

LDRNY

Lutheran Disaster Response
of New York

Emergency Management Guide for Lutheran Congregations, Schools and Agencies

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Lutheran Disaster Response responded to September 11, 2001 immediately. Acts of compassion and healing as well as organization and vision for what was to come were all folded into those first days. Lutheran Disaster Response of New York has its origins in this tragedy. The commitment to addressing human need and suffering which resulted from 9/11 is as alive today as it was two years ago. Recently LDRNY was cited as being one of the preeminent disaster response agencies which continues to respond to the needs of thousands of hidden victims.

LDRNY was founded as a result of 9/11 and the vision of and charge to LDRNY now and into the future is broader. Before 9/11, New York was one of the few states where Lutherans were not organized as leaders in faith-based disaster response. The purpose of LDRNY is *to respond directly and encourage and facilitate response from others to the needs of persons and their families affected both directly and indirectly by tragedy or disaster.*

Congregations, schools and agencies of the church are often on the front lines of disasters. Responding to immediate community and member spiritual and basic human needs is vital and critical. Just as important, you can play an extremely important role in helping members to be prepared in addition to being sure your congregation, school and agency are ready for a natural or human caused disaster. You can also assist members and those to whom you relate be personally prepared.

Disasters happen. Whether it's a house fire, local gas leak, nor'easter or a human-caused event. LDRNY is pleased to provide this Emergency Management Guide for Lutheran Congregations, Schools and Agencies as a roadmap for preparedness in addition to general information needed in the process of preparing. It is in the process of emergency preparedness that we lay the groundwork of effective response in the event of a disaster.

I urge you to review this document and consider those portions which will be most helpful to you. LDRNY and its partners in disaster preparedness are ready to assist your congregation, school or agency in moving this process forward if you would find that helpful.

It is impossible to prepare for every possible emergency. This guide does, however, provide a framework to prepare for many of them. We are hopeful you will take the time to include disaster preparedness in your agenda for the congregation, school, agency and community.

Dr. John J. Scibilia
Executive Director
Lutheran Disaster Response of New York

"Luck is the residue of design."

- Branch Rickey, former owner of the Brooklyn Dodger Baseball Team

Introduction

Organizations always have a crowded menu of issues competing for attention. Nevertheless, emergency preparedness and management¹ should always be among an organization's top priorities.

Why? Emergency planning is the responsibility of any organization employing or serving others. It is also a prudent response to *statistical likelihood*. The typical organization will have some form of emergency—whether natural, man-made or technological—at least every four to five years.² More broadly, according to the Office of Emergency Management, New York City typically experiences as many as three nature caused emergencies per year.

Emergency planning is also a matter of meeting the expectations of important entities. Clients, employees, the community and government all have expectations about your behavior and ability to manage emergencies.

They expect that you have taken reasonable steps to identify vulnerabilities, minimize risk, and be prepared to respond when an emergency occurs. They expect you to be caring, sensitive and communicative. And they expect you to be competent and compassionate during the recovery process. Failure to handle an emergency properly can result in severe, even irreparable, damage to your organization's resources, reputation and ability to continue operating.

Emergency planning requires a serious, ongoing commitment from all departments of an organization. The good news is that proper emergency planning is quite manageable and can blend in with core business functions.

This guide is designed to lead your organization through the process of preparing for emergencies. It provides principles, processes and information you can adapt to your organization's specific culture, resources, circumstances and capabilities.

The guide is presented in five sections.

1. This section, the Introduction, provides an overview of emergencies, the issues they pose, and the special role of faith based organizations in the response and recovery phases
2. Section II discusses how to prepare your organization for emergencies, including vulnerability analysis and developing an emergency plan

¹ This guide will generally use the term "emergency" rather than "disaster" or "crisis." Disasters usually connote large incidents that are beyond the ability of any one organization to tackle. However, many emergencies occur at the organizational level, and there are measures any organization can take to be more prepared for emergencies of any scale.

² This figure is provided by the Marsh Crisis Academy (www.marsh.com), a unit of the Marsh McLennan Companies.

3. Section III examines steps involved in responding to an emergency, including Incident Command System and communications
4. Section IV provides guidance on preparing your organization to recover from an emergency and to assist the community in recovery
5. Finally, this guide provides appendices that include:
 - a. Emergency scenarios to facilitate realistic, comprehensive training
 - b. Hazard specific information related to fires, hurricanes and technological emergencies
 - c. Sample press releases to help with media and community relations
 - d. Emergency agency contacts
 - e. A glossary of emergency management terminology

What is an Emergency?

An emergency is any unplanned event that can cause death or significant injury to employees, customers or the public, or that can shut down your business, disrupt operations, cause physical or environmental damage, or threaten an organization's financial standing or public image. Emergencies manifest themselves in countless ways, but some of the most common fall into the following categories.

- Natural disasters such as fires, floods and hurricanes
- Financial improprieties, such as embezzlement
- Workplace violence
- Legal issues, such as sexual harassment or racial discrimination
- A key supplier with a crisis that, in turn, affects your organization
- An Information Technology or other facility-related breakdown that threatens operations or key relationships
- Acts of terrorism
- Environmental accidents
- Civil disturbance

The events listed below illustrate the frequency and variety of disasters that can affect a community, and show that no community is immune to danger.

- Nuclear power plant disasters at Three Mile Island (1979) and Chernobyl (1986)
- Detonation of a bomb aboard Pan Am Flight 103 over Lockerbie, Scotland (1988)
- Hantavirus Disease outbreak in the southwest United States (1993)
- Sarin gas attacks in the Tokyo subway system (1995)
- Terrorist bombing at the Atlanta Olympics (1996)
- Khobar Towers truck bombing, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia (1996)

- Terrorist bombings at U.S. embassies in Nairobi and Dar es Salaam (1999)
- Intentional Salmonella infections in Oregon (1999)
- Introduction and outbreak of West Nile Virus in the United States (1999)
- Preparations for potential computer system failures from Y2K (1999)
- Outbreak of Bovine Encephalitis (Mad Cow Disease) in the United Kingdom (2000)
- Terrorist bombing of USS Cole in Aden, Yemen (2000)
- Outbreak of Foot and Mouth Disease in the United Kingdom (2001)
- Terrorist attacks on New York, Pennsylvania and Washington, DC (2001)
- Anthrax attacks in Connecticut, Florida, New Jersey, New York and Washington D.C. (2001)
- Suicide bombings in Israel (2000-2003)
- SARS outbreak in Asia spreads to parts of Europe and North America (2003)
- Breakup of space shuttle Columbia with debris landing in five states (2003)
- Invasion of Iraq and subsequent attacks on foreign personnel and facilities (2003)
- The Blackout of August, 2003
- Heat wave affecting several European nations kills 19,000 (2003)

What Hazards Should New Yorkers Prepare for?

Historically, New York has been susceptible to a variety of hazards. Natural hazards include summer heat, winter cold, coastal storms, hurricanes, flooding, severe weather, and utility disruptions that result from natural causes. New York has experienced human-caused emergencies--such as terrorist acts, airplane crashes, and transportation strikes--and technological crises such as blackouts.

