

Emergency Response Capacity Briefing

City Council Special Called Meeting
July 21, 2022



Purpose

Describe the City's current capacity and future plans for emergency responses to extreme heat and cold, including those instances that are concurrent with State or local grid power outages.

Topics

- Focus: Heat Emergency Response
- Enhanced Communications
- Electrical Grid Operations and Preparedness
- Expanding Capacity
 - Resilience Hubs
 - Budget Investments
- Tracking After Action Report Recommendation

Heat Emergency Response



Heat Emergency Plan

Multiple partners coordinate

- Heat Advisory = *Phase 1*:
 - Monitor conditions and heat-related activity
 - Coordination calls
 - Outreach and communications
- Excessive Heat Warning = *Phase 2*:
 - Actionable messaging for public and notifications
 - Extend cooling centers
- Benchmark other major metros for best practices

*Additional factors may be included in National Weather Service heat warning determinations.

HEAT ADVISORY



Heat Index $\geq 108^{\circ}$ and/or
Actual Temperature $\geq 103^{\circ}$

EXCESSIVE HEAT WATCH / WARNING



Heat Index $\geq 113^{\circ}$ or
Actual Temperature $\geq 105^{\circ}$

Weekly Collaborations

CITY OF AUSTIN PARTNERS

- Austin 3-1-1
- Austin Animal Services Office
- Communications and Public Information Office (CPIO)
- Austin Energy (AE)
- Equity Office
- Austin Fire Department (AFD)
- Homeless Services Division (HSD)
- Austin Parks and Recreation Department (PARD)
- Austin Police Department (APD)
- Austin Public Health (APH)
- Austin Public Library (APL)
- Austin Water Utility (AWU)
- Austin-Travis County Emergency Medical Services
- Equity Office
- Office of Sustainability
- Resiliency Hub Networks

EXTERNAL GOVERNMENT & NON-GOVERNMENT PARTNERS

- American Red Cross of Central Texas (ARC)
- Austin Disaster Relief Network (ADRN)
- Austin Independent School District (AISD)
- Capital Area Trauma Regional Advisory Council (CATRAC)
- Capital Metro (CapMetro)
- Front Steps/Austin Resource Center for the Homeless (ARCH)
- Meals on Wheels
- National Weather Service
- St. Edward's University
- Travis County Emergency Services Districts (TCESDs)
- Travis County Health and Human Services (TCHHS)
- Travis County Office of Emergency Management (TCOEM)
- Travis County Public Information Officer
- Travis County Sheriff's Office (TCSO)
- United Way 2-1-1

Cooling Centers

Cooling Centers ARE:

- Designed for temporary heat reprieve during peak daylight hours
- Existing locations including recreation and library facilities during normal hours
 - Normal hours extend to 8:00 p.m. at some locations
 - Excessive Heat Warnings trigger extended hours and additional locations as needed
- Provide access to water, restrooms, air conditioning & seating
- Open to service animals
- Accessible by CapMetro bus routes with free service during **Excessive Heat Warnings**

Cooling Centers are *NOT* emergency or overnight shelters and do not provide cots, meals, or medical support.

Heat Plan & Emergency Response Capacity

48 City of Austin facilities serve as cooling centers

- Most libraries remain open until 8:00 p.m. on weekdays
- Some recreation centers remain open until 9:00 p.m. on weekdays
- Many facilities are open Friday, Saturday, Sunday until 5:00 p.m.
- *During an **Excessive Heat Warning** cooling center hours may be extended, and locations added as needed*

Heat Plan: Summer 2022

June & July 2022

- NWS issued an **Excessive Heat Warning** for Sunday, June 12. Two libraries were opened outside normal operating hours to serve as cooling centers from 12:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.
 - 6 individuals accessed the cooling center at the Ruiz Library location
 - 0 individuals accessed the cooling center at the Carver Library location
- NWS issued an **Excessive Heat Warning** for Sunday, July 10. Two libraries were opened outside normal operating hours to serve as cooling centers from 12:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.
 - 4 individuals accessed the cooling center at the Ruiz Library location
 - 17 individuals accessed the cooling center at the Little Walnut Creek Library location

HSEM continues to monitor heat related medical calls, hospital visits, and cooling center utilization to assess the need for services and adjust accordingly.

