



# San Mateo County Emergency Management

FY 2025-2027 Recommended Budget

**June 24, 2025**

# Emergency Management Today



*Building resilience by empowering our communities, strengthening operational capabilities, and coordinating support before, during, and after emergencies.*



**Our vision is to become the most resilient county in the United States.**



# From Concept to Community Impact

## *Wildfire Ready Event April 26, 2025*



Photos Courtesy of Scott Buschman

## Three truths about emergencies that change everything

By Ryan Reynolds and Dr. Shelli Dhapodkar

In January 2023, San Mateo County activated its Emergency Operations Center as unprecedented atmospheric river storms brought 5.8 inches of rain in 24 hours, forcing evacuations, closing State Route 92, and displacing residents.

While we had prepared for earthquakes and wildfires, we found ourselves coordinating a flood response requiring 24,000 sandbags, emergency hotel rooms, and coastal evacuation sites — all while managing simultaneous landslides and road closures.

This scenario — increasingly common across the United States — illustrates why we need a fundamental shift in emergency management. At the recent CESA Annual Conference, emergency managers challenged conventional approaches to disasters. What became clear is that effective emergency management can no longer be the exclusive domain of professionals with “emergency manager” in their job titles — it must become the work of communities, businesses, and individuals.

Three realities changing everything



just 18 days today. In 2024, 41% of Americans lived in areas affected by disaster declarations, with active disaster conditions present for 73% of the year.

We experienced this firsthand in San Mateo County during December 2022 and January 2023, when after years of drought, multiple atmospheric rivers struck in rapid succession, displacing residents and requiring simultaneous evacuation planning, road clearing, and shelter operations.

This isn't a “new normal” — it's a fundamentally different operating environment requiring new approaches.

3). No single entity can manage this alone.

When disasters struck in previous generations, we relied on specialized emergency responders. Today's complex, overlapping crises require everyone's involvement. Every disaster begins and ends locally — the average

## Guest perspective

individualism serves us well in moments of crisis but falls short in work of preparation and response. It is precisely why emergency professionals are increasingly turning to societies with more cultural foundations, preparedness isn't a government cannot social expectations.

True resilience requires our relationships.

From individual government developing 72 hours.

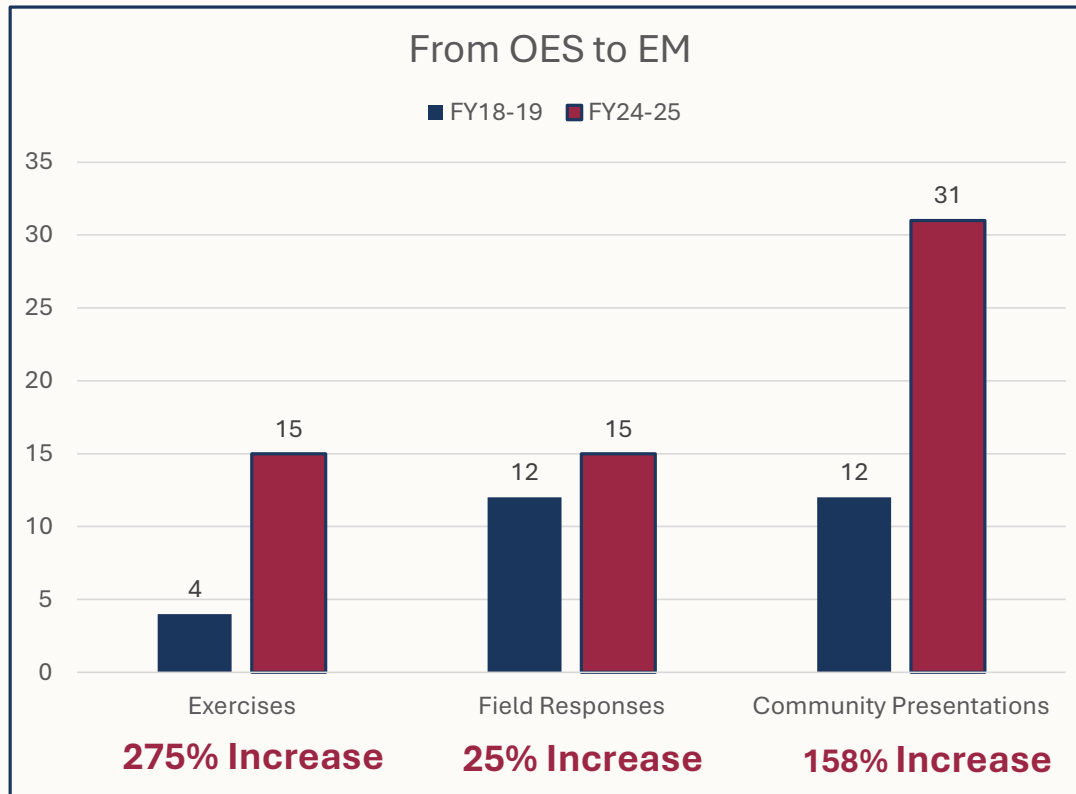
From emergency to recovery.



