



Emergency Preparedness and Recovery:

A Toolkit for Rural Communities

A Planners4Health Project



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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

As with the undertaking of a project of any significance, it takes a strong, cohesive team to bring that project from conception on a piece of paper to its birth into reality. Such is the case with this Tool Kit. The Planners4Health Team would like to extend our deep gratitude and heartfelt thanks to the following people and entities for their unselfish and tireless contributions to this project:

Russell Hopkins, Director, Northeast Texas Public Health District
 Vicki McAlister, Emergency Management Coordinator, Northeast Public Health District
 The City of Canton
 The Planners4Health Task Force
 American Planning Association
 Kim Mickelson, Immediate Past President, American Planning Association - TX
 Doug McDonald, President, American Planning Association - TX
 Texas Public Health Association
 The Van Zandt County Long Term Recovery Group
 Chip Van Zandt, Brazos Valley Image
 The Participants of the Disaster Recovery Round Table Event

And last but not least, to the wonderful people of Van Zandt County: Thank you so much for allowing us to tell your story. It has been an honor to get to know you and work with you. We wish prosperity, peace, and abundance upon you!

Our Very Best,

Dr. Melissa Oden, Planners4Health Project Manager
 Mike McAnelly, Executive Administrator, APA-TX
 Christian Chukwuma, MPH(c), Intern
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Introduction

In the fall of 2014, a Centers for Disease Control (CDC) funding opportunity became available to the state chapters of the American Planning Association (APA), in which was a mandate to partner with their state-level public health associations to work on specific projects at the community level to create healthier communities in the areas of access to healthy foods, transportation, and tobacco use. The Texas Chapter of the American Planning Association (APA-TX) partnered with the Texas Public Health Association (TPHA) and submitted thirteen project proposals during round one of the grant cycle. In December of 2014, APA-TX was notified that the City of Austin would be awarded a grant to perform work in the areas of access to healthy foods and transportation in the Rundburg area of North Austin.

When a second round of grants became available, APA-TX and TPHA stepped up again and submitted several project proposals and was, once again, successful in securing funding. Round two funding was awarded to the Healthy Tarrant County Collaboration (HTCC), led by HTCC Executive Director Linda Fulmer, to do work in the area of access to healthy foods. HTCC was also awarded an additional funding award to continue their work on the East side of Fort Worth through the first quarter of 2017.

APA National announced a fourth and final round of funding in the winter of 2016. The goal was to have the chapters choose a project they felt held a high priority in their community, with the emphasis on the intersection between planning and public health. Once again, APA-TX

was awarded funding, and through a series of fortuitous circumstances, it was decided to engage in a project in Van Zandt County in Northeast Texas, where a short ninety days before, a night of tornado touchdowns had ravaged the county.

This Tool Kit is one of the deliverables of that grant, and is the result of the hard work and dedication of the Planners4Health team. Many hours have gone into developing this kit, with the goal of providing a product that will fill a need for rural communities not just across Texas, but also across the nation. The question is not IF a disaster will happen in a rural community, but WHEN a disaster will happen. This Tool Kit is meant to be a living, breathing document, to be utilized alongside a community's disaster response and recovery plans. The Planners4Health Team strongly suggests that those plans be reviewed frequently so as to maximize a community's ability to be as prepared as possible for when a disaster strikes.

How to Use This Tool Kit

This Tool Kit is organized around the areas of responsibility and oversight of the Long Term Recovery Group (LTRG). The Planners4Health Team felt like this was the most logical way to organize this document. This allows the user to go straight to the section they need quickly.

Additionally, the steps in this tool kit will help the LTRG arrive at the end of the first stage of recovery for those communities with physical impacts. Once this first stage is completed, the LTRG can move to addressing the underlying infrastructure and the health and well being of all residents of the community.



Background of the Planners4Health Project

On April 29, 2017, seven tornadoes ripped through Van Zandt County in Northeast Texas, leaving in its wake over nine million dollars in private property damage, and four fatalities. Two of the seven tornadoes were found to have caused the most damage, and were rated an EF-3 and EF-4. The areas that were affected the most were immediately to the East and immediately to the West of the city of Canton, Texas.

The Planners4Health project focused on disaster recovery from a Social Determinants of Health perspective, specifically targeting small and/or rural communities. The Planners4Health team performed an evaluation summary of disaster planning from a planning and public health perspective; prepared a disaster preparedness and recovery toolkit, designed specifically for rural areas; and conducted a stakeholders' round table event at the conclusion of the project to disseminate the toolkit. Additionally, because the team adopted a Social Determinants of Health lens through which they viewed this project, this paradigm allowed the team to look beyond the disaster itself and focus on recovery and rebuilding a stronger, healthier community.



Long Term Recovery Groups

One of the lessons learned after the Canton tornadoes was how critical it is to have an already-established Long Term Recovery Group (LTRG) in your community. Much time and money was unobtainable during the first few days after the tornadoes because this group was not already established in Van Zandt County.

The following are some things to consider in setting up a LTRG:

- How to recruit members into the long term recovery group
- Develop the LTRG by incorporating best practices model.
- Have liability insurance for members
- Develop by-laws for the LTRG
- Process of succession – how are the members succeeded?
- When there is no LTRG, use foundations like a local Community Foundation. It is better for the County to form their own LTRG, however, because there tends to be increased trust from the members of the community.
- Establish a Case Management program and set up a protocol for attending to cases
- Set up a task force to help other counties plan their LTRG and plan
- Memorandum Of Agreement (MOA) between county and LTRG on funding, procurement, etc.
- All overhead costs (insurance, checks, furniture, stationery, administrative offices/ lease space) should be covered by the county.

- File for a non-profit, 501(c)3 status BEFORE a disaster occurs.
- Determine who will monitor the financials. Audits should be performed by non-executive committee members.
- Do committee members want to bring the recovery to an end quickly to the previous state of the community or to an upgraded normal (i.e., Social Determinants of Health)?
- Key to success - important to have “civic champions” in the LTRG.
- Plans have to be periodically updated, at the very least yearly.
- There is lack of staff in the rural areas. The LRTG will need to determine how to best leverage resources.



Immediate Needs Assessment

The primary goal of conducting the Immediate Needs Assessment (INA) is to determine the full extent of a disaster's effects and impact on the community, and based on these findings, to produce an actionable and sustainable strategy for recovery. The four objectives of the immediate needs assessment include:

- Evaluate the effect of the disaster on infrastructure and assets, access to goods and services, delivery of healthcare services, educational services, and other basic amenities.
- Evaluate the effect of the disaster on citizen participation in the governance of the community.
- High-level description of the damage and loss.

- Provide the basis for mobilizing resources for recovery and reconstruction through local, state, and federal agencies as well as Volunteer Organizations Active in Disasters (VOADs) (United Nations Development Group, 2013).

Guiding Principle of the Immediate Needs Assessment

All Immediate Needs Assessments (INA) are guided by the following seven core principles:

1. Support the local emergency manager, which is the County Judge, and the fullest possible engagement of local authorities and community-based organizations in the planning and execution of the recovery plan.
2. Provide coordination of volunteers at all the stages of the process, and at all levels, ensuring collaboration and partnership between the Volunteer Management Committee and other stakeholders engaged in the INA.
3. Adopt an approach that is conflict-sensitive and ensure that the INA does not exacerbate worsening tensions and that the recovery strategy considers potential disaster-related disputes such as land and property conflicts.
4. Strengthen and support local capacities to lead and manage disaster recovery.
5. Ensure the participation of the affected population in the assessment of needs and priorities and in the recovery process, and at the same time providing support to their spontaneous recovery effort.
6. With a gender-inclusive approach, focus on the most vulnerable sections of the population, such as female-headed households, orphans, children, the landless, people with functional and access needs, and the aged.

7. Complete the assessment in a timely manner to capitalize on the limited window of opportunity to start recovery, resource mobilization, and resilience building initiatives (United Nations Development Group, 2013).

Approach of the Immediate Needs Assessment

The Immediate Needs Assessment (INA) is an approach to determine disaster effect and impact and to begin the identification of resources needed to begin the recovery process. It is an integrated process defined from a human, socio-cultural, economic, and environmental perspective that incorporates a collection of analytical methods, tools, and techniques developed for post-disaster assessments and recovery planning. The process ensures sector-to-sector comparability and homogeneity in the definition of basic concepts of damages, losses, and post-disaster reconstruction and recovery needs. The INA serves as a common platform for analysis and action, with common elements that weave sector methodologies into one approach, thereby providing a comprehensive picture of a post-disaster conditions and the distinct needs and priorities of different sectors, social groups, and subgroups.

Before an INA is performed, a collection of pre-disaster baseline data must have been completed to compare with post-disaster conditions. This is done to help evaluate the magnitude and scale of the disaster. This section provides guidance on the main common elements assessed during an immediate needs assessment, namely:

- The evaluation, based on the disaster effects and impacts in each sector to determine the overall recovery needs
- The prioritization of recovery needs by way of a recovery strategy

- A recovery strategy that defines clear goals and objectives, appropriate interventions to meet priority needs, the expected outputs and overall intended outcome, and outlines the implementation process and responsible parties.

Core Elements of the Immediate Needs Assessment

The INA has two main components:

- Assessment of disaster effects
- Assessment of disaster impacts

Assessment of disaster effects (short-term): The effect of a disaster is determined through the assessment of three main elements:

1. ***Damage to infrastructure and physical assets:*** The quantification of public and private sector property destroyed in the disaster.
2. ***Disruption of access to goods and services:*** Assessment of disaster effects on service delivery, such as healthcare, including availability and quality of the services, and on the population's access to goods and services that are required to support lives and livelihoods.
3. ***Increased risks and vulnerabilities:*** Assessment of what risks increase because of the disaster and how, and what makes additional threats or deteriorating conditions increase the vulnerabilities of people.

Disaster effects are expressed both in quantitative and qualitative terms by geographic boundaries and sociological characteristics of the population such as gender, age, ethnicity, and disability.

