



NEWS FROM  
**ULSTER COUNTY**  
County Executive Jen Metzger

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**\*\*\*\*For Immediate Release\*\*\*\***

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## **Free Flood Disaster Assistance Workshop for Municipal Officials Announced for February 20**

**WORKSHOP IS OPEN TO MUNICIPAL LEADERS IN ULSTER COUNTY**

**KINGSTON, NY** - Municipal leaders in Ulster County are invited to attend a free Flood Disaster Assistance Workshop to be held Thursday, February 20, with a rain date of Thursday, February 27. The half-day workshop is hosted by Ulster County Departments of Emergency Services and Environment, together with Cornell Cooperative Extension of Ulster County (CCEUC) and the New York State Water Resources Institute.

The workshop will describe the flood disaster response and recovery process for local municipalities. Attendees will learn how federal, state, and local assistance and funding help municipalities and communities following a large flood.

Other major themes of the workshop are best practices for conducting post-flood damage assessments, economic triggers for disaster declarations, the significance for local communities of a declaration, and administrative guidance for disaster recovery reimbursement programs.

An extended question and answer session will give local leaders the opportunity to hear directly from the agencies that help communities in the wake of a flood disaster, including representatives from the New York State Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Services, the New York State Department of State, and the Ulster County Department of Emergency Services.

“When a community is prepared for a disaster, chaos turns into coordination and resilience replaces fear,” **said Ulster County Emergency Manager Michael Madison**, who helped

organize the Ulster County Flood Disaster Assistance Workshop. “The best action against any disaster is preparation.”

Madison will present at the workshop and discuss Ulster County preparations for major disasters, and his experience with response and recovery efforts following several large floods, including the recent Hurricane Helene in western North Carolina.

The County-wide workshop is based on a two-day flood response and recovery training hosted by CCEUC in October 2023, delivered with funding from the New York City Department of Environmental Protection.

“We’ve been wanting to replicate some of these City funded trainings for the benefit of everyone else in Ulster County for a while now, and I’m excited to launch the first in what we hope is a series of trainings around stream and floodplain management, and flood response and recovery,” **said Tim Koch, Stream Education Leader with CCEUC.** Koch, along with Heidi Emrich, an Environmental Planner with the Ulster County Department of the Environment, developed the workshop.

“There is a lot of help available after a flood, but each agency offers its own programs and assistance. We really want municipal leaders to understand how disaster response is coordinated, who to call, and how to get what they need when they need it most,” **said Emrich.**

Ulster County and CCEUC are working to develop a dedicated website with disaster preparedness information for residents and municipal officials. Information on the website planned for 2025 will include how to prepare for different kinds of disasters, such as tornadoes, ice storms, and the most common disaster in the County—flooding.

The Flood Disaster Assistance Workshop is specifically for municipal leaders, municipal administrative staff, and stream and emergency managers. Municipal leaders and staff interested in attending should contact Tim Koch by email at [tk545@cornell.edu](mailto:tk545@cornell.edu).

Cornell Cooperative Extension of Ulster County provides equal program and employment opportunities. Please contact that office in advance with any accommodation requests at (845) 340-3990 or [Ulster@Cornell.edu](mailto:Ulster@Cornell.edu).

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