Enhanced Communications



Enhanced Communications

Mass Communications Channels

- *Real-time Updates:* austintexas.gov/alerts and via 3-1-1
 - Translations provided in 10 languages including American Sign Language online
- *Traditional Media:* Interviews in partnership with Austin/Travis County EMS & Austin Public Health
- *Social Media:* via HSEM and amplified by partner departments, partner agencies, and Council offices
- *News Flashes:* Providing news for Council Members and that Council offices can amplify quickly

Enhanced Communications (Cont.)

Vulnerable population outreach

- City Partners
 - Economic Development Department
 - Austin Code Department
 - Development Services Department
 - Austin Public Health
- Text via Warn Central Texas Alerts
- Ready Central Texas App

Data Informed Decisions

- Austin Public Health & Austin/Travis County EMS Data
- 3-1-1 Heat Service Requests
- Opt-In Cooling Center Survey (translated)

Speak Up, Austin! on Public Input > Cooling Center Survey

Cooling Center Survey Translate

Please answer a few quick questions to help the City of Austin improve its community heat relief resources.

How often have you visited City Cooling Centers in the past?

☐ Never, this was my first time

☐ Just 1 time before this

☐ Less than 5 times

☐ 5 or more times

Select a response



Here to cool off?

Welcome!

Please take a quick survey to help us improve City heat relief services

SCAN THE QR CODE



VISIT (SURVEY URL HERE)

COMPLETE THE PAPER SURVEY HERE



CITY OF AUSTIN

Preparedness Campaign

Get Ready Central Texas Live @ ReadyCentralTexas.org

- *Digital ads* placed on local media web platforms:
 - El Mundo, The Statesman, Austin Chronicle, The Villager, Soulcity
- *Paid audio* spots on broadcast radio:
 - KUT, KOOP, KAZI, KLBJ, Univision Radio, Waterloo Media-102.7 Latino and 107.1 La Zeta, and Entercom Stations
- *Paid video* ads:
 - KXAN, KVUE, KEYE, KTBC, Telemundo, Univision, Spectrum, mainstream and niche streaming
- *Digital/Streaming* ads:
 - Arabic, Burmese, Chinese, Korean, Urdu and Vietnamese

Paid outreach to be supplemented with earned coverage via coordinated media availabilities, press releases about key developments in partnership with the CPIO media team



Preparedness Campaign

Campaign has reached over 300,000 Austinites in multiple languages:

- Arabic
- Burmese
- Chinese Traditional + Simplified
- French
- Hindi
- Korean
- Pashto
- Spanish
- Swahili
- Urdu
- Vietnamese

Make a Basic Emergency Kit

- Basic first aid kit, seven-day supply of medications/medical items
- Map(s) of the area
- Extra cash (suggested: \$200 in small bills)
- Spare change of clothes
- Spare car/home key
- Family and emergency contact info (phone and email)
- Pet supplies (collar, leash, tags, food, bowl)
- Copies of personal documents in water-tight bag



For more information:
readycentraltexas.org

المزيد من المعلومات:
readycentraltexas.org

Arabic

تجهيز مجموعة أساسية لإمدادات حالات الطوارئ

- مجموعة الإسعافات الأولية الأساسية، توفير الإمدادات من الأدوية / اللوازم الطبية لمدة سبعة أيام
- خريطة المنطقة
- نقد إضافي (المقترح: 200 دولار أمريكي في فئات نقدية صغيرة)
- غيار ملابس احتياطي
- مفتاح احتياطي للسيارة/المنزّل
- معلومات اتصال الأسرة والطوارئ (الهاتفو البريد الإلكتروني)
- مستلزمات الحيوانات الأليفة (الطوق والمقود والبطاقات والغذاء والوعاء)
- نسخ من الوثائق الشخصية في حقيبة محكمة ضد المياه
- 1 غالون من مياه الشرب في اليوم للشخص الواحد (مستلزمات لمدة سبعة أيام)
- مستلزمات لمدة 7 أيام من المواد الغذائية المعلبة غير القابلة للتلف وأداة فتح العبّ
- راديو يعمل بالبطارية أو راديو ذراع تدوير (راديو الطقس NOAA، إن أمكن)
- هاتف خلوي، شاحن، مصباح يدوي، بطاريات إضافية
- معدات الصرف الصحي، مستلزمات النظافة الشخصية، بطانيات
- مفتاح ربط أو كماشة
- أدوات أو معدات أخرى قد تحتاجها



- Battery-powered or hand-crank radio (NOAA Weather Radio, if possible)
- Cell phone, charger(s), flashlight, extra batteries
- Sanitation, personal hygiene items, blankets
- Wrench or plier
- Other tools or equipment you may need



Get Ready Central Texas

Time to plan for an emergency is right now. Simple steps to keep yourself and loved ones safe.



