

Hinsdale County/ Town of Lake City

Evacuation Plan



— TOWN OF —
LAKE CITY

RECORD OF CHANGES

All changes are to be annotated on the master copy of the Hinsdale County/ Lake City Evacuation Plan. Should the change be significant in nature, updates shall be made to applicable web pages. If not, changes will be reviewed and incorporated into the Plan during the next scheduled update.

| Date Updated | Change | Page/paragraph/ subject heading | Recommending agency/individual |
|--------------|--|------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 7-6-22 | Updated County logo, corrected grammar errors, added shelter location for Hinsdale | Cover page, various, pg.8 | Phil Graham |
| 4-5-2025 | Updated TOLC Logo, updated Sheriff's name, CodeRED replaced with GEM | Cover page, pg.2, Pg.5 & 6 | Phil Graham |
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Hinsdale County/ Lake City Evacuation Plan

The plan below has been approved for implementation by:

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Hinsdale County Sheriff

Date

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Chair, Hinsdale County Board of County Commissioners

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Mayor, Town of Lake City

Date

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AUTHORITY

C.R.S. 24-33.5-700 Colorado Disaster Emergency Act outlines the powers of local and state governments to respond to emergencies and disasters, including the authority to evacuate residents and visitors in order to provide for public safety. Evacuation orders of local authorities and Sheriff are enforced by criminal sanctions, and a person disobeys an evacuation order at his or her own peril. This authority was backed by an official Attorney General Opinion on June 27, 2002.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this annex is to ensure the safe and orderly evacuation of people threatened by hazards in Hinsdale County and the affected area. This annex outlines provisions to quickly evaluate and assess the immediate human and animal needs (food, water, health/medical, and housing), the operational status of vital community infrastructure (transportation, communications and utility systems), and to assist impacted localities with the restoration of essential services.

SCOPE

This annex adopts an all-hazards approach to preparing for and managing evacuations. It establishes a methodology that is applicable to any threat, hazard, or event that results in the need to evacuate. This Annex includes all areas of unincorporated Hinsdale County including public land areas and the Town of Lake City. Evacuation of the entire county is quite unlikely due to the point it is difficult to generate probable scenarios leading to such an event. As such, this annex provides considerations for the evacuation of populations affected by large or small incidents within Hinsdale County.

SITUATION AND ASSUMPTIONS

Hinsdale County is capable of supporting isolated or minor evacuations and supporting municipalities through existing agreements. However, a large event, either within the County or the region, may necessitate regional or state support. These events will require actions

and support by many agencies, multiple local jurisdictions and non-governmental organizations.

Planning Assumptions

- The primary means of evacuation for most individuals will be personal vehicles.
- Individuals who do not have personal vehicles may require assistance in evacuating.
- Individuals with access and functional needs or people with disabilities may require evacuation assistance and/or transportation coordination.
- Spontaneous evacuation should occur.
- Some individuals will resist an order to evacuate.
- Residents will utilize all available public information sources to acquire emergency information.
- More than one incident could cause evacuation.
- The combined expertise and capabilities of government at all levels, the private sector, and nongovernmental organizations will be required to prevent, prepare for, respond to, and recover from disasters.
- There is a potential that roadways could be disrupted or damaged. This will require maximum flexibility in response.
- Dissemination of information to the public is essential to gaining control of the situation, reducing fears and implementing an organized effort for evacuation.
- It may be difficult to locate and inform seasonal, tourist and homeless populations, and to estimate the scope of the transportation requirements.
- Information that is available to the public may be conflicting amongst various sources and may cause credibility issues with official information sources.
- Some percentage of the population automatically assigns suspicion to the motives of government agencies, particularly in regard to evacuations.
- Communication of accurate information is crucial during an emergency, as conflicting, incorrect and often disruptive information is common in larger disasters.

CONCEPT OF OPERATIONS

Evacuation

Authority

The authority for evacuation in Hinsdale County rests with the Hinsdale County Sheriff's Office, who will make determinations regarding the evacuation of residents and visitors from affected areas within Hinsdale County. Additionally, Fire Districts have the authority to issue evacuations within their jurisdictions according to C.R.S.24-32-2109.

- The Emergency Operations Plan establishes the use of the Incident Command System to manage events in Hinsdale County.

- All evacuation plans will be accomplished in coordination with the ICS structure established for the incident to ensure accountability of personnel.