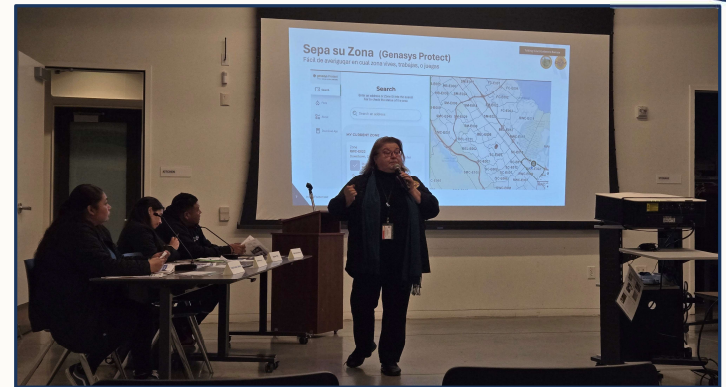
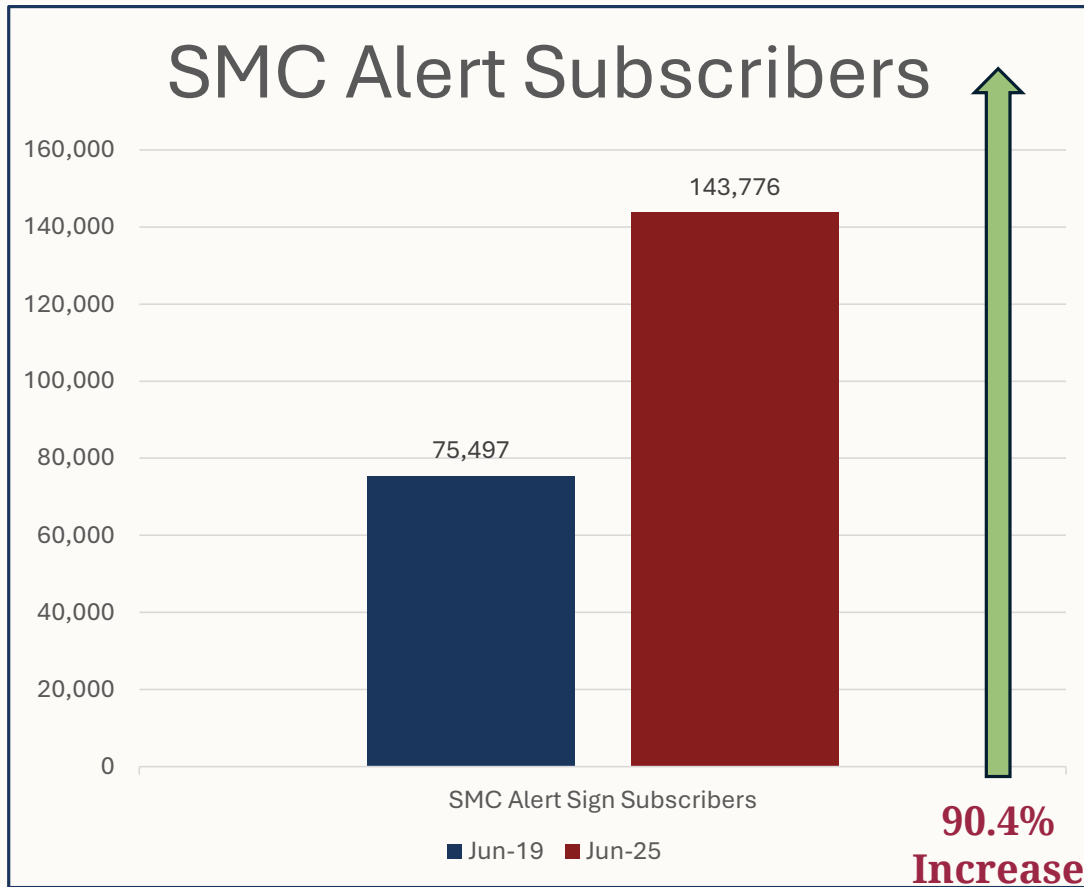
# Different by Design



# Department Performance & Improvements



# Innovation Through Alert and Warning





## FY 2025-27 Budget Overview

	FY 2024-25 Revised	FY 2025-26 Recommended	Percent Change	FY 2026-27 Preliminary Recommended
Net County Cost	3,539,215	4,510,970	27%	4,638,223
Other Sources	5,615,058	5,754,399	2%	4,531,277
Total Requirements	9,154,273	10,265,369	12%	9,169,500
Total Positions	18.0	18.0		18.0



# Strategic Focus and Current Landscape



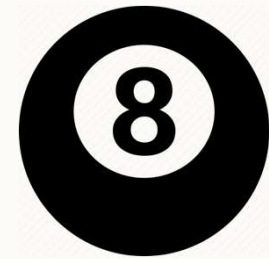
## ***Our Priorities***

**Community resilience** through updated planning and enhanced preparedness



## ***Key Challenges***

**Capacity constraints** and partnership development demands



## ***External Climate***

**Federal landscape shifting** — actively monitoring opportunities

Building resilient communities through strategic planning and partnerships.



# Investing in Our Community





# Thank You.

**Ryan Reynolds**

Assistant Director  
SMC Emergency Management  
[rreynolds@smcgov.org](mailto:rreynolds@smcgov.org)



[www.smcgov.org/dem](http://www.smcgov.org/dem)

***Together Forward.***