Know Your Neighbors
Knowing who in your neighborhood may need help during a disaster is key to helping communities survive and recover. Learn how you can help yourself and your neighbors until help arrives.

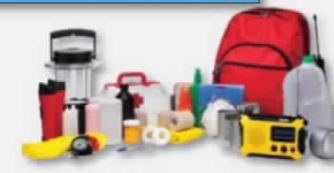


Stay Informed
Knowing what is happening and what to do is critical to being safe during emergencies. Find out how to get critical alerts and information at your fingertips.

For more information: readycentraltexas.org

- Spare car/home key
- Family and emergency contact info (phone and email)
- Pet supplies (collar, leash, tags, food, bowl)
- Copies of personal documents in water-tight bag
- 1 gallon of water per person, per day (7-day supply)
- 7-day supply of non-perishable food, can opener
- Battery-powered or hand-crank radio (NOAA Weather Radio, if possible)
- Cell phone, charger(s), flashlight, extra batteries
- Sanitation, personal hygiene items, blankets
- Wrench or plier
- Other tools or equipment you may need

Kit



- Basic first aid kit, seven-day supply of medications/medical items
- Map(s) of the area
- Extra cash (suggested: \$200 in small bills)
- Spare change of clothes

English

Austin Energy Operations & Hot Weather Preparedness

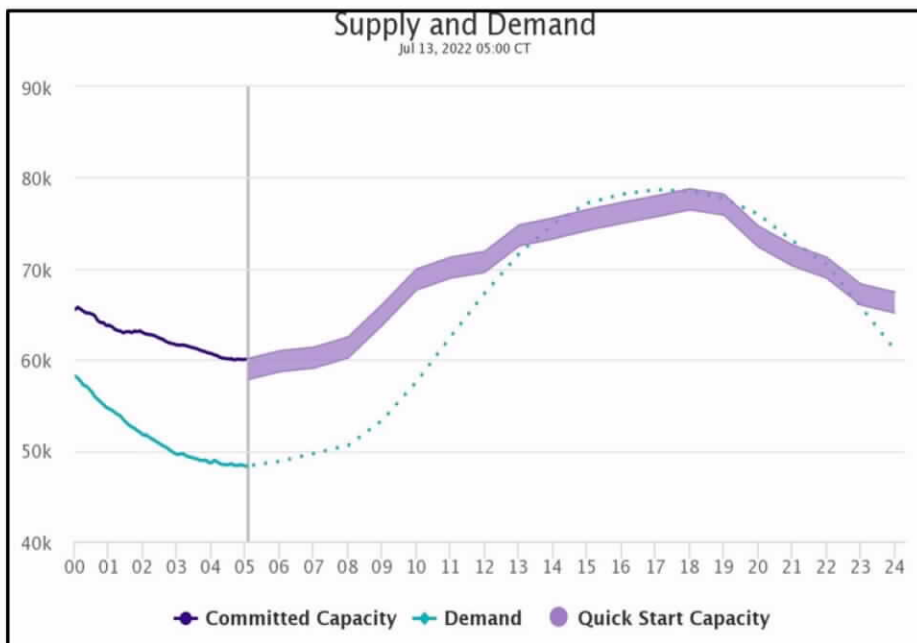
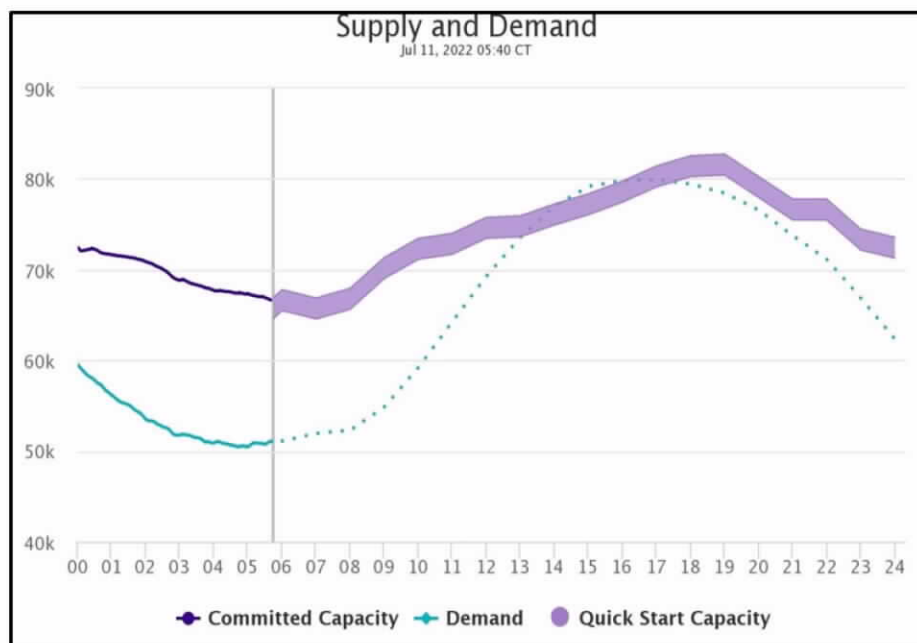
Sidney Jackson

