

The Boulder County Sheriff's Office – Emergency Services Unit

WHO WE ARE

UNIT DESCRIPTION:

The Emergency Services Unit (ESU) is part of the Operations Division of the Boulder County Sheriff's Office under the Special Operations section. ESU provides for the statutory responsibilities of the Sheriff outside of the typical law enforcement arena. Those areas include Search and Rescue, Hazmat and other emergency services field work. The Emergency Services Unit Coordinator's position is hands-on and always changing. ESU is currently comprised of four professionals whose primary responsibility is providing various tools and skills in all-hazards emergency situations.

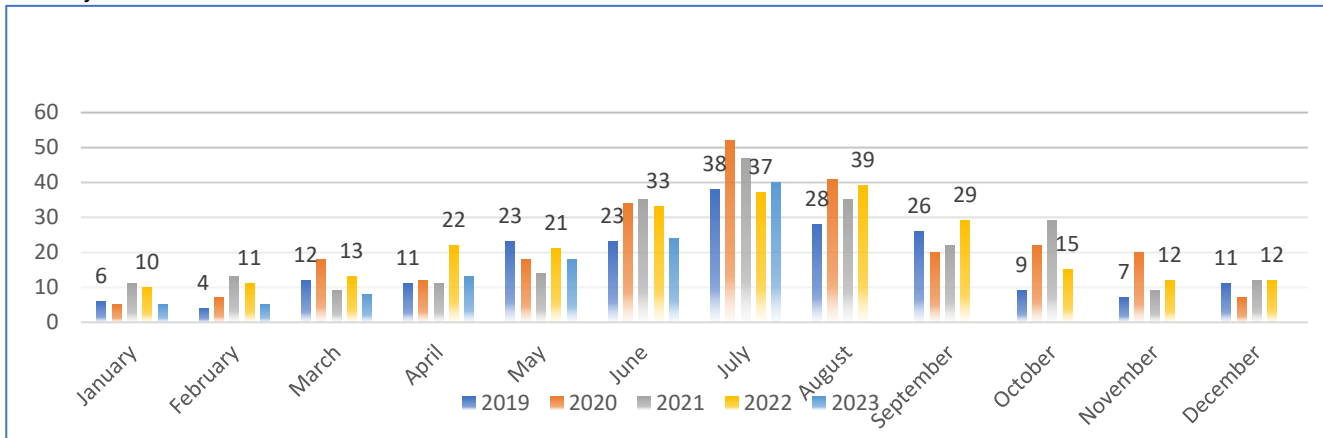


ESU is not the same as Office of Disaster Management (Emergency Management), although ESU works closely with the Office of Disaster Management.

The primary role of ESU is on-scene Incident Command for search and rescue/hazmat incidents. The ESU also supports response for weather events, spring water flow/flood recommendations/prediction and other natural and human caused catastrophes. This is a 24/7/365 responsibility. The below information is representative of our previous four-year call load:

2019: 198	2020: 256	2021: 247	2022: 254
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Calls by Year



Calls by Month

The on-call requirement of the ESU position is the most demanding part of this job. With a current staff of four, the ESU Coordinators are required to take after work hours “on-call” numerous times per week including nights, days, weekends, and holidays. A coordinator can expect to be the primary on call ~8 days per month, and secondary on-call (during May-Sept) an additional eight days per month. The on-call Emergency Services Coordinator is required to respond within five minutes of the incident page. On certain incidents such as complex rescues or search calls, more than one Emergency Services Duty Officer (ESDO) may need to assist on the call. Vacations

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during the summer months are limited. The current policy ESU coordinators must live within 20 minutes of the Boulder county-line or within the county for response.

AREAS OF WORK:

SEARCH AND RESCUE /HAZMAT INCIDENT COMMAND:

ESU will send one Emergency Services Duty Officer (ESDO) to an incident. The ESDO is responsible for Incident Command (as defined by FEMA) for the incident and oversees the Operations Section Chief for the incident. These incidents include:

- Rock climbing accidents (injuries)
- Stuck climbers and hikers
- Lost persons (mountainous and urban)
- Swift water, open water and dive rescue
- Avalanche/landslide rescue
- Downed aircraft accidents and searches
- Wildland Fire – Law Branch
- Backcountry major accident and death investigations
- Mine and cave rescue
- Hazmat incidents
- Flood rescue
- Certain heavy rescue/collapse rescue/tower rescue



The ESDO may need to “field” on certain incidents. The coordinators must be able to assist physically and mentally in all hazard incidents year-round. The county geography ranges from 5,000 to 13,000 feet in elevation. Given the above, all coordinators are required to be competent in and are annually tested for:

- ✓ Travelling in 4th class terrain (snow, ice and rock) and ascending and descending a rope in lower 5th class terrain (based on the Yosemite decimal rating system).
- ✓ Hiking up to three miles in class 2 (based on the Yosemite decimal rating system) terrain with a 35-pound pack, sometimes in inclement weather conditions.
- ✓ You must annually pass the NWCG arduous pack test – Wearing a 45-pound pack, walk three miles in 45 minutes.