Evacuation Orders and Notifications

- Evacuation Orders will be issued by the Hinsdale County Sheriff's Office through the Gunnison County Communications Center, the Hinsdale County PIO, and the Hinsdale County Office of Emergency Management. If this is not feasible, regional Emergency Management partners may assist with notifications and messaging.
- The Hinsdale County PIO should be engaged in the notification process to help ensure that the disseminated information is as accurate as possible. Additionally, the PIO will help ensure that all necessary citizens, businesses and agencies receive the information.
- Hinsdale County created a Community Preparedness Guide that was made available to all citizens and businesses in the county. The guide discusses multiple hazards that threaten the county and how residents and guests can prepare and mitigate against them.
- GEM (Hinsdale County Alerts) will be used as the primary Emergency Alert System (EAS) for all emergency notifications and evacuation orders. Additionally, orders will be sent via public address systems, through local media, and social media. Provisions will be made for translation services for people who are deaf or hard of hearing and those who do not speak English. Dispatch Centers will coordinate as needed with neighboring counties to ensure communities along the Hinsdale County line are given consistent evacuation information.
- The Silver Thread Public Health and Lake City Area Medical Center Directors should be notified of evacuations for coordination with Access and Functional Needs (AFN) populations.

Notifications

Hinsdale County uses three steps of notifications:

1. **Get Ready** - This alerts citizens that an evacuation order may be coming in the future. Citizens at this time should have heightened awareness and be advised to anticipate and listen to upcoming messages and warnings. Preparing animals and considerations for future actions should be planned. Public information should provide education on where citizens can access information and maintain awareness of the situation, but an evacuation is not being executed at this time.
2. **Get Set (Voluntary Evacuation)** - At this stage, the risk is heightened, and citizens should be elevating their level of preparation at this time. Citizens should be packing and prepare to mobilize/evacuate at a moment's notice. Public information on routes,

priority items to take and what to leave should be conveyed.. For those who require additional time or assistance, this is the time to begin evacuation to ensure safety.

3. **GO NOW!** - This means that the risk is imminent and threat to life and/or property is inevitable. Citizens at this time should be immediately leaving the area as soon as possible.

EVACUATE TO HIGHER GROUND IMMEDIATELY-(Alternate message for extreme emergencies) – This alert is used for the immediate evacuation of a threatened area when using normal evacuation routes would present a threat to evacuees. This alert is not advising citizens to leave town, this is the alert to citizens to evacuate to the nearest high ground to their location.

SHELTER IN PLACE-There may be times when citizens are notified to shelter in place. This order will likely come through the GEM system, but could come through another media source as well. There are multiple incidents that could warrant this notification to include law enforcement activities or hazardous materials incidents. Citizens will be notified of an “all clear” as soon as the incident is stabilized or complete and the area is safe for public use again.

Evacuation Information

The following information will be helpful for affected residents and workers to receive prior to an evacuation order:

- Nature of the hazard
- Methods of warning and who will carry out the warning
- Evacuation routes and actions that need to be taken
- Information about emergency evacuation points
- Information about risks of sheltering-in-place (as needed)
- Information about care of pets and domestic animals (as needed)
- Need to connect with a public official at the evacuation point for more information related to the hazard and necessary safety actions.

| Community | Ways In & Ways Out | Road Identifiers |
|-----------------|--------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Cebolla | 2 | Road 788 South or CR 50 North |
| Henson | 1 | CR 20 East to Highway 149 |
| Hermit Lakes | 1 | Forest Service Road 515 Southeast |
| Lake City | 2 | Highway 149 North and South |
| Lost Trail | 1 | Forest Service Road 520 East |
| Lower Lake Fork | 2 | Highway 149 |

| | | |
|-------------------|---|---|
| Oleo | 1 | Forest Service Road 729 to Highway 149 North or South |
| Pearl Lakes | 1 | Forest Service Roads 515 & 516 Southeast to Highway 149 |
| Piedra-Palisade | 1 | Forest Service Roads 600, 631, 633, 636, 638 South |
| Ptarmigan Meadows | 2 | Highway 149 North or South |
| Upper Lake Fork | 1 | CR 30 North to Highway 149 North or South |

Evacuation Routes

Primary emergency evacuation routes are suggested but should be validated with landowners and land management agencies involved prior to the onset of an emergency need for evacuation. These primary evacuation routes should provide multiple opportunities for evacuating traffic to exit the area.

