
For Immediate Release
#5-22

**NYC EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT’S LATEST ‘PREP TALK’ PODCAST
HIGHLIGHTS BIG CITY EMERGENCY MANAGERS**

#PrepTalkNYC { [Click here to listen to episode 76](#) }

January 19, 2022 — With an increase in extreme weather like heavy rain, heat waves, and man-made hazards such as oil spills happening across major U.S. cities, emergency managers understand the unique challenges dense urban areas face. To construct the best approach in emergency response, the Council for Excellence in Government founded the Big City Emergency Managers (BCEM) in 2005. The nonprofit organization serves as a venue to exchange vital information and discuss areas of mutual concern in emergency response matters. Today, the group has grown to include 15 jurisdictions.

On the latest episode of “Prep Talk,” BCEM members Mark Sloan, coordinator for Harris County (Texas) Office of Homeland Security & Emergency Management and Mary Ellen Carroll, executive director for the San Francisco Department of Emergency Management, discuss the organization and the importance of establishing a network with other “big city” emergency managers. This collaboration allows for major cities and counties to be better positioned to prevent, prepare, mitigate, and recover from major incidents and catastrophic emergencies.

Sloan and Carroll explore their trials, tribulations, and triumphs as emergency managers in major cities. The pair also take a deep dive into how the COVID-19 pandemic has drastically and distinctly affected their respective municipalities, and where they see the future of emergency management heading.

Big City Emergency Managers is a nonprofit organization funded by sponsors from the private sector, including T-Mobile, ESRI, Hagerty, and many others. The group includes representatives from jurisdictions across the country (representing almost a quarter of the population), consisting of 15 cities, counties, and the District of Columbia. Mark Sloan also serves as the BCEM chair.

“Big City Emergency Managers allows us the opportunity to sit down face to face with each other to share our best practices, but also with our federal partners to understand how they’re going help us in the event something does occur that we can become better prepared and be able to respond and recover more effectively for the residents that reside within our communities,” said **Coordinator for Harris County Office of Homeland Security & Emergency Management Mark Sloan**.

“It’s a safe place where we can talk about these things with other people who uniquely understand each other,” said **Executive Director for the San Francisco Department of Emergency Management Mary Ellen Carroll**. “Some of us are counties, some of us are cities

but we learn a lot and we're able to leverage all of our experience to bring that back to our own constituents."

You can listen to the latest episode on [SoundCloud](#), [Apple Podcasts](#), and [Spreaker](#).

Profile

Mark Sloan is the current chair of Big City Emergency Managers and is the homeland security and emergency management coordinator for Harris County, Texas, serving over 4.8 million residents covering more than 1,770 square miles. Sloan also serves as the director of Harris County Citizen Corps, an innovative, award-winning public preparedness initiative, recognized as a National Best Practice. Working with a team of county technology experts, he developed one of the first websites devoted to expediting community preparedness volunteer opportunities and tracking of volunteer hours.

Mary Ellen Carroll was appointed executive director of the Department of Emergency Management (DEM) in August 2018. Carroll oversees a department of 241 employees who are responsible for leading San Francisco in planning preparedness, communications, response and recovery for daily emergencies, large scale events and major disasters. Carroll brings almost 25 years of experience in local public service to the Department of Emergency Management. She has served for the past seven years as the director of emergency planning and security for the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission, where she supervised all security and emergency management operations. Carroll managed the city's pilot policy on drone usage and is an active member of the California Water/Wastewater Response Network.

-30-

MEDIA CONTACT: Ashleigh Holmes (718) 422-4888

STAY CONNECTED: Twitter: @NotifyNYC (emergency notifications)
@nycemergencygmt (emergency preparedness info)
Facebook: /NYCemergencymanagement