The INA evaluates the effect of the total or partial destruction of physical assets and infrastructure in the affected areas, in measures of physical units for all sectors. This includes destruction or disruption of:

- Social infrastructure such as the number of homes, educational and health facilities, government buildings, community centers, cultural, religious centers
- Basic infrastructure such as transportation and communications (roads, bridges, ports, airports, and train lines), water and sanitation systems, irrigation systems, energy generation, and supply lines
- Productive sectors such as agricultural infrastructure, industrial, and commercial installations, and businesses including tourism and service-based industries;
- In addition, the INA quantifies the physical assets damaged or destroyed, such as furnishings and equipment, farm machinery and tools, among others
- These damages are valued first in physical terms (number, extension in terms of area or surface, as applicable) and then in terms of monetary value, expressed as the replacement costs according to the market price just before the disaster. This becomes the baseline cost. The calculation of reconstruction costs will consider post-disaster alterations and improvements associated with risk reduction and the concept of “build back better” in the preparation of the recovery framework (i.e., Social Determinants of Health).

Assessment of Disaster Impact (Long-Term): The impact of the disaster is determined through the evaluation of two main elements:

1. ***Economic impact at macro and micro levels***: The estimation of the disaster’s likely effects on economic performance and the temporary macroeconomic imbalances that may

arise from it, as well as its varied impacts on personal/household income and employment in all sectors.

2. ***Social Determinants of Health/Human Development Impact***: The impacts of the disaster on the quality of human life in the medium and long-term. The impact analysis is based on the assessment of the disaster effects, the sector development plans, lessons from past experiences and the emerging concerns that derive from the events. The analysis of the impact of the disaster provides the medium and long-term projection of the effects on the disaster on the various sectors of the economy.



Case Management

Case Management Subcommittee Overview

Disaster Case Management (DCM) is a time-limited process that involves a partnership between case managers and disaster survivors to develop and carry out a plan for disaster recovery, which usually includes resources, services, decision-making priorities, progress reports, and the goals needed to achieve case closure. This partnership provides the survivor with a single point of contact to facilitate access to a broad range of resources. The process involves an assessment of the survivor's verified disaster-caused unmet needs, development of a goal-oriented plan that outlines the steps necessary to achieve recovery, organization and coordination of information on available resources that match the disaster-caused need, and the monitoring of progress toward reaching the recovery plan goals, and when necessary, client advocacy. The Case Management Subcommittee of Long Term Recovery Group (LTRG) is responsible for identifying local resources that can help support disaster survivors in the area.

Disaster Recovery Case Management services includes practices that are unique to delivery of services in the aftermath of emergencies and major incidents. These services are delivered under difficult environmental conditions that typically result in loss of infrastructure, disruption of operations, and special challenges for communication, record keeping, coordination, and efficiency. The main purpose of case management is to encourage disaster survivors to access and use resources and support that build on their strengths and meet their service needs.

Responsibilities of the Case Management Subcommittee

The subcommittee is responsible for instituting community outreach programs to educate the community about the benefits of the case management process. Members of the case management subcommittee play a crucial role as liaisons between case managers from agencies/organizations and the community, as well as promoters within the community to ensure that everyone who is in need of aid receives it. Arranging transportation to or providing for centrally located or mobile resource agency/organization representatives may be particularly helpful to community members.

Areas of Disaster Recovery Services

The resources that can be utilized for disaster recovery include but not limited to:

- Advocacy
- Aging services
- Agricultural aid
- Building permits and inspections
- Construction and rebuild assistance
- Crisis counseling and mental health
- Debris removal
- Employment assistance

- Food resources
- Furniture and household items
- Health and human services
- Housing assistance
- Insurance information
- Legal services
- Medical needs
- Social Security
- Tax assistance
- Transportation
- Utilities
- Veterans assistance



Unmet Needs

Unmet Needs Overview

Unmet needs represent the gap between available resources and needed resources. Communities affected by disaster may or may not be able to provide all the needed resources for immediate assistance and begin the long-term recovery process. If the community is unable to meet resource needs, the gap will be filled at the state or federal level. The Long Term Recovery Group (LTRG) can assist in filling unmet needs by serving as a liaison between resource providers, case managers, and community groups or individuals.

To request donations from possible donors, case managers will need to prepare case presentation forms that include clear descriptions of the case, the needs in the case to be addressed, and the type of funds and donations that have already been received from other sources to avoid duplicate donations.

Resource assistance may come from community members and representatives of businesses, non-profit, faith-based, and governmental agencies or organizations. The intent of

assistance source needs to be clearly written in commitment forms or participation agreements. Donors can work closely with case managers and contribute their ideas and resource referrals to the community, which adds more practical inputs to the long-term recovery plan. In addition, donors are provided reports about the usage of their funds, the most successful services, and the types of needs that are funded by their donation.

Possible Unmet Needs Categories

The possible categories of resources may be

- **Monetary** – immediate assistance or grant funds for the recovery of various aspects such as temporary housing, fence replacement, and debris removal.
- **Physical** – Some of the unmet needs immediate after disaster may include the construction of temporary housing, repairs, and tarping. Other needs include shelter, food, and medications.
- **Infrastructure** – such as utility services, debris removal, grocery/pharmacy suppliers;
- **Personnel** – such as individuals to staff shelters, serve meals, manage donations, direct traffic, answer phone lines, etc.
- **Health** – such as basic healthcare and disaster behavioral health services. Fatality management and mortuary services may also overwhelm community resources and require outside assistance.
- **Insurance Deficiencies** – Some of the disaster victims may not be covered by insurance for their loss (e.g. housing, animal, vehicles), they may need additional assistance to recover their lost or damaged properties.

- **Liaison** – The LTRC may also be interested in building connection and partnership with other organizations in the region that may have similar experiences in disaster recovery projects.

Administrator Responsibilities

The administrator (or Chair) of the Unmet Needs Subcommittee coordinates all aspects of the roundtable, including but not limited to:

- Orienting agency representatives regarding the expectations and roles of agencies participating in the source coordination roundtable process.
- Training and updating caseworkers regarding the specific roles and responsibilities of participants in the Roundtable.
- Receiving requests for case presentations from agencies and scheduling all appropriate cases for presentation to the community.
- Providing resources and answers to questions on issues pertinent to the roundtable, as well as referring potential resources of assistance to those who are still in need.
- Facilitating Roundtable meetings.
- Tracking all Roundtable resource funding commitments and maintains the Roundtable database.
- Providing aggregate reports regarding trends in disaster-caused unmet needs to the resource providers, case management agencies and the community at large.

Action Steps to Assess Available Resources

- **Conducting the Needs Assessment**
 - Collect the pre-disaster baseline data, post-disaster market data, and data on assistance provided.

- ***Pre-disaster baseline data*** provide information on the conditions of a community before the disaster and key insights for recovery and improvement in the housing, infrastructure and economy sectors. They also serve to identify past trends that negatively impacted the community and/or left it vulnerable to disasters and provide a picture for desired changes during the recovery.
 - ***Post-disaster market data*** are collected to assess direct damages to indirect damages and secondary effects after a disaster. Sources of data may come from federal sources, informal actors (e.g. family and friends), national or local organizations (e.g. Salvation Army, Red Cross), as well as insurance companies on damage estimates.
 - ***Data on assistance provided*** distinguish recovery needs that have already been funded by other sources from those that have not, to comply with The Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act, which prohibits federal disaster recovery assistance from providing a duplication of benefits (DOB) to a beneficiary.
- **Conduct an analysis to determine additional unmet resource needs. The key elements to analyze include:**
- Activities and results of emergency and short-term recovery efforts.
 - Among the existing and anticipated emergency and short term efforts, which ones only provide interim solutions versus those that will result in permanent solutions.

- Key parties involved in relief and recovery efforts, to date, at the federal, state, and local level.
 - Estimated duration of the emergency and short-term recovery efforts,
 - The condition of the most vulnerable populations.
 - Initial planning initiatives at the neighborhood, city, county or regional level.
- **Identify existing, anticipated, and potentially available funding sources.** Typical sources for disaster recovery funding include insurance, Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) individual/public assistance, U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) rural development, U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA) competitive grants, state/local funding, national foundations, and regional community foundations. In addition, the LTRC needs to consider the following questions regarding housing, infrastructure, transportation, and economic development:
 - What are the estimates of insurance payouts (including uninsured and underinsured) among homeowners, renters, rental property owners, and commercial businesses?
 - What public funding sources are available and for what purpose?
 - **Estimating Disaster Impact and Resource Needs/Allocation**
 - Address broader disaster impacts rather than just physical damages.
 - Examples of broader impacts include damages to the community's housing, infrastructure, and overall economy; sudden population gain or loss; shifts in demand from owner-occupied housing to rental or temporary

housing. The broader impacts should be taken into consideration for the long-term recovery process.

- Prioritize the filling of resources for unmet needs and ensure there is no duplication of effort with other agencies/organizations
- Look at needs at both the individual and public level.
- **Determining Capacity**
 - Consider the ability of recognized organizations to contribute to disaster recovery efforts.
 - Identify the critical skills and knowledge necessary for the recovery efforts.
- **Prioritizing Needs**

Rank priorities based on the urgency of need (e.g. housing, infrastructure, and economic sectors).



Volunteer Management

Volunteer Management Subcommittee Descriptions and Overview

The Volunteer Coordinator and Subcommittee play a vital role in coordinating and working with volunteers, resource providers, and agencies/organizations and serves as a liaison between all other subcommittees to address the immediate needs of the disaster survivors and the disaster area. The Volunteer Management Subcommittee has a range of responsibilities and duties that should be addressed before, during, and after a disaster.

The Volunteer Coordinator (VC) is engaged with most of the Long Term Recovery Group (LTRG) subcommittees. Since volunteer labor will be the medium for much of the initial work to be done, the VC must coordinate with other subcommittees to ensure there are volunteers available and ensure the volunteers are assigned to the areas of greatest need.

The Volunteer Coordinator and Subcommittee may oversee and work with other subcommittee chairs to accomplish several functions including, but not limited to, the following:

- Host community meetings to provide just in time training for volunteers
- Manage donations of supplies and equipment

- Receiving and tracking requests for resources and services
- Coordinate assistance to individuals and businesses for debris cleanup and removal
- Developing job descriptions of tasks, timelines, expectations, and guidance related to carrying out assignments
- Matching volunteer skills with jobs needed
- Establishing and communicating the LTRGs volunteer policies, i.e. health and safety codes, rules of conduct, and job parameters
- Training and orientating volunteers to the area, population, and the LTRG mission and organization
- Communicate the Public Relations Director needed supplies and volunteers.

Taking the time to establish a network of trained volunteers can lead to a swifter recovery and has the potential to create better health outcomes for a community. The following exercises can help communities identify immediate health needs before and after a disaster, while simultaneously fostering a sense of community and individual self-worth.