What is Emergency Management?

Emergency management is the process of preparing for, mitigating, responding to and recovering from an emergency. Emergency management is a dynamic process. While planning is important, training, drills, equipment testing and coordinating activities with the community are also important functions.

Proper preparedness requires thinking on multiple levels. What can happen at your immediate facility? What can happen in areas surrounding your facility? What can happen in the larger community and region that can affect you?

While there is no way to anticipate every possible emergency, this guidebook provides information to help with emergency prevention, preparedness, response and recovery.

Emergencies are inherently negative events. However, as the Federal Emergency Management Agency ("FEMA") points out, there are positive aspects of emergency

preparedness that, if highlighted, can lend momentum to the emergency management process.

- It helps organizations meet their moral obligation to protect employees, clients, the community and the environment.
- It facilitates compliance with federal, state and local regulations.³
- It enhances an organization's ability to recover from financial losses, regulatory fines, loss of market share, damages to equipment or products, or business interruption.
- It reduces exposure to civil or criminal liability in the event of an incident.
- It enhances an organization's image and credibility with employees, customers, suppliers and the community.
- It may reduce your insurance premiums.⁴

Stages of an Emergency

There are several stages typically associated with emergencies and disasters.

1. *Mitigation* occurs prior to a disaster or emergency, and consists of taking deliberate steps to reduce or eliminate risks to health, property, operations and the environment.
2. *Preparedness* focuses on the process of planning for emergency scenarios and appropriate reactions to them.
3. *Response* refers to steps taken during an emergency. So-called "first responders" usually include fire, police and government officials. Members of an organization's staff can also serve a limited first responder role.
4. *Relief* deals with the immediate needs of those affected by a disaster, such as food, shelter and clothing. It is during the relief phase that voluntary organizations - such as the Red Cross, Salvation Army and Lutheran Disaster Response of New York ("LDRNY") – typically become involved in emergency or post-emergency operations.
5. *Recovery* encompasses the medium- to long-term steps necessary to get affected persons back on their feet and return to the most normal life possible after an emergency. Material, spiritual and mental health needs are assessed and addressed. Faith based organizations usually play their biggest role in this phase.

³ Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) regulations require most organizations with ten or more employees to have a written emergency response plan. Organizations with fewer than ten employees must provide an oral briefing of emergency procedures. Organizations should check with legal counsel to determine if this regulation applies to them. Regardless, it is prudent to have an emergency plan in place.

⁴ These points are taken from FEMA's "Emergency Management Guide for Business and Industry". This guide replicates a significant amount of information from this and other FEMA materials, all of which are in the public domain. Numerous emergency management materials are available on the FEMA Web site, www.fema.gov.

Effects of a Disaster on the Community

The effects of emergencies and disasters on people run the full range of human suffering. To varying degrees, they can affect entire communities and even regions. Some potential after effects include:

- Injury to, or death of, loved ones can occur.
- Civil disturbances, shortages of food and water, power shortages and outages in the short term are possible after a disaster.
- Spiritual crises affect persons living in the disaster area. They may question their faith at a time when they need it most.
- People whose physical well-being is not affected can be left with deep psychological scars. Post traumatic stress disorder ("PTSD") and depression are common among disaster survivors as well as relief workers and other caregivers, including clergy, case workers and volunteers. Mental health can be adversely affected for years after an emergency.
- Homes, businesses and other property can be damaged or destroyed, thus affecting individuals' sense of identity and self-worth. This can inhibit their ability to recover economically and psychologically.
- Personal pride, poor communications, and cultural and language barriers can prevent people from accessing services and aid available to them.
- Local economies can be damaged or ruined by disasters. This can reduce the ability of the community to recover without outside assistance.
- Disasters often cause higher unemployment in affected areas and the surrounding region.
- While government agencies and voluntary agencies often provide material relief in the early stages after a disaster, the local community is expected to assume responsibility for longer-term recovery. Over time, this can lead to a shortage of resources and place a strain on local human service agencies.
- After a disaster, many organizations that never considered themselves "disaster agencies" find themselves performing disaster-related work. For instance, a soup kitchen far from a disaster site may see a sudden increase in demand for its services. This unanticipated demand for services often exceeds organizations' existing capacity.

Who are the Victims of Emergencies and Disasters?

At first glance, identifying victims of an emergency or disaster may seem relatively easy. However, emergencies often have less obvious victims, many of whom do not suffer after effects until long after an incident has occurred.

September 11th offers a familiar example. People who lost loved ones, local business and home owners, and uniformed service workers were immediately recognized as victims. However, as time passed, it became evident that the ripple effect of September 11th had spread much further.

In New York City alone, more than 100,000 jobs were lost as a direct result of that day's events. Many of the workers, caregivers and volunteers involved in the recovery effort

later developed worrisome or debilitating physical and psychological symptoms. The needs of affected immigrant populations were often obscured by cultural, linguistic and legal obstacles. Many of these and other victims did not surface until a year or more after September 11th.

This experience demonstrates that recovery agencies should remain flexible throughout the recovery process, and be prepared to meet new and evolving needs as they surface. They should be aware that disasters can affect people in multiple ways—materially, mentally, spiritually, physically—and be prepared to collaborate with other caregivers to provide assistance.

What Roles do Faith-Based Organizations Play in Disasters?

Even during the initial phases of a disaster, spiritual care plays a central role. Faith-based organizations can offer crisis intervention to survivors and spiritual support to caregivers. Long-term pastoral and spiritual care helps victims find hope to carry on with their lives.

Over time, faith-based organizations can make a vital contribution by performing case work that other agencies, such as FEMA and the Red Cross, did not address. They can also advocate on behalf of people most vulnerable to disaster, such as immigrant populations, elderly or disabled persons, and the economically disadvantaged. Through specialized attention, faith based organizations can help people who have difficulty gaining access to aid.

Faith-based organizations often form the core of “unmet needs committees.” These provide a venue for discussing the cases of individuals who require aid, but for whom other avenues of assistance have been exhausted. Unmet needs committees play an important role as the “safety net of last resort” for those affected by disasters.

As neighborhood-based institutions that interact with residents on a daily basis, churches and schools are uniquely positioned to reach out to local residents. This outreach capability is especially valuable during relief and recovery phases. Door-to-door campaigns, leaflet distribution, announcements at religious services and the like can inform neighborhood residents about recovery services.

Before disasters, faith-based organizations can leverage their grass roots connections to organize mitigation and preparedness activities. Through community service activities, they can help reduce the vulnerability of local populations to the affects of disasters.

Three Levels of Preparedness for Faith-Based Organizations

Faith-based organizations operate on three levels, and they should think of disaster preparedness on each level. On the first level, churches and schools operate on behalf of fairly distinct constituencies, such as congregations, students and their families, and neighborhood residents. The first priority of each institution is being prepared to serve these constituents.

Second, once faith-based institutions have planned to address the needs of their immediate constituents, they should join other institutions in their neighborhood to plan cooperative services to area residents. They can work with local police and fire stations,

hospitals, schools, senior centers, etc., to develop a model for collaboration. Together, they can form a network at the local level that organizations like FEMA and the Red Cross are not equipped to duplicate.