Deputy General Manager & Chief Operations Officer



July 21, 2022

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ERCOT Energy Emergency Alert System

- ERCOT new peak demand record of 78,264 MWs Sunday, July 10, 2022
- ERCOT new peak demand record of 78,419 MWs Wednesday, July 13, 2022



Austin Energy Incident Command activation begins at ERCOT EEA-1



ERCOT HAS NOT ordered any controlled outages during 2022




Emergency Levels*	Trigger
Normal Conditions Control Room Operating Condition Notice (OCN)**	Reserves >3,000 MW Need for additional resources
Conservation Alert***	As needed, to encourage conservation when tight operating reserves are expected to pose a reliability concern
Control Room Advisory	Reserves <3,000 MW and not expected to recover within 30 minutes
Control Room Watch	Reserves <2,500 MW and not expected to recover within 30 minutes
EEA 1 – Conservation Needed	Reserves <2,300 MW and not expected to recover within 30 minutes
EEA 2 – Conservation Critical	Physical Responsive Capability (PRC) <1,750 MW and not expected to recover within 30 minutes or frequency is below 59.91 HZ for 15 minutes
EEA 3 – Controlled Outages	PRC <1,000 MW and not expected to recover within 30 minutes or frequency is below 59.91 Hz for 30 minutes


Conservation Appeals


ERCOT issued **conservation** notices for July 11 and 13, 2022


- Public appeals to reduce consumption
- No ERCOT directives for controlled outages
- Austin Energy called on customers to conserve energy


HELP THE ELECTRICAL GRID
Conserve electricity, especially during peak hours.


 Set thermostats to 78 degrees or higher.


 Avoid using large appliances (e.g., ovens, washer/dryer).

 Use fans to feel 4-6 degrees cooler.

 Businesses should minimize lighting and electrical equipment as much as possible.

 Set pool pumps to run early morning or overnight.

 Turn off and unplug non-essential lights and appliances.



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AYUDA A LA RED ELÉCTRICA
Conserve electricidad, especialmente durante las horas pico.

 Ajuste los termostatos a 78 grados o más.

 Evite el uso de electrodomésticos grandes (hornos, lavadoras y secadoras).

 Use ventiladores para sentirse entre 4 y 6 grados más frío.

 Apague y desenchufe las luces y los electrodomésticos que no sean esenciales.

 Programe las bombas de la piscina para que funcionen por la mañana o por la noche.

 Los negocios deben minimizar la iluminación y los equipos eléctricos tanto como sea posible.



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帮助电网
节约用电, 尤其在高峰时段。

 避免使用大型电器 (例如烤箱、洗衣机/烘干机)。

 商户应尽量减少使用电灯和用电设备。

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مساعدة الشبكة الكهربائية
حافظ على الكهرباء وخاصة خلال ساعات الذروة.