Opportunities for Better Health Outcomes:

- Create program for local volunteers to get certifications for volunteer training.
- Distribute disaster planning and recovery materials while teams are volunteering and canvassing.
- Survey landscape of the community to determine the ways in which they can plan for a healthier community.
- Conduct a community health assessment and implementation plan.

The Volunteer Coordinator and Subcommittee also need to identify the action steps for the pre-disaster, emergency stage, and recovery stage of a disaster. The following are specific

guidelines for each phase of a disaster for the Volunteer Management Coordinator and Subcommittee:

Pre-Disaster Action Steps:

- Educate volunteers on who is responsible for managing a disaster and their specific roles, from the elected officials, first responders, other LTRG subcommittees
- Encourage volunteers to register with the communities specific Volunteer Registry and to connect with local Medical Reserve Corps unit
- Host community preparedness meeting and training for emergency response teams and volunteers
- Create a toolkit of NGOs, Charitable Groups, Governmental agencies, at the local, regional, and national level, that can offer volunteers, housing, and supplies.
- Determine locations to house supplies and organize volunteers
- VC should be up to date on volunteer policies, i.e. health and safety codes, rules, of conduct, and create a job action sheet for volunteers.
- VC should create tentative timeline for disaster recovery
- VC should begin to match volunteers with job descriptions in order to start training

Emergency Action Steps:

- VC should alert local community volunteers
- VC should reference toolkit of local, regional, and national organizations to being organization volunteer efforts

Recovery Action Steps - Immediate Needs:

- VC should coordinate with all subcommittees to address the immediate needs, then assign liaisons and organize volunteers around specific needs

- Assign roles to volunteers and review just in time training for tasks
- Volunteer teams should reach out to appropriate channels for the necessary supplies and equipment
- Assign a volunteer(s) to manage inventories of supplies and equipment
- Coordinate with Country Public Information Officer to create promotional material about needed number of volunteers, supplies, housing, and equipment
- Assign committee member to manage varying volunteer groups and act as liaisons for updates, updating any job action sheets if necessary

Recovery Action Steps - Long-Term Needs:

- Coordinate with construction teams, local businesses, and residents on debris removal
- Work with local public health to conduct a Community Assessment for Public Health Emergency Response (CASPER) survey to determine long-term recovery needs
- Participate with local emergency management in after action review to determine updates to disaster planning appropriate for the committees' involvement
- Assist in organizing town hall meetings to obtain community input and community rebuilding plans, including how to achieve better health outcomes
- Work with the Public Information Officer to create a timeline for PR updates on needed supplies and volunteers.
- Review liability and insurance policies, and determine liability authority, regarding the engagement of volunteers.
- Document the important facts, success stories, and special volunteer activities. Utilize photographs, print and video stories from the media, and feedback from

volunteer groups. Collect information from volunteers about their experience. Use this input for evaluation and future planning.

Affiliated volunteers are individuals who are members of a recognized voluntary or nonprofit organization and are specially trained for specific disaster response activities. They are usually affiliated to the organization before the disaster, and they are invited by that organization to become involved in a particular aspect of emergency management.

Spontaneous Unaffiliated Volunteers (SUV) are people who are inspired to assist community members, after a disaster. They often possess skills needed but because they were not involved in the planning process, they are subject to screening process at a time when their services are needed. As a result of the delay in the screening process, they are not properly utilized and may even pose a problem to the volunteer management subcommittee. Often neglected resources to consider when recruiting volunteers in rural areas include farmers, teachers, and restaurant staff in the affected communities.

Volunteer organizations

These are resources with individuals who share a passion for service. Communities can use these resources to build their volunteer bank or call upon them in disasters to assist in their response and recovery efforts. Please see Appendix D for a list of Volunteer Resources.

Volunteer Checklist

- Form Volunteer Coordination Team
- Ensure VCT Is Component of Disaster
- Form collaborations/ coalitions
- Information

- Identify Potential Partners
- Establish a Volunteer Reception Center
- Build a Volunteer Reception Center “Go Kit” - “Go Kits” include office supplies, forms, lists, maps, special equipment, etc.
- Review Insurance Policies to cover volunteer
- Develop Communication Tools (Pre-scripted News Releases that provide information regarding volunteer opportunities, needed skills, and how to volunteer, Website, List-serves, Toll-free Hotlines; Affiliation information)
- Conduct Trainings and Exercises
- Develop “Shut Down” Plan



Public Relations/Information

Public Relations and Information Subcommittee Descriptions and Overview

One of the most important jobs in the Long-Term Recovery Group (LTRG) is providing timely and accurate information to the public. Requests for funds, volunteers, and donations are all disseminated through the press, social networking, and various organizations and agencies. The county’s Public Information Officer (PIO), who plays a crucial role coordinating communications and disseminating information, on behalf of the county, to the general public, government organizations, and news media, works with all subcommittees as needed, but most importantly with Donations Management, Volunteer Management, and Fundraising. It is crucial for the PIO to establish clear and effective messaging through all social media, printed, and televised or radio outlets. Additionally, in order to communicate timely and accurate messages, the PIO should establish a team with clear roles and responsibilities. Utilizing modern communication tools and processes can effectively help manage, streamline, and direct

information throughout the disaster recovery process. Appendix D offers a list of technological communication resources that the Public Relations Committee and LTRG can incorporate in preliminary and post-disaster communication plans.

It is vital that the Public Relations and Information Subcommittee create a comprehensive communications plan that identifies the appropriate channels of communication to the community affected by a disaster, to the surrounding local and regional communities, to the press, and to supporting teams and organizations involved in the disaster recovery process. The plan should also establish internal communication lines within the committee and between all of the other LTRG subcommittees. Additionally, the committee should establish a set of best practices to ensure all communications are in line with the committee's communication game plan.

The following are strategies and tactics that should be incorporated into a communications plan:

- ***Credibility***: Design public information that builds trust and confidence in the recovery group and the community.
- ***Context***: Communicate in environments that are comfortable for the audience; i.e. beyond the local newspaper, use of particular radio stations, flyers in the neighborhood grocery store.
- ***Clarity***: Ensure the readability of the message. Messages should be crafted to an appropriate reading level. Ensure the message is available to those with language, reading, visual, and hearing challenges.
- ***Continuity and Consistency***: Communication may not occur instantly. Redundant communications are important in order to reach a majority of the community.

- **Content:** Develop messages that are meaningful to the intended audience and are compatible with their value system and relevant to their problems.
- **Channels:** Employ established channels of communication already used but the target audience.

The Public Relations and Information Subcommittee needs to identify action steps for the pre-disaster, emergency stage, and recovery stages of a disaster. The following are specific guidelines for each phase of a disaster for the Public Relations and Information Subcommittee:

Pre-disaster Action Steps:

- Work with the County Public Information Officer to identify communications intersection point for local communication. Questions for consideration may include:
 - Does the community have Internet access?
 - What is the penetration rate of print media such as newspapers?
 - Are there local events or frequented place where information could be posted or disseminated?
- Identify and create platforms to disseminate information online and in the community based on research
- Assist in the dissemination of community and individual preparedness measures
- Create a photo library that tells the recovery group's story
- Assist in crafting a pre-disaster message that can be readily disseminated in the event of a disaster. Consider boil water notices, transportation shelters, pet information, food/water distribution volunteer information, etc.

Emergency Action Steps:

- Define high and low-tech communication channels between the LTRG

- Coordinate with Volunteer, Donation, and Fundraising subcommittees to compile immediate needs

Recovery Actions Steps - Immediate Needs:

- Set system in place to receive regular updates from the Volunteer, Donation, and Fundraising subcommittees to compile immediate needs. Consider assigning a liaison from each subcommittee to communities' updates.

Recovery Action Step - Long-Term Needs:

- Continue to coordinate with Volunteer, Donation, and Fundraising subcommittees to compile immediate needs. Consider assigning a liaison from each subcommittee to communities updates
- Continue to coordinate with local officials to establish updating facts about the disaster
- Continue to send out communications requisitions needs donations of supplies, equipment, volunteers, and donations
- Highlight the success of the LTRG by updating the community of the recovery progress
- Produce and publicize special events including, recognitions, observances, and celebrations
- Write a concise report of actions and outcomes of the committee's efforts for the pre-disaster, emergency, and recovery stages



Finance/Budget

The purpose of this section is to monitor and balance all financial matters concerning the community. It is crucial to note the significance that a community's ongoing financial position represents to its long-term well-being. Regardless of the disaster affecting a region, county, or city, securing the financial stability of the community is of paramount importance.

In recovery planning, an essential step that is non-negotiable is 501(c)3, non-profit status account where funds can be held for the purpose of disaster recovery/response.

Things to consider when setting up a 501(c)3 account

Some areas of concern requiring immediate attention after a disaster, include:

- Establish a fundraising or donation protocol
- Assess for damages
- Secure priority needs

Establishing a strong financial plan to manage a community's funds and its long-term financial security is essential. At the same time, an effective plan to achieve those goals is mandatory.

The following provides a framework for developing financial goals:

1. Identify need
2. Define associated costs
3. Develop a plan by prioritizing

To facilitate disaster recovery and planning, funding plays a fundamental role. To cover lost income and properties, and to finance rebuilding efforts, the community requires funds. The Local governments are responsible for providing enough funds to repair the destroyed structures and recovery operations. They may not be able to provide the entire funds needed by the community so it is important that the Long Term Recovery Groups have information on available financing resources for disasters response and recovery. The need for proper documentation of all financial correspondence and transaction cannot be overemphasized.

The Long Term Recovery Group should:

- Organize the types and sources of funding available
- Determine how they can reach these funding sources
- Have an inventory of the economic extent of damage of the disaster on their community
- Ensure accountability of the group's finances

Local funding sources include:

- Local revenue and reserves
- Public-private partnerships
- Special taxing or fees from property owners located in the designated area in order to help fund recovery programs and projects.
- Special bonds, loans, and taxes can be used to raise revenue to fund disaster recovery.

Insurance

Most rural communities are faced with major challenges of un-insurance and under-insurance.

State and local insurance pools

- Intergovernmental risk pools are formed under state-specific legislation allowing for joint "pooling" of resources to address risks ranging from property loss to employee benefits, tort liability, workers compensation, and more. Pools are owned and governed collectively by their member entities. See <http://www.agrip.org/publicsectorpooling>.