Third, faith-based institutions should connect with larger community or regional networks to enhance information sharing and service provision. A Lutheran church that is well connected with LDRNY, for instance, will have access to information about the activities of other recovery agencies. This will enable them to direct constituents and local residents to appropriate service providers and avoid duplication of services. Conversely, LDRNY will have a mechanism to disseminate information to neighborhoods throughout the area.

II. Before an Emergency: Organizational Preparedness

Developing an Organizational Emergency Plan

Emergency preparedness is about anticipating hazardous circumstances, reducing the risk of their occurrence, and creating procedures that minimize their impact on people and property. Sooner or later, some crisis--whether natural, human caused or technological--is likely to strike your organization.

If handled properly, in a way that reflects thoughtful pre-planning and concern for others, a crisis can actually enhance an organization's standing among critical constituents and the community. Conversely, lack of preparation and poor handling of a crisis can damage an organization's reputation and even threaten its continued existence.

This section provides tools for identifying the risks your organization may face and for preparing to meet an actual emergency head on.

Risk Analysis and Risk Management

Risk analysis is the process of identifying risks that could have an impact on your organization. Once risks have been identified, it is easier to determine what procedures and resources are appropriate for managing them.

According to the Nonprofit Risk Management Center ("NRMCC"), risk management can begin by asking three simple questions:

1. What can go wrong?
2. What will we do, both to prevent harm from occurring and in the aftermath of an "incident"?
3. If something happens, how will we pay for it?

Establish an Emergency Planning Team

The first step should be to establish a team that will take the lead in planning and executing the emergency management strategy. It is extremely important that the team and its mission have strong support from the highest levels of the organization. It is also important that the managers who are part of the team are familiar with each other. The team should include representatives from every major functional area of the organization, including core operational departments, human resources, accounting, facilities management and communications.

Once the team is formed, it should:

- Determine the scope of its mission
- Issue a mission statement to key leaders within the organization
- Establish an agenda of issues that need to be tackled
- Develop a schedule for completing the tasks identified
- Determine the necessary budget to complete the mission

Next, the team should put its mission in context:

- Review existing plans and procedures.

- Identify the safety codes and regulations that are relevant to your organization. This should be reviewed with legal counsel.
- Identify critical operations, products and services.
- List the internal resources and capabilities that you have available.
- Identify valuable external resources that can help you plan for, and respond to, emergencies.
- Review your insurance policies and become familiar with what they do, and do not, cover.
- Meet to compare notes with relevant outside groups, such as fire safety and other emergency management professionals, representatives of organizations similar to yours, your insurance company, and other organizations in your area.

According to the NRMCC, developing a risk management plan is comprised of the following steps.

1. Identify risks

Every organization faces risks. Some risks are common among organizations, such as fire, weather related hazards, and legal issues. Others are unique to specific organizations. Schools and churches, for instance, must be especially vigilant in caring for children in their charge.

The first step in risk management is to compile a list of potential hazards that includes even unlikely events. This is also called vulnerability analysis. Consider emergencies that could occur within your facility and emergencies beyond your grounds that could affect you. Below are some factors to consider.

Historical: What types of emergencies have occurred in the community, at your facility, at other facilities in the area, and at organizations similar to yours? Examples include:

- Fires
- Severe weather
- Hazardous material spills
- Transportation accidents
- Hurricanes
- Terrorism
- Utility outage

Geographic: What can happen as a result of the facility's location? Consider:

- Proximity to flood plains
- Proximity to companies that produce, store, use or transport hazardous materials
- Proximity to major transportation routes and airports
- Proximity to high-crime areas
- Proximity to nuclear power plants

Technological: What could result from a process or system failure? Possibilities include:

- Fire, explosion, hazardous materials incident

- Failure of a safety system, such as fire sprinklers or emergency lighting
- Telecommunications failure
- Computer system failure
- Power failure
- Heating/cooling system failure
- Emergency notification system failure

Human Error : What emergencies can be caused by people in your facility? Do employees know what to do in an emergency? Human error is the most frequent cause of workplace emergencies and can result from:

- Poor training
- Poor maintenance
- Carelessness
- Misconduct
- Substance abuse
- Fatigue

Physical: What emergencies could occur because of the physical construction of the facility?

- Are hazardous materials stored properly?
- Are evacuation routes secure and clear of potential obstructions?
- What is the potential damage from:
 - Loss of electricity
 - Loss of communications
 - Ruptured gas main
 - Water damage
 - Structural damage
- Are there physical precautions you are required by law to take?

2. Evaluate and prioritize risk

Once the vulnerability analysis is done, the risk management team can assess the likelihood of each hazard actually occurring and calculate the associated after-effects and costs. In developing probability and cost estimates, an organization should look first at its own past incidents and consider what incidents similar organizations have encountered.

- Estimate the probability of each emergency on a chart, assigning a 1 to emergencies with the least potential impact and a 5 to emergencies with the greatest potential impact.
- Assess the potential human impact of each emergency, again assigning values on a scale of 1 to 5. Are people likely to be injured in a particular incident? Displaced? Unable to work?
- Use the same process to assess potential property impact. Be sure to account for the cost of temporary and permanent replacement of property or its repair.
- Assess potential impact on your business, including:
 - Business interruption
 - Employees unable to report to work

- Clients unable to reach your facility
 - Violation of contractual agreements
 - Imposition of fines, penalties or legal costs
 - Interruption of critical supplies
- Identify the internal and external resources available to meet each potential emergency situation. Internal resources can include:
 - *Personnel* — fire marshals, security, emergency management group, evacuation team, public information officer
 - *Equipment* — fire protection and suppression equipment, communications equipment, first aid supplies, emergency supplies, warning systems, emergency power equipment, decontamination equipment
 - *Facilities* — emergency operations center, media briefing area, shelter areas, first-aid stations, sanitation facilities, food supplies(?)
 - *Organizational capabilities* — training, evacuation plan, employee support system, family reunification plan
 - *Backup systems* — arrangements with other organizations to provide:
 - Payroll
 - Communications
 - Production
 - Customer services
 - Shipping and receiving
 - Information systems support
 - Emergency power
 - Recovery support

External resources can include:

- Local emergency management office
- Fire Department
- Hazardous materials response organization
- Emergency medical services
- Hospitals
- Local and state police
- Community service organizations
- Utilities
- Contractors
- Suppliers of emergency equipment
- Insurance carriers
- Parent organizations, such as diocesan or school district offices, and LDRNY

Assess your business functions and determine which are important to resume quickly. Business functions should be categorized as primary and secondary tasks:

- Primary tasks are those that are absolutely vital to the functioning of the organization. A church, for instance, might consider holding worship services a primary task. A school is likely to consider tracking and communicating with children, teachers and families a primary task.
- Secondary tasks are functions that are generally considered very important, but are not vital for the fundamental operation of an organization. An operating human resources or payroll department is generally considered very important to an organization, but in times of crisis, these functions are not necessarily vital.