 تجنب استخدام الأجهزة الكبيرة (مثل الأفران، الغسالة/المجفف).

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 يجب على الشركات أن تقلل من الإضاءة وتشغيل المعدات الكهربائية قدر الإمكان.

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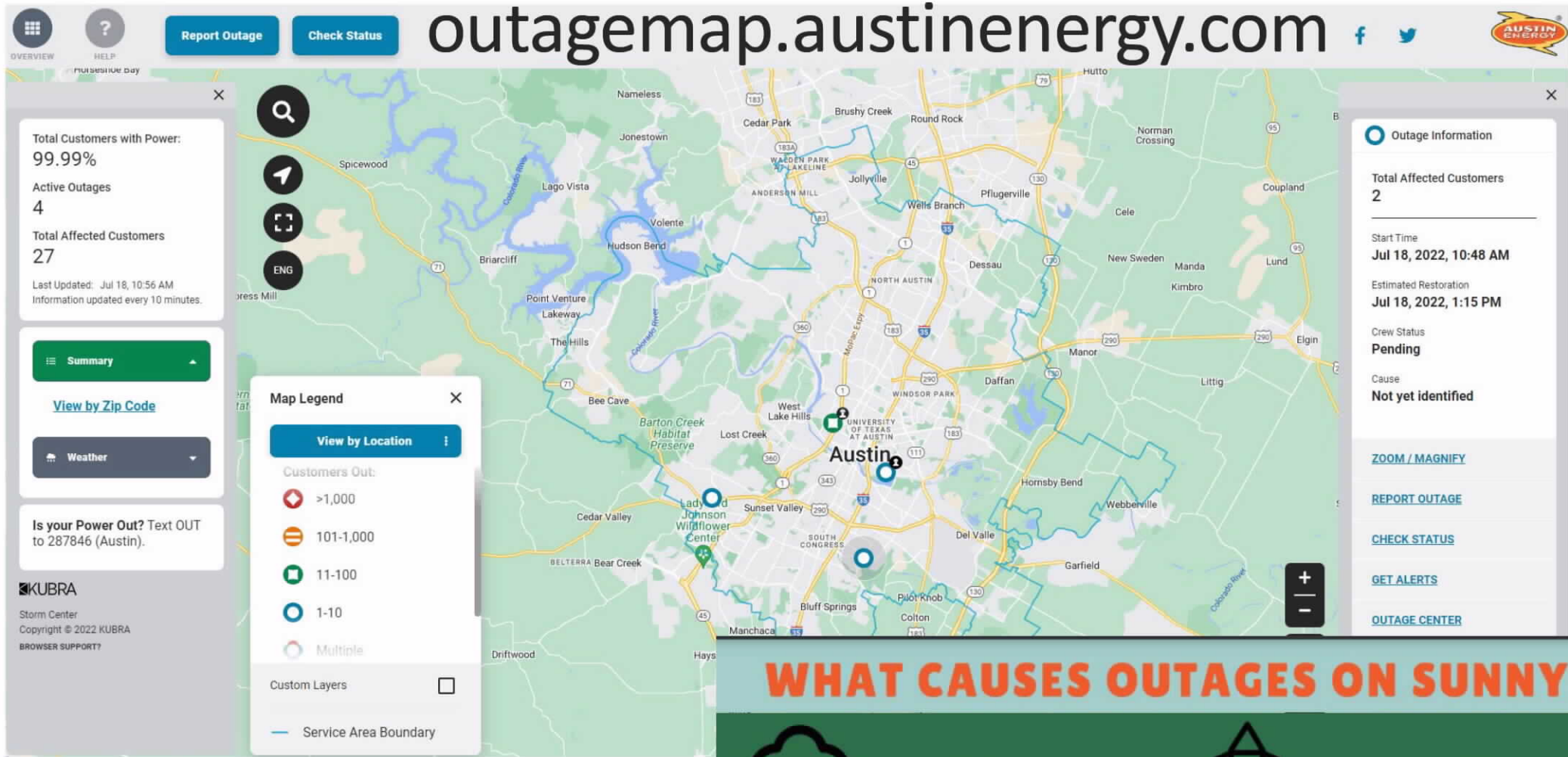
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WHAT CAUSES OUTAGES ON SUNNY DAYS?