State-backed private insurance

- Several states have state-backed insurance programs, which mostly focus on providing disaster-specific coverage for home owners, and in some cases renters and small businesses.

National Flood Insurance Program

- Provides federal backing of flood insurance coverage to home owners, renters and business owners who reside in communities that adopt and enforce floodplain management measures; see <https://www.fema.gov/national-flood-insurance-program>.

Private market insurance

- Policies generally cover structures, contents, and the costs of additional living expenses (residential) or business interruption (commercial and public sector).

Federal funding Sources include:

Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)

- Public Assistance provides grants to state and local government agencies, private nonprofit organizations, and federally recognized tribal organizations for debris removal, emergency protective measures, and the repair, replacement, or restoration of disaster-damaged

facilities and infrastructure in federally declared disasters. <https://www.fema.gov/public-assistance-local-state-tribal-and-non-profit>.

- Hazard Mitigation Grant Program funding is directed to states and tribal organizations for hazard mitigation planning and projects in federally declared disasters.
<https://www.fema.gov/hazard-mitigation-grant-program>.
- Community Disaster Loan Program provides loans to assist local governments in providing essential services following federally declared disasters.
<https://www.fema.gov/community-disaster-loan-program>.
- Individual and Households Program provides grants directly to renters and displaced home owners that register with FEMA for assistance and reside within the boundaries of a federal disaster declaration region. <https://www.fema.gov/public-assistance-local-state-tribal-and-non-profit/recovery-directorate/assistance-individuals-and>.

U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)

- Can expedite the annual awards made through the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) and HOME Investment Partnerships (HOME) programs for use in a disaster area and also provide mortgage assistance funds;
<http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/info/> disaster resources.
- Congress can also appropriate supplemental emergency funds to HUD for CDBG "Disaster Recovery grants," and to a smaller extent, HOME, to help rebuild areas affected by major disasters declared by the president; <https://www.hudexchange.info/cdbg-dr>.

U.S. Small Business Administration

- Typically provides disaster assistance in the form of loans for businesses of all sizes, private nonprofit organizations, and for homeowners and renters for damage restoration. See <http://www.sba.gov/category/navigation-structure/loans-grants/small-business-loans/disaster-loans>.

Economic Development Administration

- Grants to disaster-impacted small businesses and local governments to assist with long-term economic recovery. <http://www.eda.gov/about/disaster-recovery.htm>.

Federal Highway Administration

- Emergency Relief program funds for freeway and highway repair and restoration. <https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/map21/factsheets/er.cfm>.

State funding sources include:

State emergency management agencies

- Typically administer the Stafford Act programs, including the Public Assistance and Hazard Mitigation Grant Program, as well as the Individuals and Households Program.

Other state agencies and legislatures

- May provide a share of matching funds to the Stafford Act programs.
- Can authorize tax credits and other forms of temporary relief or incentives to help stimulate rebuilding.
- Involved in recovery, liaising with their counterparts at both the national and local levels. For example, state housing agencies may manage the distribution of federal funding via HUD-CDBG to disaster-impacted local governments and residents.

Philanthropic and Private Investment

An important and often overlooked element of disaster planning is the management and coordination of financial contributions. Financial contributions are much easier to accept than contributions of physical materials or volunteer assistance, but the compassion and generosity of donors wanting to support victims in the wake of a disaster is available for a fleeting moment in time that can be lost or squandered if there is not an appropriate plan in place.

IRS publication 3833, *Disaster Relief: Providing Assistance Through Charitable Organizations* and the *Disaster Philanthropy Playbook*, produced by the Center for Disaster Philanthropy, are two excellent sources of detailed advice to educate community leaders with regard to receiving and deploying financial contributions after a disaster.

From those publications and the experience of both the IRS and the Center for Disaster Philanthropy, a few helpful instructions emerge for managing a charitable fund in the wake of a disaster:

- 1) If donors want to receive a charitable tax receipt for a contribution to aid victims of a disaster, contributions must be made to a public charity, which meets the IRS requirements to issue such a receipt.
- 2) Before a disaster strikes, community leaders and elected officials, with input from nonprofits working in the community, should identify one qualifying public charity such as a local nonprofit or community foundation to establish a community disaster fund and accept financial contributions on behalf of the entire community. This organization should be capable of processing a high volume of online, mail and hand-

delivered contributions without being overwhelmed by providing services to the victims of the disaster. (See note below about community foundations)

- 3) An agreement should be in place, which details who will make decisions regarding grants from the community disaster fund and which organizations may be eligible to receive distributions.
- 4) Local disaster response should include immediate activation of the community disaster fund and clear communication from local officials and nonprofit organizations about ways the public can make financial contributions. Spokespersons should be able to clearly communicate how those contributions will be used and distributed.

Note About Community Foundations

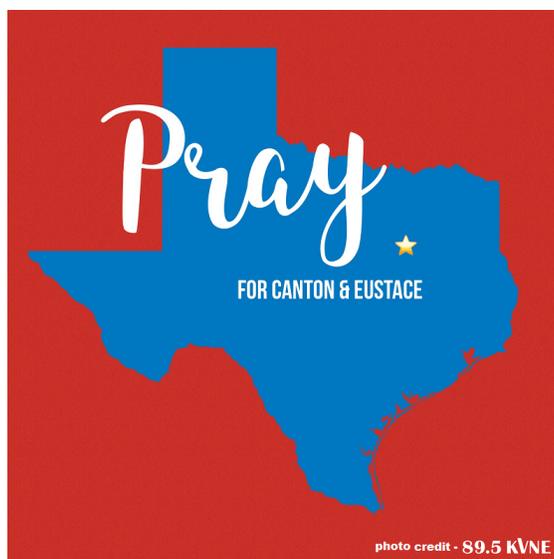
According to the Council on Foundations there are over 780 community foundations in the U.S., which means there is likely to be one serving in, or very near, every community facing a disaster. The Council on Foundations maintains a list of community foundations and can help you find one serving your community. Community foundations are public charities that work daily with a wide variety of charities in their region and are excellent resources to help identify the charities, which will respond to a disaster. Community foundations are often utilized for their ability to establish and manage disaster funds quickly and professionally. In addition, community foundations are experts at handling contributions and making grants, as compared to other local charities, which are experts at the physical response required to serve individuals impacted by a disaster.

Depending on the size and scope of a disaster, one or more nonprofits may emerge from a disaster as the organizations, which are handling the long-term recovery and in-depth case

management work with victims. In some instances, no such charity exists and a new organization may need to be established to fulfill that role. Either way, a disaster fund at a local community foundation would have the capability to be quickly activated to receive financial contributions, which would then be distributed to the frontline charities, which ultimately serve disaster victims.

Nongovernmental organizations, private nonprofit entities, faith-based organizations, foundations, and businesses

- Provide both material and financial assistance to individuals, families, community organizations, and local governments.
- Local community foundation can also sometimes act as the fiscal agent for local governments to receive monetary donations, which are then disbursed to qualified service providers in the locality.



After-Care

Emotional and Spiritual Aftercare

Spiritual and emotional care after a disaster is a process through which individuals, families, and communities affected by disaster draw from their rich heritage of faith, hope, community, and meaning as a form of strength that bolsters the recovery process. They move through a grief process culminating in emotional recovery, although some may never attain full emotional recovery. The National Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (VOAD) Guidelines for Disaster Spiritual Care are provided for National VOAD members, emergency management, partners in disaster response and the public. These guidelines share the hallmarks of excellence to which National VOAD members aspire in disaster spiritual care, promoting confidence among partners and the public (National VOAD Disaster Spiritual Care Guidelines, 2014).

These guidelines may be foundations for organizations in envisioning disaster spiritual care by providing the following:

- Orientation and background to new organizations on how to develop these services.

- Helpful experience and learning while working in cultural and religious diversity.
- A sense of mutual accountability by collaborating with others.
- Parameters of mutual protection and safety for those receiving care and those providing care.
- A shared language and terminology regarding disaster spiritual care to enhance communication.

Spiritual/emotional care has an important role in all phases of a disaster, from short-term response through long-term recovery. Assessing and providing for the spiritual needs of individuals, families, and communities can kindle important capacities of hope and resilience. Disaster Spiritual Care (DSC) is part of the broader crisis intervention process (National VOAD Disaster Spiritual Care Guidelines, 2014). It is not psychotherapy but an acute short-term helping process designed for reduction of symptoms, stabilization after the initial impact, promotion of resilience and coping and a return to adaptive functioning/referral.

Best practices in spiritual and emotional aftercare include:

- Respect for all expressions of belief regarding faith and non-faith.
- Respect for each person's rich diversity of heritage, language and culture.
- Commitment to ethical practices that protect the vulnerable.
- Commitment to collaboration with all disaster spiritual care providers, local and deployed.
- Commitment to confidentiality.
- Spiritual assessments to determine perceived and real needs and assets.

Responsibilities of the After-care Subcommittee

- Form and train a spiritual and mental health taskforce in outreach techniques and providing resources to survivors and the community at large.
- Initiate or support special worship services, counseling, commemorative events, and other events that enhance the spiritual well-being of survivors.
- Offer security and appropriate human contact to survivors through information, gathering sites, and programs.
- A qualified mental health person can assess mental or spiritual needs of individuals and the community.
- Support and assist survivors with specific, tangible problems such as transportation and child care.
- Advocate for appropriate delivery of services where mental health issues are identified.



Animal Care in Disaster Recovery

In disasters, people often worry about their family pet(s), farmers are concerned about their livestock, and horse owners worry about their horses. It is critically important to include animal issues in emergency planning and preparedness. While the state and local governments take priority in caring and keeping people safe, it is up to animal owners to work with one another individually and in mutual interest groups to develop plans for their animals in times of disasters. However, a collaborative effort between emergency management and animal care providers can improve a community's successful disaster preparedness and response. It is important to note that each community must adjust its plan to meet its own needs.

Groups to Consider

- Private owners - Pet owners, livestock producers
- Businesses - Veterinarians, pet stores, grooming parlors, animal accessory stores, feed stores, slaughterhouses, farmers cooperatives, department stores, boarding kennels, animal transport companies, pest control companies, circuses

- Educational institutions - Veterinary schools, zoos, animal science and agriculture schools, aquaria.