It may not be immediately obvious which tasks in your organization are primary or secondary. Therefore, it is helpful to make flow charts to illustrate which functions depend on other functions to operate. Interviews with departments across the organization can help determine whom they depend on to do their job. Once the flow chart is complete, use the “1 to 5” rating system to evaluate the importance of each task.

Before moving on to write your emergency plan, add up all the categories you have rated 1 to 5. The columns with the highest scores will help you prioritize the issues your team needs to address.

3. Risk types

As you prepare to write your emergency plan, keep in mind how your organization will manage its risks. NRMCC names four basic strategies for controlling risk:

- *Avoidance.* Either refrain from providing, or cease to provide, a service or an activity considered too risky.
- *Modification.* Change the activity so that the chance of harm occurring and impact of potential damage are within acceptable limits.
- *Retention.* Accept all or a portion of the risk, and prepare for the consequences.
- *Sharing.* Consider sharing the risk with another organization. Examples of risk sharing include mutual aid agreements with other organizations, purchasing insurance, and sharing responsibility for a risk with another service provider through a contractual arrangement.

Emergency Plan Components

Once your team has performed the preliminary assessments outlined above, start writing the plan. The plan should include the following sections.

Executive Summary: This provides an overview of the emergency plan and states the following:

- The purpose of the plan
- The facility’s emergency management policy
- Level of authority and responsibilities of key personnel
- The types of emergencies that could occur
- Where response operations will be managed

Emergency Management Overview: Briefly describe your approach to each of the following elements of your approach to emergency management

- Direction and control
- Communications
- Life safety
- Property protection
- Community outreach
- Recovery and restoration
- Administration and logistics

Each of these is described in more detail in the “Organizational Response to an Emergency” section.

Emergency Response Procedures: These detail how the organization will respond to an emergency. It is best to develop these as checklists that can be referred to quickly. Each staff member should know where to go and what to do in an emergency. Spell out how staff would do each of the following:

- Assess emergency situations
- Protect employees, customers, visitors, equipment, vital records and other assets, especially in the first three days of an emergency situation
- Restore business operations
- Specific procedures might be needed for any number of situations such as workplace violence or bomb threats, and for such functions as:
 - Warning employees and clients
 - Communicating with personnel and community responders
 - Conducting an evacuation and accounting for all persons in the facility
 - Managing response activities
 - Activating and operating an emergency operations center
 - Fighting fires
 - Shutting down operations
 - Protecting vital records
 - Restoring operations

Assess the needs of disabled and non-English-speaking people. For example, a blind employee should be assigned a partner in case an evacuation is necessary.

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) defines a disabled person as anyone who has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities, such as seeing, hearing, walking, breathing, performing manual tasks, learning, caring for oneself or working.

Support Documents: Catalog documents that could be needed in an emergency.

- Emergency call lists (wallet size if possible) of all persons on and off site who would be involved in responding to an emergency, their responsibilities and their 24-hour telephone numbers
- Building and site maps that indicate:
 - Utility shutoffs
 - Water hydrants
 - Water main valves
 - Water lines
 - Gas main valves
 - Gas lines
 - Electrical cutoffs
 - Electrical substations
 - Storm drains
 - Sewer lines
 - Location of each building (include name of building, street name and number)
 - Floor plans
 - Alarms
 - Fire extinguishers
 - Fire suppression systems
 - Exits
 - Stairways
 - Designated escape routes
 - Restricted areas
 - Hazardous materials (including cleaning supplies and chemicals)
 - High-value items
- Lists of major resources (equipment, supplies, services) that could be needed in an emergency; mutual aid agreements with other organizations and government agencies

Write the Plan

Assign a section of the plan to each member of your planning group. Be sure to set a specific, aggressive schedule to keep the project on track. Allow sufficient time for a first draft, a review, and a second draft to be produced. When the first draft has been reviewed, invite key personnel to run a tabletop exercise to test your plan. (Emergency scenarios and tips on running tabletop exercises are provided in the appendices of this guide.) After the tabletop exercise, incorporate the lessons it teaches into your plan and produce a final draft.

Market Your Plan

To one extent or another, your emergency plan involves everyone in your organization. But even the best emergency plan is no good if it languishes on a shelf. When it is complete, it is important to “market” your plan throughout the organization so people are familiar with it.

When the final draft is complete, arrange a briefing session with the chief executive (“CEO”); the CEO’s commitment is essential. Then distribute it to all senior managers and relevant departments. Send a copy to your organization’s headquarters and to

emergency responders in your community. Members of your emergency response team should keep a copy of it at home.

Continuous Updating

Your emergency plan is never really finished. It should change as old challenges evolve and new challenges arise. Your emergency plan should be re-visited at least once a year to make sure it is up to date. Your emergency planning team should change when members leave the organization or assume new roles. In anticipation of their possible absence during an emergency, alternates should be assigned and briefed on the plan.

Emergency planning is most effective when it becomes part of your organization's culture. It should become part of everyday operations and planning for future operations. Test how well the plan has become part of operations by asking:

- Do personnel know what they should do in an emergency?
- To what extent does senior management support the responsibilities outlined in the plan?
- Has emergency planning been incorporated into personnel and financial procedures?
- Can emergency preparedness information be disseminated through organization communications such as newsletters, e-mail distributions and employee manuals?
- What kinds of safety posters or other visible reminders would be helpful?
- How can all levels of the organization be involved in evaluating and updating the plan?

Implementing Your Emergency Plan

Implementation means more than using your plan in an emergency. It also includes acting on recommendations stemming from the vulnerability analysis, integrating the plan into company operations, training employees and evaluating the plan.

Some basic considerations for a training program include determining:

- Who will be trained?
- Who will do the training?
- What training activities will be used?
- When and where each session will take place?
- How will the session be evaluated and documented?

Training activities include:

- *Orientation and education* sessions should be held to provide information, answer questions and identify issues. The Occupational Safety and Health Administration ("OSHA") requires organizations with more than ten employees to provide staff with a written emergency plan. Organizations with fewer than ten employees must provide a verbal briefing.

- *Tabletop exercises* allow the emergency management group to meet to discuss their roles in emergency scenarios.
- *Walk-through drills* allow your emergency management group to practice their emergency response functions.
- *Functional drills* test specific functions such as emergency notifications, warning and communications procedures and equipment, though not necessarily at the same time. Personnel are asked to evaluate the systems and identify problem areas.
- *Evacuation Drills* Enable your personnel walk the evacuation route to a designated area and account for all everyone. Ask them to note potential hazards along the way, such as cluttered stairways, and modify your plan accordingly.
- *Full-scale Exercises* should closely simulate an actual emergency. This exercise should involve as many internal and external parties, such as emergency responders, as possible.

Spread these activities out over a 12-month period to keep them manageable and to integrate them smoothly with other operations. Training should provide information to everyone associated with your institution, including managers, employees, vendors, contractors, clients and their families.

Employee Training

Make sure training addresses:

- Individual roles and responsibilities
- Information about hazards and protective actions
- Notification, warning and communication procedures
- How to locate family members in an emergency
- Emergency response procedures
- Evacuation, shelter and accountability procedures
- Location and use of common emergency equipment
- Emergency shutdown procedures

Auditing Your Plan

Evaluate and modify your plan:

- After each training drill or exercise
- After each emergency
- When personnel or their responsibilities change
- When the facility changes
- When policies or procedures change

The plan should be audited at least annually and personnel should be briefed when changes are made.