Refusal to Evacuate

Persons who refuse to comply with a mandatory evacuation order will not be arrested nor forcibly removed from their homes. Those who refuse to evacuate should be informed that they should not expect rescue or other lifesaving assistance during the incident. If minor juvenile children are present and under the care of those who refuse to evacuate, the children may be taken into protective custody if Law Enforcement believes the children are in imminent danger of serious bodily injury or death. According to county policies, the Gunnison/Hinsdale County Human Services Department will be contacted for continued care and custody of juvenile children. Additionally, and depending on the circumstances, those who refuse to evacuate that are under the influence of alcohol, drugs or displaying severe behavioral health issues may be taken into protective custody.

Evacuation Centers and Shelter Destinations

The American Red Cross, in coordination with Hinsdale County OEM, has established priority evacuation centers and shelter locations for communities throughout Hinsdale County. This list should be used as a first measure to determine sites and inform the public. Shelters will be staffed by the American Red Cross, OEM personnel and volunteers as available. Below are the following shelter locations both within Hinsdale County and in surrounding counties where MOU’s are in place, should people be unable to shelter-in-place within Hinsdale County:

Hinsdale County Shelters:

- 1. Lake City Armory - 230 N. Bluff Street, Lake City, CO 81235
 - a. Capacity: 120 (Only 1 shower available)

2. Lake City Community School

- a. Capacity: 180

Gunnison County Shelters:

1. City of Gunnison Parks and Recreation Dept. Community Recreation Center - 200 E. Spencer Ave, Gunnison, CO 81230
 - a. Capacity: 150
2. Gunnison County Fairgrounds - Fred Field Western Heritage Center - 275 S. Spruce Street, Gunnison, CO 81230
 - a. Capacity: 170
3. Gunnison Community School-1099 N. 11th Street, Gunnison, CO 81230
 - a. Capacity: 220
4. Western Colorado University - Wright Field House and Gymnasium - 600 N. Adams Street, Gunnison, CO 81230
 - a. Capacity: 830
5. Western Colorado University - University Center (Not ideal as primary sheltering facility as no showers are available, but can be utilized if needed) - 600 N. Adams Street, Gunnison, CO 81230
 - a. Capacity: 250

Mineral County Shelters:

1. Creede Consolidated Schools - 405 Corsair Drive, Creede, CO 81130
2. Mineral County Underground Community Facilities- FS 503 Road 9, Creede, CO 81130
3. Town of Creede (Old Creede School)- 308 La Garita Street, Creede, CO 81130

Transportation - Transportation issues include outbound traffic volumes and routes, inbound emergency access routes, traffic control, motorist communication and disabled vehicle removal.

Evacuation Routes - will be established as soon as practical following an emergency and will be assessed regularly as the incident unfolds. Due to the two largest hazards in Hinsdale, wildfire and flood, these routes may change as the incident grows and/or changes. Wildfire risk can be reduced by treating Hazardous fuel concentrations along primary evacuation routes by creating shaded fuel breaks to reduce canopy cover to 40 percent or less and treat slash

and combustible debris within 200 to 300 feet of either side of the road. Tributary roads should be identified in local developments and treated similarly to facilitate a safe and orderly evacuation.

Inbound Emergency Access Routes - If possible, one lane on every evacuation route will be kept available for inbound emergency vehicles. The inbound routes will be used for authorized emergency travel including ambulances, buses, fuel trucks, tow truck's etc. There may be circumstances where both lanes of any given road/highway will be used for evacuation purposes or circumstances where the road is not wide enough for two-way traffic.

Means of Controlling Flow of Evacuees - The evacuation of large numbers of people from vulnerable areas will stress the limited capabilities of roadways available for this purpose, potentially requiring additional time to complete an evacuation. Consequently, evacuation must be initiated as soon as feasible upon recognition of the threat and must continue to function efficiently until completion. In order to manage the flow of evacuees in a safe and orderly manner, evacuation zones will be established by Incident Command. These zones will be identified in advance of a threat whenever possible.

Motorist Communication - Highway message signs, radio broadcasts, weather alert radio broadcasts, and law enforcement will direct the flow of traffic and communicate information on evacuation routes.

Disabled Vehicle Removal - Tow trucks and/or those resources that can provide similar services may be essential during an evacuation. The function of this service would be to remove disabled vehicles and assist with the repair of vehicles so the evacuation routes are kept moving. Limited fuel supplies could also be delivered.

Provisions for People Unable to Self-Evacuate (AFN Population)

People with Disabilities - Likely to require assistance with transportation out of evacuated areas and back into affected areas once the emergency is stabilized. Service Animals shall be allowed to remain with their owner throughout evacuation, shelter and re-entry.

