Civic Standard
- Hardwick School District
- Four Committee Representatives (one from each committee below)

#### EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS



#### EMERGENCY SHELTER



#### EMERGENCY SUPPLY & SUPPORT CENTER



#### VOLUNTEER MOBILIZATION



## HARDWICK LEMP ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The LEMP Advisory Committee is responsible for advising and evaluating the preparedness of four key committees: **Emergency Communications**, **Emergency Shelter**, **Emergency Supply and Support Center**, and **Volunteer Mobilization**. Each year, after the March town meeting, the Town of Hardwick will appoint representatives to fill critical representative positions on the LEMP Advisory Committee, ensuring diverse and comprehensive community representation. The positions will include a representative from the critical town government divisions and community partners as outlined above.

The LEMP Advisory Committee will meet at least twice a year to evaluate volunteer status and overall preparedness. Additionally, the Advisory Committee will oversee and participate in an annual tabletop emergency exercise—unless a real emergency occurs that can serve as the exercise—engaging volunteers from the four committees and community participants to practice responding to an emergent event.

## ADVISORY COMMITTEE FOCUS



**ASSESS COMMITTEE PREPAREDNESS**



**ANNUAL TABLETOP EMERGENCY EXERCISE**

# ANNUAL TABLETOP TRAINING



## COMMITMENT TO READINESS

All stakeholders involved in Hardwick's emergency response efforts are committed to maintaining a high level of preparedness for future emergencies. To ensure readiness, the Town of Hardwick and the LEMP Advisory Committee will ensure committees, volunteers, and community members have the opportunity to participate in an annual tabletop training and incident response exercise. In the event of an actual emergency, the real-world response will fulfill the annual training requirement.

## INCIDENT RESPONSE TRAINING

A tabletop session is an interactive, simulation-based training exercise that integrates roleplaying, critical thinking, and decision-making. Participants will apply the Incident Command System (ICS) to manage a scaled mass casualty incident (MCI) based on real-world statistics. The hands-on activity engages all levels of the ICS structure across multiple disciplines, requiring participants to leverage both personal experience and ICS resources to effectively coordinate a simulated disaster response.

Objectives:

- Identify and mobilize appropriate level resources.
- Activate and implement a structured response plan for emergency incidents.
- Effectively manage a dynamic scene through delegation and the developed procedures and framework.
- Evaluate performance, identifying successful strategies and areas for improvement, with a focus on applying lessons learned.

## TABLETOP EXERCISE RESOURCES

- Vermont Department of Public Safety  
[www.vem.vermont.gov/training/exercises](http://www.vem.vermont.gov/training/exercises)
- FEMA Incident Command System Resource Center  
<https://training.fema.gov/emiweb/is/icsresource/trainingmaterials/>
- Northeast Emergency Training Solutions, Nick Carlson  
[www.netsvt.com](http://www.netsvt.com)