Among the issues the audit should examine are:

- Is management sufficiently involved in evaluating and updating the plan?
- Are identified vulnerabilities being addressed?
- Have lessons from drills and actual incidents been added to the plan?
- Do the emergency management team members understand their responsibilities? Have new members and alternates been trained?
- Does the plan reflect changes to the facility?
- Are records of facility property and equipment up to date?
- Have training objectives been met?
- Have hazards changed?
- Are the names, titles and telephone numbers in the plan current?
- Is emergency management being incorporated into other business processes?
- Have community agencies and organizations been briefed on the plan? Are they involved in evaluating the plan?

Insurance and Risk Management

Insurance is a fundamental element of risk management. Your organization should maintain an ongoing dialogue with your insurance company to be sure you have proper, thorough coverage. Some questions to ask include the following:

- Does your insurance cover the true cost of your property? How recent and accurate is your property assessment?
- Does insurance cover recent, high value additions such as structural improvements, computer or phone systems?
- Does your policy cover temporary rental of another facility if your structure is damaged or destroyed?
- What are your deductibles?
- What does your policy require you to do in the event of a loss?
- Does your policy cover the cost of required upgrades to code?
- What types of records and documentation will your insurance company want to see?
- Are you covered for lost income in the event of business interruption? Do you have enough coverage? What is the duration of that coverage?
- How long is your coverage for lost income if your business is closed by order of a civil authority?
- How will your emergency management program affect your rates?

Inspect your facility and do an inventory of valuable items it contains. This will enable you to assess damages quickly after an incident and pass along accurate information to your insurer. Take measures to protect vital records. Some standard practices include:

- Make a list of records that are vital to the operation of your organization.
- Store essential records in a fireproof, watertight safe.
- Use a safe deposit box for records that are not accessed frequently, such as mortgages and insurance papers.
- Keep backups of electronic records at a safe off-site location.
- If you provide confidential services to a client population, take steps to make sure these records remain safe and secure. The same is true of personnel records.

While insurance is a valuable means of financing and transferring risk, few organizations have the resources for complete self-insurance. Even then, purchasing insurance does not suffice as complete risk management. As NRMCC puts it, "In the nonprofit sector, practicing risk management is living the commitment to prevent harm...risk management addresses many risks that are not insurable - such as, the potential loss of tax exempt status, public goodwill, and continuing donor support."

Preparing a Communications Plan

Communication is essential in responding properly to any emergency. Developing a communications plan is vital to any emergency plan and should involve multiple levels, including staff, clients and their families, larger "parent" organizations such as school districts, local and state authorities, and community groups. The U.S Department of Education makes the following recommendations for crisis communications planning:

- Use common terminology across all branches of your organization. Use plain, clear language so people can easily understand instructions that are issued.
- As many Americans learned during the Blackout of 2003, normal methods of communication, such as intercoms, cell phones and computers do not always work during an emergency. Therefore, you should be prepared to use alternate communications methods.
- Make sure institutions have adequate supplies of communications gear and that it is easily accessible and transportable. For instance, the leader of a parish or school might have an emergency backpack containing necessary materials and communications equipment that can be grabbed at a moment's notice.
- Communications equipment should be compatible with emergency responders' communications equipment and should not cause interference.
- For parishes and schools, it is especially important to develop a plan to notify families in the event of a crisis. Common practices include sending notices to homes with relevant information, and developing phone trees and e-mail lists so there is a procedure for calling families. Developing both procedures allows an institution to tailor its communications response. Notices are more appropriate for less immediate situations, while telephone calls (perhaps coupled with e-mails) are best for urgent notification of families. Encourage

parental input throughout the planning process and listen to their suggestions.

- Establish pathways to communicate with the community. You should be prepared to communicate in several manners, including phone and e-mail trees, a community liaison, and briefings to inform media and family.
- Choose a Public Information Officer to deal with families and the media in times of crisis. This helps disseminate uniform information.
- Keep staff informed. They are your first line of response in a crisis and the more they know about what is going on, the calmer and more effective they will be.
- Be aware that parents will want to reunite with their children as soon as possible. Set reunification procedures in motion as soon as it is safe and possible. If immediate reunification is not possible, be sure to keep parents informed. You should maintain a stream of information to them during and immediately after a crisis, and throughout the recovery phase.

Warning System

Establish a system for warning personnel of an emergency. The system should:

- Be audible or within view by all people in your facility
- Have an auxiliary power supply
- Have a distinct and recognizable signal
- Include plans for warning persons with disabilities. A flashing strobe light can be used to warn hearing-impaired people
- Familiarize personnel with procedures for responding when the warning system is activated
- Establish procedures for warning customers, contractors, visitors and others who may not be familiar with the facility's warning system
- Provide for testing of your facility's warning system at least monthly

III. Responding to Emergencies

The planning process outlined above should make your personnel and facility better prepared to weather an emergency. Now it is time to consider how your organization should handle an actual emergency when it occurs. We begin with a widely used methodology, called Incident Command System ("ICS"), which dictates lines of authority, roles and responsibilities, and response actions during an emergency. Originally developed by California firefighters, ICS is adaptable enough to be used by virtually any type of organization in response to a variety of emergencies.

Incident Command System (ICS)

Incident Command System is a model for the command, control and response to emergency situations. It provides staff with a standardized operational structure and common terminology, but is flexible enough to respond to virtually any crisis. Having a proper ICS in place also facilitates cooperation with emergency responders.

ICS is built around five major components:

- 1) Command
- 2) Planning
- 3) Operations
- 4) Logistics
- 5) Finance/Administration

Incident Command

Your Incident Command team should be based on members of your emergency management team, but not necessarily include every member. The team should have designated leaders for each of the functional areas mentioned above, as well as trained alternates.

The people on the command team have authority during an incident. They are the only ones empowered to make certain decisions such as ordering an evacuation or shelter in place. During the planning process, they set priorities and objectives. During a response, the Incident Commander decides which sections and functions will be activated in response to the incident.

The Incident Command is charged with the following activities:

- Establishing command and setting the incident command post ("ICP")
- Protecting life and property
- Controlling equipment and human resources
- Maintaining accountability for responder and public safety, as well as task accomplishment
- Establishing and maintaining effective communications with outside agencies and organizations
- Assessing incident priorities

- Determining objectives
- Developing and implementing the Incident Action Plan ("IAP")
- Developing an appropriate organizational structure
- Maintaining a manageable scope of control
- Managing incident resources
- Coordinating overall emergency activities
- Coordinating the activities of outside agencies
- Ordering an evacuation or shelter in place
- Declare an incident "over"
- Authorizing the release of information to the media
- Keeping track of costs
- Maintaining a log of all actions taken, decisions made, deviations from policy, and the time of each

It is essential to choose an appropriate person to act as Incident Commander ("IC"). He or she will need to be an assertive, decisive leader and a quick thinker who can remain calm in stressful circumstances. Adaptability and an ability to recognize his or her limitations are also important.