Downed
Trees



Animal
Interference



Worn
Equipment



Car
Crashes



Construction
Incidents



COA Utilities Medically Vulnerable Registry

Gerardo “Jerry” Galvan

Vice President, Customer Care Services



July 21, 2022

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COA Utilities Medically Vulnerable Registry (MVR)



Who is eligible?

Customers on life-support equipment requiring power or water, or with a critical medical condition requiring heating/air conditioning. Customers and their doctors are sent an application which is renewed at least annually.



What does MVR provide?

MVR customers get account management support and extra time to pay past-due balances.

Staff help MVR customers create emergency plans in case of outage, and meters are flagged to alert field crews during scheduled work.



What happens in emergencies?

Customers receive courtesy calls in advance of an imminent emergency. Staff review their emergency plans and connect customers with community resources as needed.

When MVR flagged meter loses power, staff calls the customer and may call emergency contacts or initiate a wellness check if unreachable.



Expanding Capacity

Resilience Hubs, Budget Investments



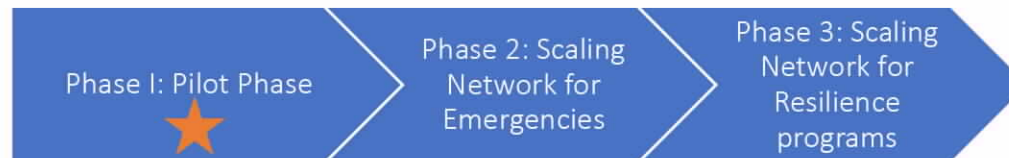
Applying a Resilience Lens

Heat resilient communities → heat management + heat mitigation

On April 8, 2021, Austin City Council passed [Resolution 20210408-028](#), which directs the City Manager to

- 1) create a plan, budget recommendations, funding strategies, and a timeline for designing and equipping an initial six pilot hubs for disasters, including the necessary power and water redundancies, and
- 2) budget recommendations, funding strategies, and a timeline for creating a community-wide resilience hub network plan sufficient to serve all Austinites during emergencies.

Resilience Hub Network Approach



Resilience Hubs Definition: Trusted community serving facilities that **support** residents and **coordinate** resource distribution and services **before, during, and after** a disaster.

Resilience Hubs: Updates

- 6 Focus areas in Eastern Crescent have been mapped & prioritized.

4 types of emergency activation functions being evaluated

- Information Hub
- Cooling/Warming Centers
- Food/Water Distribution Center
- Shelter operations

3 operation models considered for emergency and resilience programming

- Agency-Owned, Agency-Operated
- Agency + Community Partnership
- Community Owned, Community Operated

- Community engagement consultant has been procured and community Task Force identified.
- City of Austin Sustainability Team has prepared Resilience Hub Network [Brochure](#).
- Team capacity expanded through partnership with UT.

Resilience Hubs: Next Steps

- Finalize community engagement process to select 6 specific sites in each of the areas identified.
- Expand team capacity to develop Phase II and Phase III plan for scaling of Resilience Hub Network, through learnings of Pilot program.
- Launch Communications Campaign.

[More Info](#)

Budget Investments: FY 2022

Reallocate positions to expand capacity in the short-term

- Four existing vacant positions were identified and reclassified to fill immediate need for staffing support within HSEM
 - Two positions dedicated to ongoing direct support of the resilience program;
 - One HSEM position: Mass Care Coordinator
 - One HSEM position: Technology Strategy Officer

Budget Investments: FY 2023

- \$2.2 million and 8 new positions for a dedicated distribution facility to improve City response to a major catastrophic event.
- \$630,000 in partial-year funding for 9 new positions to support resiliency hubs and City efforts to coordinate community mass care and temporary emergency sheltering in the event of a disaster.
- \$1.2 million to support two additional shelter operations during the cold weather activation period.
- \$565,000 in partial-year funding for 2 new positions and consulting services to improve community preparedness and increase equitable access to assistance in the event of a disaster.