Animal Issues in Disasters

- After a disaster, familiar scents and landmarks may be altered. Pets may become confused and lost, so it is important to maintain close contact with pets and leash them when they go outside.
- Misinformed owners may leave animals to stray resulting in traffic accidents and an overloading of human shelters and veterinary practices.
- Snakes and other potentially dangerous animals displaced by the disaster may have migrated into the area (especially after flooding).
- Debris and downed power lines can be a hazard for people and pets.
- Disaster-related stress may change a pet's behavior. Normally quiet and friendly pets may become defensive or aggressive. If you evacuate, take your pets with you.
- Mental health impact (feelings of guilt, bereavement and anger). Farmers may feel so grief-stricken by the loss of their animals that they leave agriculture completely; many victims are unhappy when they discover that they could not stay at public shelters if they had pets with them; animal owners in public shelters may show psychosomatic symptoms because of not knowing the whereabouts of their pets.
- Animal bites and outbreaks of zoonosis such as rabies.

Care of Pets in Disasters

Disasters cannot be prevented from occurring, but implementing a good plan towards reducing injuries, death and suffering can reduce the impact of the disaster. Owners should consider:

Mitigation

- The best way to mitigate disasters for your pets is to avoid the disaster in the first place. If necessary and when advised, evacuate!
- Ensure rabies tags are up-to-date and fastened to the animal's collar.
- Maintain a copy of current pictures of the owner and the pet(s). Include the pet's face and back and any specific markings for identification purposes.
- Make a pet emergency kit.
- Identify shelters in advance that will allow your pets.
- Have a secure pet carrier, leash, or harness for each pet.
- Make a list of the places where you can get veterinary care, food, shelter and housing for your pets in an emergency.
- Consider having each pet micro chipped. Register the microchip and ensure your contact information is regularly maintained and up to date with the microchip company. Include a local address and an additional contact that would not be impacted by a local disaster.

Preparedness

- Imagine the types of disasters that you might encounter
- Develop a family disaster plan with specific plans for pets
- Practice evacuation of your family and pets until evacuation is achieved within a few minutes.

- Decide on a meeting place for your family if you get separated.
- Decide who will take care of your pet and where he or she will stay during a crisis.
- Determine the best room in the house to keep your pet if you must evacuate without your pet. This varies with the type of pet and the type of disaster.
- Make emergency arrangements for pet care with neighbors, family and friends. Ensure they have keys to your house and leave information on how you can be reached, which room the animals are in, and how to care for your pets.
- Think of whom you would phone outside of your area. Often people cannot phone into a disaster zone, but it is possible to phone out. An effective and proven method of ensuring help in a disaster is to establish a telephone tree. Telephone trees work when one person phones two friends to see if they need help or to request help. These two people each phone another two people and so on.
- Obedience training for your pet may save its life during an emergency
- Familiarize your pet with being transported. You can practice drills with your pet by getting it used to riding with you in your car. That way it will not be unduly alarmed if it has to evacuate in a disaster.
- Cats can be very difficult to catch when they are stressed or afraid. Practice catching and transporting your cat in a crate and carrying it around the house. This will allow your pet to become familiar with the transport box
- You should have a disaster kit for each pet. Kits and their contents should be easily retrieved and kept in rodent and ant-proof containers. Check the contents of the disaster kits twice a year when the clocks change for daylight savings. Rotate all foods into use and replace with fresh food every two months.

Items that are recommended for your disaster kit include:

- Extra collars and tags, harnesses and leashes for all pets (including cats).
- Muzzles may be needed to control agitated and aggressive animals — for dogs, these can be made from gauze rolls or panty hose. A muzzle or towel can be used for cats. A towel can be used to restrain your bird if it becomes agitated and aggressive during the confusion.
- Extra pet food to avoid diet changes in stressful situations.
- Toys or blankets your pet will find familiar.
- A manual can opener.
- A supply of stored drinking water. Food, water, and bowls for each pet.
- Paper towel, plastic bags, and spray disinfectant for animal waste clean-up.
- Copies of pet's medical and vaccination records. Boarding facilities may not accept your pets without proof of health.
- If the pet is on medication, ask your veterinarian about keeping extra supplies of medication or a copy of the prescription for these medications in your kit. Mark your calendar to replace medications before they expire.
- Maintain a copy of current pictures of the owner and the pet(s). Include the pet's face and back and any specific markings for identification purposes.
- Your pet's crate should be easily accessible and large enough for your pet to stand up and turn around.
- Since animals may be sheltered in open facilities, make sure there is enough bedding to keep them warm. You should also label the crate with your pet's name, your name and where you can be reached

- A first aid kit should include only materials that you know how to use. Remember that if your pet has a problem and you do not know exactly what it is, you should consult a veterinarian. Useful items for a first aid kit for pets include: bandaging materials to cover wounds, animal antiseptic ointment, clippers, latex gloves, and tweezers.
- To minimize ill health effects of a disaster, make sure that your pet's vaccinations are current. Most vaccinations are repeated yearly. Keep copies of your pet's current vaccinations, health and ownership records in your disaster kit.
- If your pet requires regular medications, keep a current copy of your pet's prescription or extra supplies in your disaster preparedness kit.

Response

- Stay calm and assess the situation.
- Never put yourself or others at risk. Do not attempt to rescue your pet if your life or health or that of others may be placed in danger.
- Crate your cat or dog immediately. If you do not, your pet may sense danger. This will make them want to hide and they become more difficult to catch and crate.
- Listen to the emergency alert system on your radio or television for instructions on what you should do and whether special arrangements have been made for people with pets.
- If your pet has been exposed to chemicals, get information on how to handle it without harming yourself. You should have identified sources of veterinary care and other information in your emergency plan
- In some situations, circumstances may force you to leave your pet behind. Leaving your pet behind is only a last resort. If you must leave without your pet, you should leave them in your home.

- Under no circumstances should you ever leave your pet tied up outside or let them loose to fend for themselves. Roaming dogs are a public health hazard and owners remain responsible for any injuries or damage caused by your dog. In large disasters where loose animals become a problem, animal control shelters often have no other option than to treat these animals as abandoned. Many pets have to be adopted, fostered, or euthanized.
- Do not leave unfamiliar foods and treats for your pet. They may overeat which leads to intestinal problems. Provide water in a heavy bowl that cannot be tipped over.
- Always keep exotic pets in separate rooms. Many exotic pets can be very dangerous to disaster personnel and other animals not familiar with them or who encounter them unexpectedly.
- Leave warnings and handling instructions for all exotics, especially poisonous ones.
- Paste labels clearly for rescue workers to see what animals they will encounter, how many and where they can contact somebody familiar with how to take care of them.
- Make sure somebody knows where you can be contacted and what the needs and location of your pets are.
- Leaving your pet behind in a disaster may decrease its chances of survival.

Recovery

- Check your pet for injury and exposure to chemicals. If you have any concerns about the health of your pet or their exposure to hazardous materials, contact a veterinarian before you attempt to treat them.
- If you have to move to new surroundings, do not remove your pet from its crate until it is calm. Do so only in a closed room.

- Be careful in allowing your cat or dog out after a major disaster. Follow the recommendations of the emergency management personnel as to whether the environment is safe for you and your pet.
- Give your pet small amounts of food and water several times throughout the day. The volumes of food may be increased to normal over three to four days.
- Let your pet have plenty of uninterrupted sleep. If you still have your pet's favorite toys, encourage them to play. This will allow them to recover from the stress and trauma.
- Avoid unfamiliar activities with your pet, such as bathing, excessive exercise, or diet supplements. Try to avoid diet changes.
- If you and your pet are separated, pay daily visits to local shelters, animal control facilities, veterinary offices and kennels until you have found it. A phone call is often not as effective as a visit. You can also post photos of your lost pet.
- If your pet has tattoos, a microchip or other permanent identification, this will increase the chances of finding it. Be aware that collars and tags are sometimes lost.
- If you find a stray animal, take it to a shelter or other facility set up for lost and found animals. Place an advertisement in the local newspaper to inform the owner where the pet was taken. Often newspapers run found ads for free.
- Share your experiences with friends and family. Talking about your experiences will help you deal with them and offers great stress relief.
- Consider seeking professional counseling, as recovery is aided when guided by professionals experienced in dealing with disasters.

Checklist for disaster preparedness for pets:

Do you have the following items ready?

- ✓ Your written family disaster plan
- ✓ Disaster preparedness kit
- ✓ Crate and bedding
- ✓ Food, water, manual can opener, and dishes
- ✓ Plastic bags, paper towels, newspaper (when shredded, can be used as cat litter)
- ✓ Disinfectant
- ✓ Collar, leash, harnesses
- ✓ Muzzles, gauze rolls
- ✓ Identification tags
- ✓ Current medical and vaccination records
- ✓ Extra bottles of daily medications or copies of prescriptions with current expiration date
- ✓ Current photos
- ✓ Pet comfort items: towels, blankets, toys
- ✓ A list of hotels, motels and boarding kennels that accept pets
- ✓ Detailed instructions for animal care and rescue workers
- ✓ First aid kit
- ✓ Flashlights, batteries
- ✓ Copies of health certificates
- ✓ Out-of-state telephone contact list
- ✓ Flat tire repair kit

Large Animals in Disaster

Individuals with large animals, such as horses or cattle should have an emergency plan to include evacuation and sheltering plans. Also consider:

- Pre-identify farms/stables, etc. who may be available to receive large animals for a short or long-term basis.
- Evacuate animals whenever possible. Map out primary and secondary routes in advance.
- Evacuation destinations should be prepared with, or ready to obtain, food, water, veterinary care, and animal handling equipment.
- Vehicles and trailers needed for transporting and supporting each type of animal should be available along with experienced handlers and drivers.
- In case evacuation is not possible, animal owners must decide whether to move large animals to shelter or turn them outside. This decision should be based on the disaster type, quality and location of shelter, and the risks of turning them outside.
- All animals should have some form of identification.

Wildlife in Disaster

Disaster and life threatening situations will exacerbate the unpredictable nature of wild animals. Pre-disaster messaging to the community should include:

- Be cautious approaching wild animals during emergency situations. Do not corner them. Wild animals will likely feel threatened and may endanger themselves by running into floodwaters, fire, etc.
- Wildlife such as snakes, opossums, raccoons and other rodents often seek refuge from floodwaters on upper levels of homes and have been known to remain after water recedes. If wildlife is encountered in this situation, open a window or other escape route.

Do not attempt to capture or handle the animal. Call the local animal control office or animal shelter.

- If you see an injured or stranded animal, do not approach or attempt to help. Call your local animal control office or animal shelter.
- If you are scratched or bitten by a wild animal, seek immediate emergency room care for an evaluation and possible treatment for rabies exposure.