The Incident Commander will not necessarily be the CEO of the organization. In fact, the time required of the IC to prepare for emergencies may preclude the CEO as a candidate. Therefore, the CEO should be prepared to relinquish certain authority to the IC during an emergency. If the IC is absent during an emergency, other members of the team should be prepared to assume the IC role. *Your entire organization should be prepared to accept new lines of authority during an emergency.* Governing bodies, such as boards of directors, should sign off on these temporary shifts in authority *before* an emergency occurs.

At first, the Incident Commander may be the most senior emergency management team member on site. Authority should transition as more senior team members arrive. With each transition, the outgoing Incident Commander should be prepared to brief the incoming IC on the status of the incident and response. He or she should be prepared to shift authority to outside entities, such as fire and police personnel, as they arrive.

As incidents evolve, the IC may delegate certain duties to others. As required, the Incident Commander can establish other command staff positions, including:

1. The Information Officer handles all media inquiries, and coordinates the release of information to the media with the Public Affairs Officer at the Emergency Operations Center.
2. The Safety Officer monitors safety conditions and develops measures for ensuring the safety of all assigned personnel
3. The Liaison Officer is the on-scene contact for other agencies assigned to the incident.

The Incident Commander should base decisions on three major incident priorities:

1. Life safety: The Incident Commander's first priority is the safety of everyone near the incident.
2. Incident stability: The Incident Commander is responsible for determining strategy that will:
 - Minimize the effect that the incident may have on the surrounding area
 - Maximize response efficiency
 - Manage the size and complexity of the response so it is commensurate with the complexity of the incident
3. Property conservation: The Incident Commander is responsible for minimizing damage to property while achieving the incident objectives.

The Planning Section

The Incident Commander is responsible for planning during small-scale events. In larger scale incidents, the IC establishes a Planning Section that collects, evaluates, and disseminates information about the incident and the status of resources.

The Operations Section

The *Operations Section* is responsible for carrying out the response activities described in the emergency plan. The chief of this section is responsible for implementing the IAP, and works with the IC to determine the resources and organization needed for the response, such as:

- Directing and coordinating all operations and providing for the safety of personnel
- Assisting the Incident Commander in developing response goals and objectives for the incident
- Implementing the emergency plan
- Requesting (or releasing) resources through the Incident Commander
- Keeping the Incident Commander informed of the status of operations

The Logistics Section

The *Logistics Section* is responsible for providing facilities, services, and materials and personnel necessary to respond to the incident. This section takes on great significance in long-term or extended operations.

The Finance/Administration Section

The Finance/Administration Section tracks incident costs and reimbursement accounting.

Emergency Operations Center ("EOC")

The EOC acts as a nerve center where the emergency management group meets and makes decisions about response. It should be located in an area of your facility that is not likely to be involved in an incident. An alternate location should be chosen in case the primary location is not available. EOC selection criteria should include likely functions to be performed, number of people involved and ease of access to communications equipment, reference materials, and other tools necessary for emergency response. Some items to include in your EOC are:

- Communications equipment
- A copy of the emergency management plan and EOC procedures
- Blueprints, maps, status boards
- A list of EOC personnel and descriptions of their duties
- Technical information and data for advising responders
- Building security system Information
- Information and data management capabilities
- Telephone directories
- Backup power, communications and lighting
- Emergency supplies

Coordination of Outside Response

In some cases, laws, codes, prior agreements or the very nature of the emergency require the IC to turn operations over to an outside response organization. Your organization's IC should give the outside IC a complete report on the situation. Your IC should keep track of which organizations are on-site and how the response is being coordinated. This helps increase personnel safety and accountability, and prevents duplication of effort.

Evacuation and Sheltering in Place

Your organization should be prepared for emergencies that require relocating people. For some incidents, such as severe weather emergencies, staying in predetermined "safe zones" of your facility—or sheltering in place—is the best response. Other events, such as fires, warrant evacuation of your facility. In either case, the first step is preparing your staff to respond properly.

Your emergency management group should identify in advance the types of incidents that are likely to require sheltering in place or evacuation. Staff should be trained in each procedure and in the signals that trigger them.

Go Bags for Staff

Staff responsible for the safety of others should have Go Bags they can grab quickly. The contents of these bags should vary in a way that is appropriate to the level of responsibility of each staff member. The contents of a school principal's Go Bag, for instance, should be more extensive than a teacher's. First aid supplies should be readily available and should be stored in multiple locations. Each institution should think

carefully about important items to include in their Go Bags. Some recommended items for emergency management group and senior staff Go Bags include:

- Emergency response team roster and contact information
- Employee or student attendance rosters
- Employee/Student emergency data cards that include pertinent medical information such as allergies, medications and physician contact information
- Employee/Student photos
- Special needs information
- Keys
- Aerial or other photos or maps of facility grounds
- Maps of the surrounding neighborhood, transportation data
- Evacuation sites
- Designated command post and staging areas
- Fire alarm, sprinkler and utility shut off procedures
- Layout of gas and utility lines

Some recommended items for non-emergency response staff include:

- A current employee/class roster
- A copy of emergency procedures
- First aid supplies
- A flashlight and extra batteries
- Activities for students
- Paper and pens
- Clipboard

Although these Go Bags are primarily for staff use, they can also provide valuable information to first responders as they arrive at the scene. They will need as much information as possible about your premises, such as layout, where people congregate, potential trouble spots, and shutoff information.

Shelter in Place

What Shelter-in-Place Means:

One of the instructions you may be given in an emergency where hazardous materials may have been released into the atmosphere is to shelter-in-place. This is a precaution aimed to keep you safe while remaining indoors. Shelter-in-place means selecting an interior room, with no or few windows, and taking refuge there. It does not mean sealing off your entire office building.⁵

⁵ This section on sheltering in place is borrowed from the New York City Office of Emergency Management's Ready New York guide.

How to Shelter-in-Place

At Work:

- Close the business.
- If there are customers, clients, or visitors in the building, provide for their safety by asking them to stay – not leave. When authorities provide directions to shelter-in-place, they want everyone to take those steps immediately, where they are, and not drive or walk outdoors.
- Unless there is an imminent threat, ask employees, customers, clients, and visitors to call their emergency contact to let them know where they are and that they are safe.
- Turn on call-forwarding or alternative telephone answering systems or services. If the business has voice mail or an automated attendant, change the recording to indicate that the business is closed, and that staff and visitors are remaining in the building until authorities advise it is safe to leave.
- Close and lock all windows, exterior doors, and any other openings to the outside.
- If you are told there is danger of explosion, close the window shades, blinds, or curtains.
- Have employees familiar with your building's mechanical systems turn off all fans and heating and air conditioning systems. Some systems automatically provide for exchange of inside air with outside air – these systems, in particular, need to be turned off, sealed, or disabled.
- Gather essential disaster supplies, such as nonperishable food, bottled water, battery-powered radios, first aid supplies, flashlights, batteries, duct tape, plastic sheeting, and plastic garbage bags.
- Select interior room(s) above the ground floor, with the fewest windows or vents. The room(s) should have adequate space for everyone to be able to sit. Avoid overcrowding by selecting several rooms if necessary. Large storage closets, utility rooms, pantries, copy and conference rooms without exterior windows will work well. Avoid selecting a room with mechanical equipment like ventilation blowers or pipes, because this equipment may not be able to be sealed from the outdoors.
- It is ideal to have a hard-wired telephone in the room(s) you select. Call emergency contacts and have the phone available if you need to report a life-threatening condition. Cellular telephone equipment may be overwhelmed or damaged during an emergency.
- Use duct tape and plastic sheeting (heavier than food wrap) to seal all cracks around the door(s) and any vents into the room.
- Bring everyone into the room(s). Shut and lock the door(s).
- Write down the names of everyone in the room, and call your business' designated emergency contact to report the names of those in the room with you, and their affiliation with your business (employee, visitor, client, or customer.)