Tracking After Action Recommendations



Community Resiliency Improvement Status Portal (CRISP)

- Developed by Austin-Travis County Emergency Management Offices
- Portal features After Action Reports from significant community emergencies from 2013 forward
- Outlines key recommendations from disaster responses
- Tracks progress towards recommendation completion
- Publicly available late summer (data.austintexas.gov)



Community Resiliency Improvement Status Portal (CRISP)

Record Count:
1147

Event

All

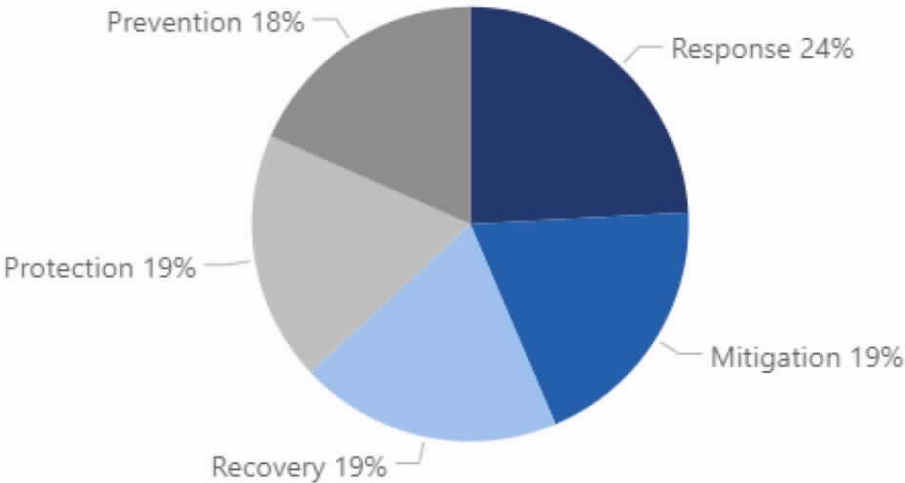
Mission Area

All

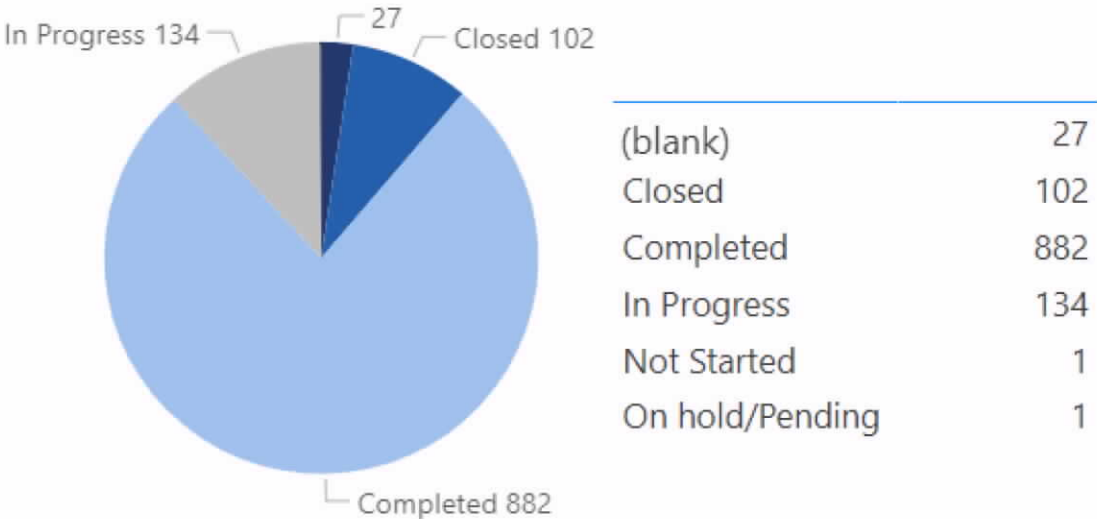
Core Capabilities

All

Recommendations by Mission Area



Recommendations by Status



After Action ID	Event	Recommendation	Mission Area	Core Capabilities	Status	Percent Complete
COVID - 001	COVID-19	Develop clear lines of communication utilizing the ICS structure to disseminate decisions and enhance collaboration among command staff.	Recovery Prevention Protection Mitigation Response	Operational Coordination	Completed	100
COVID - 002	COVID-19	Integrate public health professionals into ATC EOC leadership and general staff positions	Recovery	Operational	Completed	100

Thank you!