Other skills which ESU Coordinators need to possess include:

- Must snowshoe or ski in the winter
- UTV/ATV/snowmobile driver competent
- Backcountry navigation skills

RELATED SKILL SETS WHICH THE COORDINATORS POSSESS FOR INCIDENT COMMAND:

- A *working knowledge and comprehensive understanding* of the National Incident Management System (NIMS) and the Incident Command System (ICS). The ESDO will direct the development of Incident Action Plans (IAPs) for ongoing incidents
- Knowledge/experience in urban and mountain search and rescue techniques
- A *comprehensive understanding* of all rescue resources, including air, land and water, available to the Sheriff's Office, when and how to order them for incidents.

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- Ability to vet search calls according to best known practices
- Computer mapping (Sartopo and Field Maps)
- Operate 2-way radios
- Accurately update associated database and write press releases and incident reports
- Emergency vehicle driving
- Hazmat Operations level certification and competent with Cameo Suite computer applications

PROJECTS:

Outside of incident response, ESU is responsible for numerous projects such as:

- Working as liaisons to maintain good working relationships, promote sound planning, and assist with conflict resolution among the emergency service provider agencies within Boulder County.
- Assisting in major event planning and incident management including: flood detection/warning, spring creek flow monitoring, avalanche and winter storm monitoring, search and rescue, hazardous materials response, mass casualty incidents and representation at a variety of meetings.
- Enhancing the Boulder County Sheriff's Office relations with county fire protection districts/departments, ambulance service providers, City, County, State and National Park Rangers, United States Forest Service (USFS) personnel and is the liaison for the BCSO contracted emergency rescue agencies.
- Administers and maintains the snowmobile, ATV and UTV programs.
- Maintains the County Mass Casualty trailer and an incident support trailer.
- Administering ambulance inspections and contracting.
- Manage the Mounted Search and Rescue Team.
- Write and administer grants such as BSAR.
- Assist the Boulder County Hazmat Team Advisory Committee.
- Administer the Active 911 app for the Sheriff's Office.
- Work on issues associated with rescue concerns at the local and regional levels.
- Work on projects associated with the Boulder County Fire Fighters' Association and the Boulder Valley Fire Consortium.
- Build mapping capability for the Sheriff's Office including Field Maps and SarTopo.
- Maintain and deploy the Starlink system.



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- Work with volunteer, paid, rescue and fire agencies to build the wide area search capabilities for the County.
- Develop and implement “Emergency Services Topics” training programs for the Sheriff's Office.
- Serve on and assist the Boulder County Type III Incident Management Team.
- Develop and participate in exercises.
- May be reassigned in the case of an emergency.

RELATED SKILL SETS WHICH THE COORDINATORS POSSESS FOR PROJECT MANAGEMENT ARE:

- Accomplish assigned tasks during stressful situations.
- Project management skills such as the ability to design programs and envisioning end states.
- Communicate tactfully, diplomatically, and effectively with the public, coworkers, and partner agencies.
- Effective time management skills.
- Effective planning skills – both short and long term.
- Ability to work without direct supervision for both day-to-day operations and emergency incidents.
- Demonstrate a thorough understanding of modern emergency service principles, strategies, tactics, methods, procedures, and management. This includes hazardous materials, incident management, and search and rescue.
- Must possess the ability to write correctly.
- Communicate effectively in public forums.



EMERGENCY OPERATIONS CENTER/ OFFICE OF DISASTER MANAGEMENT

ESU Coordinators support the Office of Disaster Management in the following:



- Active members of the MAC group and fulfilling the role in Emergency Support Function (ESF) 9 - Search and Rescue, ESF 10 - Hazmat and ESF 13 - Public Safety.
- May be the liaison for an incident/event to the Emergency Operations Center (EOC).
- Develop/facilitates, writes, and implements annexes to the Emergency Operations Plan (EOP).
- Assists with the work of the Local Emergency Planning Committee.