Recovery Measurement Tool

Disaster recovery should be monitored to ensure the community is making forward progress in achieving optimum disaster recovery goals set in the recovery process. Ongoing monitoring and assessment of progress will help the recovery oversight team to determine the need to make changes to the plan. Periodic updates to the community on the recovery plan and progress, to include before and after pictures, will assist the community at large in moving through the grief process and individual personal recovery. The inability to measure and evaluate the recovery process will limit the ability of the team to determine the status and impact of recovery efforts, which may lead to a revised recovery plans, policies and programs.

Every community affected by a disaster incident should achieve adequate recovery within a given time frame. During this time of recovery, a measurement tool is required to monitor the recovery process. The monitoring of recovery should be based on a pre-disaster baseline, understanding recovery may not bring the community back to pre-disaster, but rather back to the new normal for the community. Pre-disaster data of baseline conditions of the community is

important, but not critical to the recovery process. Regardless of the availability of pre-disaster data, the need for recovery monitoring and assessment remains.

Some recovery measures, although underutilized, exist as a variety of assessments, scorecards, and toolkits. For example, the Rockefeller Foundation's City Resilience Framework (see Appendix D) provides measures that help users relate resilience to 12 measurable aspects of health, economy, leadership, and systems. The Disaster Recovery Tracking Tool, developed by the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill's Coastal Hazards Center of Excellence and FEMA-New York (See Appendix D), provides users with 79 metrics for tracking recovery in ten focus areas. A community's own pre-disaster recovery plan can also establish baseline conditions, define measures, outline monitoring programs, and design policies that support the use of data for assessing the effectiveness of recovery.

To measure the recovery progress, recovery indicators should be established. These indicators will be linked to recovery plans, and the information obtained when tracking indicators are used to evaluate the level of progress that has been attained towards the recovery plan goals. This information can be used as a basis to revise policies and recovery plan programs. For example, the percentage of homes rebuilt (by week or month) can be an indicator to assess the recovery goal set to replace/repair destroyed homes to pre-disaster conditions. Based on a comprehensive set of indicators, a recovery team can identify errors, limitations, and conflicts among plans and program implementation. This allows them to revise recovery policies and programs early on, thereby saving time and resources available.

Indices and measures in existence can be modified and used to suit any community recovery plan and high-quality plans can assist in the development of indicators, and guide the use of data in the recovery process. The indicators adopted should be suited to the recovery goals

and needs of the community and recovery team responsible for planning the recovery. Two general classes of goals include transformative goals that deal with building back better and restorative goals that aim to alleviate losses efficiently and quickly (Horney J., Berke P., and Van Zandt, S. 2014).

In developing a tool for tracking the recovery in Van Zandt County, the “Community Recovery Checklist” (CRC) was chosen. The CRC was created to assist practitioners, government agencies, and citizens in tracking recovery in their community following a disaster (See Appendix D).

Benefits of Using the CRC:

- Motivates the community to think about the areas that need to be addressed in order to prepare for a potential disaster and facilitate a successful recovery following an event.
- Serves as a tool to drive the recovery team towards their set goals during disaster recovery.
- Assesses the community recovery capacity, including pre-disaster self-assessments generated from baseline data, or a means of measuring the adaptive capacity of a community to assess the ability to recover.
- Provides early estimates of the level of recovery assistance needed by the community.
- Promotes better accountability and transparency during disaster recovery.
- Assists states, counties, and regional planning councils by providing a standard set of metrics to better understand the recovery progress of multiple communities or jurisdictions.

Recovery Focus Areas

The areas of focus for recovery include, but may not be limited to:

- Business and Economy
- Disaster and Recovery Management
- Mobilization of Recovery Funding
- Communities and Social Services
- Households
- Population Characteristics
- Public Sector Recovery
- Public Buildings and Infrastructure
- Cultural Sites and Resources

Components:

1. Business and Economy

- Total businesses located in community
- Total disaster-related business closures
- Average level of business insurance
- Number of commercial bankruptcies
- Economic output

2. Disaster and Recovery Management

- Number of hazard mitigation, emergency preparedness and recovery public meetings held and number of public participants
- Disaster management plans (emergency preparedness/ hazard mitigation/recovery plan) developed or updated post-disaster

- Improved community resiliency
- Outreach methods used to engage public in disaster planning (e.g., radio and television advertisements, brochures, web surveys)

3. Mobilization of Recovery Funding

- Amount of non-FEMA recovery funding distributed
- Amount of donations received
- Amount of insurance payments received
- Total funding used for permanent reconstruction projects

4. Communities and Social Services

- Availability of social services
- Re-establishment of social networks and community facilities (e.g., re-establishment of schools, community facilities, houses of worship)
- Community health care facilities operational

5. Households

- Owner-occupied and renter-occupied housing units
- Percent of population residing in temporary housing units
- Average level of homeowner's insurance
- Median/mean home value
- Median/mean household income
- Vacancy rates/number of households returned
- Number of abandoned housing units

6. Population Characteristics

- Total population
- Disaster-displaced individuals
- Unemployment rate
- Households under poverty rate
- Population without access to a car
- Population over age 65
- Population under age 12
- Population disabled

7. Public Sector Recovery

- Number of civic organizations
- Tax revenue
- Public services available
- Children enrolled in community schools
- Number of voter registrations

8. Public Buildings and Infrastructure

- Re-establishment of transportation and transit system(s)
- Miles of disaster-damaged roads and bridges repaired
- Damage to critical infrastructure (e.g., utilities, water treatment, gas pipelines) repaired
- Damage to public facilities (e.g., municipal buildings) repaired
- Status of debris management

9. Cultural sites and resources

- Reconstruction/repair of damaged cultural or heritage sites (e.g., landmarks, artifacts)
- Reconstruction/repair of damaged arts and religious facilities
- Re-establishment of arts and sports organizations
- Religious service attendance

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APPENDIX A

Definitions

Definitions

Community Recovery Checklist - The Community Recovery Checklist is designed to assist local officials and recovery specialists in tracking progress toward recovery goals by identifying relevant indicators to monitor changes over time.

Disaster Recovery Case Management - a partnership between a case manager and disaster survivors to develop and carry out a plan for disaster recovery.

Disaster Risk Reduction – a systematic approach to identifying, assessing and reducing the risks of disaster. It aims to reduce socio-economic vulnerabilities to disaster as well as dealing with the environmental and other hazards that trigger them.

Humane Society of the United States - An animal advocacy organization, seeking a humane world for animals by combating large-scale cruelties such as puppy mills, animal fighting, factory farming, seal slaughter, horse cruelty, captive hunts and the wildlife trade.

Immediate Needs Assessment – Used to determine the full extent of a disaster’s impact on an area and, based on these findings, to produce an actionable and sustainable strategy for recovery.

National Animal Rescue and Sheltering Coalition – A coalition of national organizations that represents millions of animal welfare, animal care, and animal control professionals, volunteers, and pet owners, working collaboratively and cooperatively to assist communities and their animals in their preparations for and response to incidents that place animals in crisis.

National Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster – An association of organizations that mitigate and alleviate the impact of disasters, provides a forum promoting cooperation, communication, coordination and collaboration; and fosters more effective delivery of services to communities affected by disaster

Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals - non-profit animal welfare organizations that operate independently of each other and campaign for animal welfare, assist in the prevention of cruelty to animals, rehabilitation and finding homes for maltreated and unwanted animals that can be reestablished into new homes.

Veterinary Medical Assistance Teams - serve as first responders to ensure high quality care of animals during disasters and emergencies. They provide operational emergency response programs to state animal health authorities and preparedness programs to animal health authorities, veterinary medical associations, and other relevant organizations.



APPENDIX B

Abbreviations

Abbreviations

CRC – Community Recovery Checklist

CERT - Community Emergency Response Teams

DRR - Disaster Risk Reduction

EDA – United States Economic Development Administration

FEMA – Federal Emergency Management Agency

HSUS – Humane Society of the United States

INA – Immediate Needs Assessment

LSSDR – Lutheran Social Services Disaster Response

LTRG – Long Term Recovery Group

MDS – Mennonite Disaster Service

NARSC – National Animal Rescue and Sheltering Coalition

NGO – Non-government organization

SPCA – Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals

TDEM – Texas Division of Emergency Management

USDA – United States Department of Agriculture

VC – Volunteer Coordinator

VMATS – Veterinary Medical Assistance Teams

VOAD - National Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster

VRC - Volunteer Reception Center



APPENDIX C

Roles and Responsibilities

Roles and Responsibilities

The County Judge will:

- Establish objectives and priorities for the emergency management program and provide general policy guidance on the conduct of that program.
- Monitor the emergency response during disaster situations and provides direction where appropriate.
- With the assistance of the Public Information Officer, keep the public informed during emergency situations.
- With the assistance of the legal staff, declare a local state of disaster, request the Governor declare a state of emergency, or invoke the emergency powers of government when necessary.
- Request assistance from other local governments or the State when necessary
- Direct activation of the EOC.
- Implement the policies and decisions of the governing body relating to emergency management.
- Organize the emergency management program and identifies personnel, equipment, and facility needs.
- Assign emergency management program tasks to departments and agencies.
- Ensure that departments and agencies participate in emergency planning, training, and exercise activities.
- Coordinate the operational response of local emergency services.
- Coordinate activation of the EOC and supervise its operation.

Direction and Control:

Primary responsibility for this function is assigned to the County Judge, who will coordinate with the EMC in the preparation and maintenance of Annex N (Direction & Control) to this plan and supporting SOPs.

Emergency tasks to be performed include:

- Direct and control our local operating forces.
- Maintain coordination with neighboring jurisdictions and the Disaster District in Tyler, Texas.
- Maintain the EOC in an operating mode or be able to convert the designated facility space into an operable EOC rapidly.
- Assigns representatives, by title, to report to the EOC and develops procedures for crisis training.
- Develops and identifies the duties of the staff, use of displays and message forms, and procedures for EOC activation.
- Coordinates the evacuation of areas at risk.

