

Partnership for Disaster Resilience

Oregon Showcase State

Oregon and Hazards

Oregon faces a number of natural and human caused hazards with the potential to cause loss of life, injuries, and substantial property damage. Consequently, the state is presented with many unique challenges and opportunities in hazard risk reduction. Despite the growing recognition of the need for long-term coordination to reduce risk of disasters, many communities and organizations continue to experience difficulty in developing and implementing hazard risk reduction plans, policies, and activities. Communities regularly suffer from a lack of technical and funding assistance, as well as insufficient coordination among the public, private, and non-profit sectors at the local, regional, and statewide levels. The Partnership for Disaster Resilience (*The Partnership*): Oregon Showcase State Program works to address these issues and offers a model of how increased *communication*, *coordination*, and *collaboration* between diverse partners can increase community capacity to reduce their risk to hazards.

Disaster Resilient by Design

What is the “Partnership for Disaster Resilience: Oregon Showcase State”?

The Partnership provides a comprehensive, cost-effective approach for partners to bring together resources – both human and financial – to enhance disaster safety and preparedness statewide. *The Partnership* fosters collaboration among private and public agencies; works with communities and organizations to determine needs, and to identify issues and resources; and helps develop strategies for risk reduction. Activities are organized on three levels: statewide, regional, and local (including university campuses). Each level of activity builds off of the other and leads to a more coordinated and collaborative statewide program.

What are the goals of The Partnership?

The mission of *The Partnership* is to create a disaster resilient state. The goals of *The Partnership* are to empower communities through increased communication, coordination, and collaboration between diverse partners to:

- Build local capacity for risk reduction and recovery;
- Prevent injuries and death caused by disasters;
- Protect public and private property from disaster impacts; and
- Establish a disaster-resilient economy.

The Partnership works to make disaster resilience a part of every community’s and organization’s routine decision-making process, thus making Oregon safer – now and for generations to come.

How does the Partnership work?

The Partnership provides a unique opportunity to demonstrate how public, private, and professional organizations, and academia can build capacity and collectively work toward the shared mission of creating a disaster resilient and sustainable state. *The Partnership* was developed and is coordinated by the Community Service Center (CSC) at the University of Oregon.

For the past 30 years, the CSC, an interdisciplinary organization at the University of Oregon, has provided planning and technical assistance to help solve local and regional issues, improve the quality of life in Oregon, and help make Oregon communities more self sufficient, while providing the highest quality of graduate-level education and professional training. *The Partnership*, through the CSC, works to link the skills, expertise, and innovation of higher education with the hazard risk reduction needs of communities and regions in Oregon, thereby providing service to the state as well as learning opportunities for the students.

The Partnership coordinates limited resources to generate activity that could not be accomplished by any one group/organization working alone.



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What are The Partnership's primary activities?

The Partnership's five-year strategic plan identifies which activities are priorities. Primary activities to make Oregon "Disaster Resilient by Design" include:

- **Community Plan Development and Activity Support:** *The Partnership* supports communities in developing hazard risk reduction plans by providing training programs, workshops, and in the field technical assistance. Additionally, *The Partnership* aims to build local capacity for disaster safety and risk reduction, while developing a support network among communities and partners. This support includes the development of mitigation plans, post-disaster recovery plans, and continuity of operation plans.
- **Technical Resource Development and Research:** *The Partnership* develops and distributes resource manuals and CDs (e.g., Technical Resource Guide, Plan Templates and examples, etc.) that assist communities in planning and preparing for all hazards.
- **Disaster Resilient University Initiative:** *The Partnership* and CSC are developing and coordinating a comprehensive and integrated emergency management program for the University of Oregon to serve as the state model. The model employs an interdisciplinary service learning approach that leverages resources – both human and financial – to enhance campus safety and disaster resilience.
- **Training Programs and Capacity Building:** *The Partnership* continually develops new training programs that benefit communities, agencies, and partners involved in hazard risk reduction. Samples include Open for Business, Benefit/Cost Analysis, Vulnerability Assessment, and a "How-To" series for communities developing FEMA-approved hazards risk reduction plans.
- **Partnership Development:** *The Partnership* facilitates collaboration between agencies by providing networking opportunities at the training programs, and further provides information exchange through a newsletter and web site.

A short history on how the Partnership started?

The concept of *The Partnership* began in 1998 with a core group of state agencies, through the Interagency Hazard Mitigation Team, insurance companies, the Institute for Business & Home Safety (IBHS), and the Oregon Natural Hazards Workgroup (ONHW) at the University of Oregon's Community Service Center.

On December 12, 2000, Oregon's Governor signed an Executive Order designating Oregon a "Showcase State for Natural Disaster Resistance & Resilience." This Executive Order follows a model developed and tested in Rhode Island by the IBHS, an initiative of the insurance industry engaged in communication, education, engineering, and research of natural hazards. Oregon's Executive Order builds upon the sound foundation established by the state's land use planning laws, building code requirements, emergency preparedness planning, hazards assessment, and other policies and programs.

In 2007, the Oregon Natural Hazards Workgroup and the Partners for Disaster Resistance & Resilience joined forces under one new name, The Partnership for Disaster Resilience: Oregon Showcase State Program.

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