- Keep listening to the radio or television until you are told all is safe or you are told to evacuate. Local officials may call for evacuation in specific areas at greatest risk in your community.

At School:

- Close the school. Activate the school's emergency plan. Follow reverse evacuation procedures to bring students, faculty, and staff indoors.
- If there are visitors in the building, provide for their safety by asking them to stay – not leave. When authorities provide directions to shelter-in-place, they want everyone to take those steps immediately, where they are, and not drive or walk outdoors.
- Provide for answering telephone inquiries from concerned parents by having at least one telephone with the school's listed phone number available in the room selected to provide shelter for the school secretary, or person designated to answer these calls. This room should also be sealed. There should be a way to communicate among all rooms where people are sheltering-in-place in the school.
- Ideally, provide for a way to make announcements over the school-wide public address system from the room where the top school official takes shelter.
- If children have cell phones, allow them to use them to call a parent or guardian to let them know that they have been asked to remain in school until further notice, and that they are safe.
- If the school has voice mail or an automated attendant, change the recording to indicate that the school is closed, students and staff are remaining in the building until authorities advise that it is safe to leave.
- Provide directions to close and lock all windows, exterior doors, and any other openings to the outside.
- If you are told there is danger of explosion, direct that window shades, blinds, or curtains be closed.
- Have employees familiar with your building's mechanical systems turn off all fans, heating and air conditioning systems. Some systems automatically provide for exchange of inside air with outside air – these systems, in particular, need to be turned off, sealed, or disabled.
- Gather essential disaster supplies, such as nonperishable food, bottled water, battery-powered radios, first aid supplies, flashlights, batteries, duct tape, plastic sheeting, and plastic garbage bags.
- Select interior room(s) above the ground floor, with the fewest windows or vents. The room(s) should have adequate space for everyone to be able to sit in. Avoid overcrowding by selecting several rooms if necessary. Classrooms may be used if there are no windows or the windows are sealed and can not be opened. Large storage closets, utility rooms, meeting rooms, and even a gymnasium without exterior windows will also work well.
- It is ideal to have a hard-wired telephone in the room(s) you select. Call emergency contacts and have the phone available if you need to report a life-

threatening condition. Cellular telephone equipment may be overwhelmed or damaged during an emergency.

- Bring everyone into the room. Shut and lock the door.
- Use duct tape and plastic sheeting (heavier than food wrap) to seal all cracks around the door(s) and any vents into the room.
- Write down the names of everyone in the room, and call your schools' designated emergency contact to report who is in the room with you.
- Listen for an official announcement from school officials via the public address system, and stay where you are until you are told all is safe or you are told to evacuate. Local officials may call for evacuation in specific areas at greatest risk in your community.

Evacuation Planning

- Determine the conditions under which an evacuation would be necessary.
- The emergency management group should identify evacuation destinations and routes in advance of an incident.
- Institute a clear chain of command. Designate personnel with the authority to order an evacuation and "evacuation wardens" to assist others in an evacuation and account for personnel.
- Set specific evacuation procedures. Establish a system for accounting for personnel. Consider employees' transportation needs for community-wide evacuations.
- Establish procedures for assisting persons with disabilities and those who do not speak English.
- Post evacuation procedures.
- Designate personnel to continue or shut down critical operations while an evacuation is underway. They must be capable of recognizing when to abandon the operation and evacuate themselves.
- Coordinate plans with the local emergency management office.

Evacuation Routes and Exits

Designate primary and secondary evacuation routes and exits. Have them clearly marked and well lit. Post signs. Install emergency lighting in case a power outage occurs during an evacuation.

Ensure that evacuation routes and emergency exits are:

- Wide enough to accommodate the number of evacuating personnel
- Clear and unobstructed at all times
- Routes that do not expose evacuating personnel to additional hazards
- Evacuation routes evaluated by someone not part of your organization

Assembly Areas and Accountability

Getting an accurate count of people after an evacuation is difficult and requires practice.

- Designate assembly areas where personnel should gather after evacuating.
- Take a head count after the evacuation. The names and last known locations of personnel not accounted for should be determined and given to the EOC. (Confusion in the assembly areas can lead to unnecessary and dangerous search and rescue operations.)
- Establish a method for accounting for non-employees such as suppliers and customers.
- Establish procedures for further evacuation in case the incident expands. This may consist of sending employees home by normal means or providing them with transportation to an off-site location.

Family Reunification Plans

In an emergency situation, families are understandably eager to reunite with one another. Organizations, particularly ones that work with children, should put reunification and communications plans in place.

Organizations should pre-select sites to which they will move their people if the need arises to evacuate. These sites should be easily accessible on foot from the original location, but at a safe distance from your facility. Having more than one tier of evacuation sites may be prudent. For instance, if water pipes break and flooding ensues, a school might evacuate its classroom buildings in favor of a gymnasium that stands safely apart from the affected structure.

The Red Cross and Office of Emergency Management keep track of a network of shelters throughout the city. They should be contacted to determine how, and under what conditions, these shelters are accessible. Alternatively, organizations should identify facilities in their immediate neighborhood that might serve as shelters in times of crisis, work out arrangements with the owners, and check with the Red Cross or OEM to see if these alternative facilities are appropriate.

Organizations should have copies of their evacuation and reunification plans ready so they can be provided to local media. This will help families know where to go to reunite with their loved ones. For schools and other organizations that deal with children, up-to-date records should be kept of which adults are authorized to pick up children.

As with all aspects of your emergency planning, be sure to train staff in evacuation and reunification procedures. Take them to evacuation and reunification sites, and run practice drills so they know what to do in a crisis. Tabletop drills using realistic scenarios, such as the ones provided in the appendices of this guide, are especially helpful.

Personnel with Special Needs

Many organizations have individuals with special needs. Persons with disabilities may have a problem with mobility, hearing, or sight that could hinder their evacuation. A hearing impaired person, for instance, may not be able to hear fire alarms or emergency instructions. A person in a wheelchair might not be able to go up or down stairs either at your facility or at the evacuation destination. Be sure to account for these possibilities by assigning sufficient staff to assist these individuals and select evacuation sites that will

be accessible to them. Encourage people with special needs to follow the guidelines set out in the Office of Emergency Management's *Ready New York* guide.