The Emergency Management Coordinator will:

- Serve as the staff advisor to our County Judge on emergency management matters.
- Keep the County Judge governing body apprised of our preparedness status and emergency management needs.
- Coordinate local planning and preparedness activities and the maintenance of this plan.
- Prepare and maintain a resource inventory.
- Arrange appropriate training for local emergency management personnel and emergency responders.
- Coordinate periodic emergency exercises to test our plan and training.
- Manage the EOC, develop procedures for its operation, and conduct training for those who staff it.
- Activate the EOC when required.
- Perform day-to-day liaison with the state emergency management staff and other local emergency management personnel.
- Coordinate with organized volunteer groups and businesses regarding emergency operations.

Shelter and Mass Care:

Primary responsibility for this function is assigned to the EMC, who will prepare and maintain Annex C (Shelter and Mass Care) to this plan and supporting SOPs

Emergency tasks to be performed include:

- Perform emergency shelter and mass care planning.
- Coordinate and conduct shelter and mass care operations with our other departments, relief agencies, and volunteer groups.

Hazard Mitigation:

The primary responsibility for this function is assigned to the EMC, who will prepare and maintain Annex P (Hazard Mitigation) to this plan and supporting SOPs.

Emergency tasks to be performed include:

- Maintain the local Hazard Analysis.
- Identify beneficial pre-disaster hazard mitigation projects and seek approval from local officials to implement such projects.
- In the aftermath of an emergency, determine appropriate actions to mitigate the situation and coordinate implementation of those actions.
- Coordinate and carry out post-disaster hazard mitigation program.

The County Sheriff will:

Prepare and maintain Annex A (Warning) to this plan and supporting SOPs.

Emergency tasks to be performed include:

- Receive information on emergency situations.
- Alert key local officials of emergency situations.
- Disseminate warning information and instructions to the public through available warning systems ensuring the needs of the whole community are addressed.
- Disseminate warning and instructions to special facilities such as schools and hospitals.

Communications:

Primary responsibility for this function is assigned to the County Sheriff, who will assist the EMC in the preparation and maintenance of Annex B (Communications) to this plan and supporting SOPs.

Emergency tasks to be performed include:

- Identify the communications systems available with the local area and determine the connectivity of those systems, and ensure their interoperability.
- Develop plans and procedures for coordinated use of the various communications systems available in this jurisdiction during emergencies.
- Determine and implement means of augmenting communications during emergencies, including support by volunteer organizations.

Evacuation:

Primary responsibility for this function is assigned to the County Sheriff, who will prepare and maintain Annex E (Evacuation) to this plan and supporting SOPs.

Emergency tasks to be performed include:

- Identify areas where evacuation has been or may in the future and determine of population at risk.
- Perform evacuation planning for known risk areas to include route selection and determination of traffic control requirements.
- Develop simplified planning procedures for ad hoc evacuations.
- Determine emergency public information requirements.
- Perform evacuation planning for functional and access needs and institutional facilities (schools, hospitals, nursing homes, and other institutions).

Law Enforcement:

Primary responsibility for this function is assigned to the County Sheriff/Sheriff's Office, who will prepare and maintain Annex G (Law Enforcement) to this plan and supporting SOPs.

Emergency tasks to be performed include:

Maintenance of law and order.
 Traffic control.
 Terrorist incident response.
 Provision of security for vital facilities, evacuated areas, and shelters.
 Access control for damaged or contaminated areas.
 Warning support.
 Post-incident reconnaissance and damage assessment.
 Prepare and maintain law enforcement resource inventory.

Terrorist Incident Response.

Primary responsibility for this function is assigned to the County Sheriff/Sheriff's Office, who will prepare and maintain Annex V (Terrorist Incident Response) to this plan and supporting SOPs.

Emergency tasks to be performed include:

Coordinate and carry out defensive anti-terrorist activities, including criminal intelligence, investigation, protection of facilities, and public awareness activities.
 Coordinate and carry out offensive counter-terrorist operations to neutralize terrorist activities.
 Carry out terrorism consequence operations conducted in the aftermath of a terrorist incident to save lives and protect public and private property.
 Ensure required notification of terrorist incidents is made to state and federal authorities.

The County Fire Marshal will:

Prepare and maintain Annex D (Radiological Protection) to this plan and supporting SOPs.

Emergency tasks to be performed include:

- Maintain inventory of radiological equipment.
- Ensure response forces include personnel with current training in radiological monitoring and decontamination.
- Respond to radiological incidents and terrorist incidents involving radiological materials.
- Make notification concerning radiological incidents to state and federal authorities.

Firefighting:

Primary responsibility for this function is assigned to the Fire Marshal, who will prepare and maintain Annex F (Firefighting) to this plan and supporting SOPs.

Emergency tasks to be performed include:

- Fire prevention activities.
- Fire detection and control.
- Hazardous material and oil spill response.
- Terrorist incident response.
- Evacuation support.
- Post-incident reconnaissance and damage assessment.
- Fire safety inspection of temporary shelters.
- Prepare and maintain fire resource inventory.

Hazardous Materials & Oil Spill:

The primary responsibility for this function is assigned to the County Fire Marshal, who will prepare and maintain Annex Q (Hazardous Material & Oil Spill Response) to this plan and supporting SOPs.

Emergency tasks to be performed include:

- In accordance with OSHA regulations, establish ICS to manage the response to hazardous materials incidents.
- Establish the hazmat incident functional areas (e.g., Hot Zone, cool zone, Cold Zone, etc.)
- Determine and implement requirements for personal protective equipment for emergency responders.
- Initiate appropriate actions to control and eliminate the hazard in accordance with established hazmat response guidance and SOPs.
- Determine areas at risk and which public protective actions, if any, should be implemented.
- Apply appropriate firefighting techniques if the incident has, or may, result in a fire.
- Determines when affected areas may be safely reentered.

Search & Rescue:

The primary responsibility for this function is assigned to the County Fire Marshal, who will prepare and maintain Annex R (Search and Rescue) to this plan and supporting SOPs.

Emergency tasks to be performed include:

- Coordinate and conduct search and rescue activities.
- Identify requirements for specialized resources to support rescue operations.

- Coordinate external technical assistance and equipment support for search and rescue operations.

The Incident Commander will:

Manage emergency response resources and operations at the incident site command post to resolve the emergency situation.

Determine and implement required protective actions for response personnel and the public at an incident site.

The Public Health Officer will:

Prepare and maintain Annex H (Health & Medical Services) to this plan and supporting SOPs.

Emergency tasks to be performed include:

Coordinate health and medical care and EMS support during emergency situations.

Public health information and education.

Inspection of food and water supplies.

Develop emergency public health regulations and orders.

Coordinate collection, identification, and interment of deceased victims.

Public Information Officer will:

Coordinate with the EMC in the preparation and maintenance of Annex I (Public Information) to this plan and supporting SOPs.

Emergency tasks to be performed include:

- Establish a Joint Information Center (JIC)
- Conduct on-going hazard awareness and public education programs.
- Pursuant to the Joint Information System (JIS), compile and release information and instructions for the public during emergency situations and respond to questions relating to emergency operations.
- Provide information to the media and the public during emergency situations.
- Arrange for media briefings.
- Compiles print and photo documentation of emergency situations.

The County Auditor will:

Coordinate with the EMC in the preparation and maintenance of Annex J (Recovery) to this plan and supporting SOPs.

Emergency tasks to be performed include:

- Establish and train a damage assessment team using local personnel. Coordinate the efforts of that team with state and federal damage assessment personnel who may be dispatched to assist us.
- Assess and compile information on damage to public and private property and needs of disaster victims and formulate and carry out programs to fill those needs.
- If damages are beyond our capability to deal with, compile information for use by our elected officials in requesting state or federal disaster assistance.
- If we are determined to be eligible for state or federal disaster assistance, coordinate with state and federal agencies to carry out authorized recovery programs.

Resource Management:

Primary responsibility for this function is assigned to the County Auditor, who will prepare and maintain Annex M (Resource Management) to this plan and supporting SOPs.

Emergency tasks to be performed include:

- Maintain an inventory of emergency resources.
- During emergency operations, locates supplies, equipment, and personnel to meet specific needs.
- Maintain a list of suppliers for supplies and equipment needed immediately in the aftermath of an emergency.
- Establish emergency purchasing procedures and coordinate emergency procurements.
- Establish and maintain a manpower reserve and coordinate assignment of reserve personnel to departments and agencies that require augmentation.
- Coordinate transportation, sorting, temporary storage, and distribution of resources during emergency situations.
- Establish staging areas for resources, if required.
- During emergency operations, identify to the Donations Management Coordinator those goods, services, and personnel that are needed.
- Maintain records of emergency-related expenditures for purchases and personnel.

The County Commissioners will:

Coordinate with the EMC in the preparation and maintenance of Annex K (Public Works & Engineering) to this plan and supporting SOPs.

Emergency tasks to be performed include:

- Protect government facilities and vital equipment where possible.
- Assess damage to streets, bridges, traffic control devices, and other public facilities.
- Direct temporary repair of vital facilities.
- Restore damaged roads and bridges.
- Restore waste treatment and disposal systems.
- Arrange for debris removal.
- General damage assessment support.
- Building inspection support.
- Provide specialized equipment to support emergency operations.
- Support traffic control and search and rescue operations.

Utilities:

Primary responsibility for this function is assigned to the County Commissioners who will prepare and maintain Annex L (Energy and Utilities) to this plan and supporting SOPs.

Emergency tasks to be performed include:

- Prioritize restoration of utility service to vital facilities and other facilities.
- Arrange for the provision of emergency power sources where required.
- Identify requirements for emergency drinking water and portable toilets to the department or agency responsible for mass care.
- Assess damage to, repair, and restore public utilities.
- Monitor recovery activities of privately owned utilities.

Transportation:

The primary responsibility for this function is assigned to the County Commissioners who will coordinate with the EMC in the preparation and maintenance of Annex S (Transportation) to this plan and supporting SOPs.

Emergency tasks to be performed include:

- Identifies local public and private transportation resources and coordinates their use in emergencies.
- Coordinates deployment of transportation equipment to support emergency operations.

- Establishes and maintains a reserve pool of drivers, maintenance personnel, parts, and tools.
- Maintains records on use of transportation equipment and personnel for purpose of possible reimbursement.

The Indigent Health Coordinator will:

Prepare and maintain Annex O (Human Services) to this plan and supporting SOPs

Emergency tasks to be performed include:

- Identify emergency feeding sites.
- Identify sources of clothing for disaster victims.
- Secure emergency food supplies.
- Coordinate the operation of shelter facilities, whether operated by local government, local volunteer groups, or organized disaster relief agencies such as the American Red Cross.
- Coordinate special care requirements for disaster victims such as the aged, special needs individuals, and others.
- Coordinate the provision of disaster mental health services to disaster victims, emergency workers, and/or others suffering trauma due to the emergency incident/disaster.

