Josh Morton, CEM

IAEM-USA President & Director of the Saluda County (SC) Emergency Management Division

Speaker Bio:

Josh Morton, MPA, CEM, SCCEM has served as the Director of the Saluda County (SC) Emergency Management Division since 2012. During his tenure as Saluda County's EM director, he has managed several federally declared disasters, with the most recent being Hurricane Helene. He was also named the 2024 South Carolina Emergency Management Association Emergency Management Director of the Year.

Prior to his time in Saluda County, Director Morton served as a Regional Emergency Manager with the South Carolina Emergency Management Division from 2007-2012. His exposure to the emergency management profession began as a volunteer firefighter when he was in high school. His first position in the emergency management profession was as an emergency planner and CERT team coordinator for the Chester County (SC) Emergency Management Agency. Josh's wife Bethany is also an emergency manager and has served as part of the Regional Emergency Management Program at the South Carolina Emergency Management Division since 2008.

Josh served as IAEM-USA Region 4 President-Elect from 2018-2020, and Region 4 President from 2020-2022. In 2021, he was elected by the Regional Presidents to represent them as the At-Large Member of the IAEM-USA Executive Committee. In August 2023, Josh was elected back to the IAEM-USA Board of Directors, where he currently serves as President of IAEM-USA.

Presentation:

FEMA, Congress, and the Future of Emergency Management Policy

In the wake of the 2026 midterm elections, Washington's shifting political landscape raises important questions about the path forward for emergency management policy. Join IAEM Director of Government Affairs Thad Huguley, IAEM President Josh Morton, NEMA Director of Government Affairs Matt Cowles, and

longtime emergency management policy expert Mike Herman for a candid discussion about the future of FEMA, congressional efforts to reform federal disaster policy, and the challenges and opportunities facing the emergency management community. Drawing on decades of experience navigating federal policy, the panelists will offer insights into the political and legislative landscape, what lies ahead, and how emergency managers can help shape the future of the profession.