Hospitals and Care Centers - Consider the need for buses with wheelchair lifts, ambulances, and ambulances with advanced life support capability for transfers.

Schools - Planning must include arrangements for family reunification and availability of school

buses and drivers.

Daycare Providers - In addition to family reunification plans, infant seats and close supervision will be required.

Tourist and Business Travelers - Transportation may be required to assist travelers and tourists without adequate transportation.

Seasonal and Homeless Populations -Additional transportation and information requirements will be needed to locate and inform seasonal and homeless populations, and to estimate the scope of the transportation requirements.

Air Transport -Air ambulances may be needed for evacuation of patients that may otherwise go by ground transport, due to evacuation route congestion or other travel delays and difficulties.

Perimeter Control Requirements

- a. Plan to maintain access points and establish policies for permitting traffic in and out for official business.
- b. Plans must be flexible to allow for additional evacuations of people who initially refused, if they may be evacuated safely.
- c. Emergency personnel will not be engaged in evacuation attempts of persons refusing to leave.
- d. Assure the public that the evacuated areas are being monitored to discourage theft and/or looting.

Accountability

- a. Data Collection assignments will be made by the EOC Planning Section at the Hinsdale County EOC or at the Incident Command Post by Incident Command.
- b. The following events, resources, or information must be accounted for in an evacuation operation:
 - Where and when evacuation warnings have been issued.
 - Number evacuated.
 - Number remaining in the risk area, including provisions for functional needs and people with disabilities (medical conditions, medications, mobility, etc.).
 - Number of evacuees in shelters.
 - Names and locations of individuals evacuated from schools, daycare and the medical center.
- c. Data Collection will be done in coordination with Damage Assessment Teams and

emergency responders

- Consider using a large map of the affected area to visualize the evacuation zones, closed roads, security check points and other facilities.
- Indicate which homes have been evacuated or are empty, and which households have been warned but are not leaving.
- Maintain a transmittable data file in common software format for data sharing when possible.

Return to the Risk Area - Re-Entry

The process for re-entry into the evacuated areas must be coordinated to ensure safety of the public, protection of property, and the continuation of response and recovery activities. The Sheriff's Office will be responsible for notifying residents when it is safe to return to their homes and businesses. Law enforcement will be responsible for ensuring the return occurs in an orderly and safe fashion.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

A. Hinsdale County Sheriff's Office

- Activate and coordinate evacuations in the impacted areas.
- Establish, coordinate and monitor checkpoints and roadblocks in unincorporated areas of the county, as specified by the Operations Section of the EOC.
- Provide security.
- Conduct search and rescue in impacted areas within their jurisdictions.
- Enforce curfews within unincorporated areas, if required.
- Monitor road conditions and report traffic flows and counts.
- Conduct aerial surveys of the impacted areas of the county.
- Provide mutual aid to municipal law enforcement through the Operation Section of the EOC.
- Conduct search and rescue in impacted areas within their jurisdictions.

B. Hinsdale County Office of Emergency Management

- Communicate with the Town of Lake City and the State EOC.
- Organize Damage Assessment Teams.
- Coordinate with all partners and supporting agencies.

C. Gunnison/Hinsdale County Human Services/ Silver Thread Public Health/ Lake City Area Medical Center

- Ensure access and functional needs, at-risk, special needs or medically dependent citizens have means to re-enter their home or treatment center.
- Assist citizens with transportation and/or coordination as needed.

D. Hinsdale County Road and Bridge

- Provide signage for pre evacuation, if needed.
- Provide resources for debris removal for primary routes.
- Assist with roadblocks, if requested.

E. Colorado State Patrol

- Monitor traffic conditions on state and federal highways and report to the county EOC.
- Assist in traffic control and roadblocking, if requested.

F. Fire Department

- Provide fire protection, suppression, and hazardous materials response.

G. Public Information Officers/ Joint Information Center

- Ensure that the public is informed about proper identification required for re-entry.
- Ensure that the public is notified once re-entry begins.

PLAN DEVELOPMENT AND MAINTENANCE

This plan is the principal source for guidance concerning evacuation in Hinsdale County following an event that forces a significant evacuation of citizens from any area within the county. Overall coordination of this plan will be administered by the Hinsdale County Sheriff's Office. The Hinsdale Office of Emergency Management is responsible for developing and maintaining this annex. This annex should be reviewed annually and updated as needed to remain current.