The Volunteer Coordinator will:

Coordinate with the EMC in the preparation and maintenance of Annex T (Donations Management) to this plan and supporting SOPs.

Emergency tasks to be performed include:

- Compile resource requirements identified by the Resource Management staff.
- Solicit donations to meet known needs.
- Establish and implement procedures to receive, accept or turn down offers of donated goods and services, and provide instructions to donors of needed goods or services.
- In coordination with the Resource Management staff, establish a facility to receive, sort, and distribute donated goods.

The District Attorney will:

Prepare and maintain Annex U (Legal) to this plan and supporting SOPs.

Emergency tasks to be performed include:

- Advise local officials on emergency powers of local government and procedures for invoking those measures.
- Review and advise our officials on possible legal issues arising from disaster operations.
- Prepare and/or recommend legislation to implement the emergency powers that may be required during and emergency.
- Advise local officials and department heads on record-keeping requirements and other documentation necessary for the exercising of emergency powers.

Department and agency heads not assigned a specific function in this plan will be prepared to make their resources available for emergency duty at the direction of our chief elected official.



APPENDIX D

Additional Resources

Volunteer Resources

<https://www.nationalservice.gov/programs/americorps/americorps-nccc>

<https://www.nationalservice.gov/programs/americorps/join-americorps>

- AmeriCorps NCCC
- AmeriCorps VISTA
- FEMA Corps
- TDVR – Texas Disaster Volunteer Register
- Citizen Corps Councils — www.citizencorps.gov/councils/
- Local VOAD listing — www.nvoad.org/membersdb.php?members=State

Volunteer Centers — www.pointsoflight.org/centers/find_center.cfm

What is a Safe Room?

“Safe rooms” are reinforced small rooms built in the interior of a home, fortified by concrete and/or steel to offer extra protection against tornadoes, hurricanes and other severe windstorms. They can be built in a basement, or if no basement is available, on the ground floor. In existing homes, interior bathrooms or closets can be fortified into “safe rooms” also. Those who have safe rooms, or any other kind of tornado shelter, should register them with the local fire department to help with rescue in case the entrance(s) are blocked by debris.

FOR MORE INFORMATION ON SAFE ROOMS:

- NOAA National Centers for Environmental Information (NCEI) U.S. Billion-Dollar Weather and Climate Disasters (2017). <https://www.ncdc.noaa.gov/billions/>
- NOAA National Centers for Environmental Information (NCEI) U.S. Billion-Dollar Weather and Climate Disasters (2017). <https://www.ncdc.noaa.gov/billions/>

The emPOWER Initiative

To help communities address the added risks for these vulnerable populations, the Department of Health and Human Services' (HHS) Office of the Assistant Secretary for Preparedness and Response (ASPR) developed the emPOWER Initiative through a partnership with the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid. This innovative and first-of-its-kind integrated platform provides progressively dynamic data and mapping tools that can help state and local health departments, and their partners, to better anticipate, mitigate, plan for, and respond to the potential needs of at-risk persons with access and functional needs prior to, during, and after a disaster.

Reference

- National Association of County & City Health Officials. The Preparedness Brief Retrieved October 2017.
<http://nacchopreparedness.org/the-hhs-empower-initiative-emergency-preparedness-tools-addressing-the-needs-of-energy-dependent-at-risk-populations-2/>

ONLINE RESOURCES

- Schwab, James, ed. 2014. Planning for Post-Disaster Recovery: Next Generation. PAS Report no. 576. Chicago: American Planning Association.
- Resources available for rural communities to speed the process, to reduce the losses, to become more resilient:

American Planning Association. Planning for Post-Disaster Recovery: Next Generation Retrieved November 2017 from
<https://www.planning.org/research/postdisaster>

Laurie A. Johnson (2014) American Planning Association/ Federal Emergency Management Association. Planning for Post-Disaster Recovery: Next Generation Briefing Papers

Model Pre-Event Recovery Ordinance

Topping K. C. Model Pre-Event Recovery Ordinance Retrieved from

https://planning-org-uploaded-media.s3.amazonaws.com/legacy_resources/research/postdisaster/pdf/modelrecoveryordinance.pdf

The Model Recovery Ordinance focuses on actions necessary to facilitate recovery, provides a structured format for capturing essential recovery requirements. Rural communities should review this model ordinance as it provides legal authority for actions useful in advancing recovery and adopts desired long-term recovery outcomes.

It emphasizes that:

- Disaster recovery can be facilitated by establishment of an Long Term Recovery Team within the county to plan, organize, and speed up recovery activities;
- Preparation of a pre-disaster Recovery Plan can help the county organize to accelerate recovery in advance of a disaster and to mitigate hazardous conditions before and after the disaster;
- Post-disaster recovery can be facilitated by adoption of a pre-event ordinance authorizing certain extraordinary staff actions to be taken to accelerate the execution of a recovery plan;

- Before a disaster, it is important to establish and maintain cooperative relationships with other local, regional, state, and federal governmental agencies to assist in post-disaster recovery efforts

- <http://www.cert-la.com/cert-texas/>

This website provides an inventory of Community Emergency Response Team contacts, phone and email in all counties in Texas.

Public Relations and Information:

Modern communication tools and social networking platforms afford groups, such as government agencies, private companies, nonprofits, as well as individuals, the ability to effectively communicate within and beyond geographic boundaries in real time during each phase of a natural disaster. Moreover, modern communication tools, including hardware, software, handheld devices, and networking system help to create short and long-term transparency needed to deliver vital information, fundraise, and recruit and manage volunteers. Technological communication processes and tools also serve as a way to streamline the communication process, helping to keep information accurate and timely; supplant infrastructure that has been damaged or destroyed during a disaster; used to orient communities and agencies with an area's specific pre-disaster and post-planning processes; and can be utilized to track to long-term recovery through data collection.

The following is a preliminary list of communication devices, networking platforms, applications (apps) and online organizations that can be incorporated into a community's or an individual's

pre-disaster and recovery tool kit. Individuals should not limit themselves to the listed items below but research additional communication tools that might be more accommodating to their specific needs.

Devices:

Mesh Technology

- In a wireless mesh network, the network connection is spread out among dozens or even hundreds of wireless mesh nodes that "talk" to each other to share the network connection across a large area

<https://computer.howstuffworks.com/how-wireless-mesh-networks-work.htm>

Ham Operator

<http://www.arrl.org/what-is-ham-radio>

- Amateur radio describes the use of radio frequency spectrum for purposes of non-commercial exchange of messages, wireless experimentation, self-training, private recreation, radio sport, contesting, and emergency communication

Disaster Relief Trailer - Large Generator Application

<http://www.cleggind.com/products-services/major-subsystems/generators/large/subsystem-details/large-generator-example-one>

Commercial Disaster Kits

<http://www.homefrontemergency.com/hoofsuki3.html>

Online Planning Resources:

James Schwab, blog on natural hazards and disaster recovery

<http://www.jimschwab.com>

Homeland security

<https://www.dhs.gov/science-and-technology/technologies>

- List of devices and apps to utilize during an emergency.

Ready

<https://www.ready.gov>

- Federally funded website that teaches individuals and communities how plan for disasters. Offers templates, social media campaigns, way offers ways to get involved in disaster planning.

Rockefeller Foundation's City Resilience Framework

<http://www.rockefellerfoundation.org/uploads/files/e4830599-c2a7-4049-a002-4031f82850e3.pdf>

Disaster Recovery Tracking Tool

<http://communityrecoverytool.com/>

<http://www.trackyourrecovery.org/>

FEMA

https://www.fema.gov/media-library-data/1440449346150-1ff18127345615d8b7e1effb4752b668/Family_Comm_Plan_508_20150820.pdf

- Emergency Communication Plan Outline and Template

https://www.fema.gov/media-library-data/1389294951288-b25113d9aef2b877323d380720827f3b/R3_trifold_eng.pdf

- Pre- Disaster Checklist and prepare guide

Social Media Platforms:

Facebook (Facebook Live and push notifications or updates)

Twitter (push notifications or updates)

Hootsuite -Allows you to monitor Facebook, Twitter and other social media using just one app. Easy to toggle back and forth between accounts.

APS:

Red Cross Shelter AP

- Gives updated shelter information, shares disaster news and other tips. Shelter information updates every 30 minutes.

Red Cross First Aid AP

- Great for first aid tips in your pocket should you need them.

Patch for iPhone

- Updates on forecasts, safety tips, road closures, power outages and other problems that arise in your area. <https://patch.com/new-hampshire/amherst>

FEMA AP

<https://www.fema.gov/mobile-app>

- Updates, platform to upload photos of damage, maps of disaster resources, apply for assistance

Websites, Databases, and Data Collection Platforms:

Code for America

<https://www.codeforamerica.org/join-us/volunteer-with-us>

- Code for America Brigades are volunteer groups that work on local issues to help make government work better for everyone.

Ushahidi

<https://www.ushahidi.com>

- An open-source Web platform that gives real time data

Billboard Really Simple Syndication (RSS)

<http://imware.clickability.com/imware/imware?encq=WY0NWau9XPzJycm5WZkVyckZXZ0NUS9QDOWETNE%3D>

- RSS (Really Simple Syndication) is a format that allows websites to easily expose linked headlines to their readers. To get RSS feeds, you'll first need an RSS reader, which allows you to automatically pull in fresh content from multiple RSS feeds across the Web into a single application.

Vial of Life program

<http://www.vialoflife.com>

- The Vial of Life (aka Vial of L.I.F.E (Lifesaving Information for Emergencies)) is a program that allows individuals to have their complete medical information ready in their home for emergency personnel to reference during an emergency

Amazon Smile

<https://smile.amazon.com>

- Amazon donates 0.5% of the price of your eligible AmazonSmile purchases to the charitable organization of your choice.

Amazon Registry

https://www.amazon.com/b?node=14069511011&tag=googhydr-20&hvadid=193606448785&hvpos=1t1&hvexid=&hvnetw=g&hvrnd=7765853010310838110&hvpone=&hvptwo=&hvqmt=e&hvdev=c&ref=pd_sl_51utjfoyma_e&hvtargid=aud-349572068812:kwd-353766056607

- Incorporate a pre-disaster registry into the pre-planning process