Communications

Losing communications can be a disaster in itself. Communications are vital for some business operations and, in an emergency situation, they are necessary to report a crisis, warn personnel, coordinate response, and inform families about what is happening.

Contingency Planning

- Prepare for circumstances in which communications are lost.
- Consider the everyday functions performed by your facility and the communication methods used to support them.
- Consider the business impact if your communications don't work. How would this impact your emergency operations?
- Prioritize all facility communications. Determine which should be restored first in an emergency.
- Establish procedures for restoring communications systems.
- Talk to your communications vendors about their emergency response capabilities. Establish procedures for restoring services.
- Determine needs for backup communications for each business function. Options include messengers, telephones, portable microwave, amateur radios, point-to-point private lines, satellite, and high-frequency radio.
- Consider ways to help employees prepare their families for emergencies. This will increase their personal safety and help the facility get back up and running.

Emergency Communications

Consider the functions your facility might need to perform in an emergency and the communications systems needed to support them. Consider communications between:

- Emergency responders
- Responders and the Incident Commander (IC)
- The IC and the Emergency Operations Center (EOC)
- The IC and employees
- The EOC and outside response organizations
- The EOC and neighboring businesses
- The EOC and employees' families
- The EOC and customers
- The EOC and media

Family Communications

Make plans for communicating with employees' families in an emergency. Also, encourage employees to:

- Consider how they would communicate with their families in case they are separated from one another or injured in an emergency
- Arrange for an out-of-town contact for all family members to call in an emergency
- Designate a place to meet family members in case they cannot get home in an emergency

Notification

- Test emergency alarms and other notification systems monthly.
- Establish procedures for employees to report an emergency.
- Train personnel assigned to specific notification tasks. Post emergency telephone numbers near each telephone, on employee bulletin boards and in other prominent locations.
- Maintain an updated list of addresses and telephone and pager numbers of key emergency response personnel (from within and outside the facility).
- Determine government agencies' notification requirements in advance. Notification must be made immediately to local government agencies when an emergency has the potential to affect public health and safety.
- Prepare announcements that could be made over public address systems.

Dealing with the Media in an Emergency

Assume that media will be present at some point of any emergency. Rather than being threatened by media, be prepared to work with them. They are a valuable means of disseminating information. In fact, the media may be your only means of communicating information if telephones and other communications devices have been affected during a crisis. If reporters feel they are not getting complete information, they will often go digging for more. Therefore, it is better to be proactive rather than reactive.

- When possible, work with media before a crisis occurs. Make them aware of your emergency planning efforts and communications plans so they are familiar with your needs before an incident occurs. Invite them to preparedness exercises. This will also help inform and comfort families that you are thinking ahead about safety.
- Designate a Public Information Officer (PIO) to be the single source of information for the media. This person should be able to coordinate quickly with other media specialists at a parent organization, such as the diocese or school district.
- Make sure media know that information will only come from the PIO, even if no information is available yet. The PIO should be proactive and tell media that information will be shared as soon as it is available. Tell them you appreciate their cooperation and ask them to remain in a designated area.

- Pre-determine a specific site for media to congregate and receive updates from the PIO, preferably a position that is away from staff and clients. Choose an alternate site as well just in case the primary site is unavailable.
- Prepare staff for media in advance of an event. Media commonly will seek interviews with staff and clients, and staff should know to direct inquiries to the PIO.
- Be prepared to hold a joint press conference with the PIO and emergency responders, or choose one representative to disseminate information. This will help manage the content and timing of the information being released.
- Work with local emergency management agencies in advance of a crisis to control your airspace. Having helicopters overhead during a crisis usually adds to the chaos and tension.

Some general tips to follow when dealing with the media include the following:

- Speak for yourself. Government officials may be useful to address specific issues related to the emergency response, but you should control information directly related to your organization.
- Know your goal for interviews. Think about what your key points are and try to stick to them.
- If you have time to prepare, write down some likely questions and prepare your answers to them.
- Speak in a reporter-friendly manner: State conclusions and back them up with facts.
- Always be truthful.
- Short answers are better than long ones.
- Stay “on message.” If reporters’ questions sidetrack you, use answers to return to the main points.

If a reporter states incorrect information, be sure to correct him or her.

- Avoid hypothetical questions. Stick to the facts about what is known.
- Be polite and pleasant.
- If you don’t know an answer, say so and tell the reporter you will get the information to him or her as soon as possible.
- Remain calm. It is easy to lose patience in a crisis situation.

Other specific points you may wish to cover when interacting with the media include the following:

- The safety of children, clients and employees is of paramount importance to you.
- Detail the extent of injuries.
- Your organization responded using an emergency plan that was prepared well in advance of the incident. If the plan was devised in consultation with emergency management officials, mention that.

- If your institution was closed as a result of the incident, explain the process that led to that decision.
- Express sadness if it is appropriate to do so.
- If appropriate, say that your thoughts and prayers are with those affected by the incident and their families.
- Consult with emergency responders before releasing detailed information about the nature of the incident. They may be able to add valuable insights.
- Thank the police and other emergency responders.
- Thank your staff.
- If there was an act of heroism on the part of an employee, children, or emergency responders, discuss it as appropriate.

Sample press releases are included in the appendices of this guide.

Reporters typically ask the following questions.

- What happened? Answer with the basic information necessary for someone to understand, but do not get too technical. Do not speculate about the cause.
- When did it happen? Approximate to the nearest half hour.
- Where did it happen? Identify the general section, such as “on the football field.”
- Who was involved? Do not release information about individuals until their families have been identified.
- Why or how did it happen? This is often difficult to know for certain immediately after an incident. It is often best to say that the specific cause will be investigated and released later. If the cause is known for certain, consult with legal counsel before releasing the information.
- How much damage? It is usually difficult to know this in the short term and insurance considerations make it unwise to speculate.
- What are you doing about it? You may not know what you are going to do immediately after a crisis strikes. But it is usually good to say that there will be an investigation and you will keep the public informed.

Facility Protection

Establish procedures for:

- Fighting fires
- Containing material spills
- Closing or barricading doors and windows
- Shutting down equipment
- Covering or securing equipment
- Moving equipment to a safe location

Identify sources of backup equipment, parts and supplies. Designate personnel to authorize, supervise and perform a facility shutdown. Train them to recognize when to abandon the effort. Obtain materials to carry out protection procedures and keep them on hand for use only in emergencies.

Protection Systems

Determine if you have adequate systems for detecting hazardous situations, providing warning and protecting property. Consult your property insurer about special protective systems. Consider:

- Fire protection systems
- Lightning protection systems
- Water-level monitoring systems
- Overflow detection devices
- Automatic shutoffs
- Emergency power generation systems

Mitigation

Consider ways to reduce the effects of emergencies, such as moving or constructing facilities away from flood plains. Also consider ways to reduce the chances of emergencies from occurring, such as changing processes or materials used to run the business.

Protecting facilities, equipment and vital records is essential to restoring operations once an emergency has occurred. Consider physical measures such as:

- Installing fire sprinkler systems
- Installing fire-resistant materials and furnishings
- Securing light fixtures and other items that could fall or shake loose in an emergency
- Moving heavy or breakable objects to low shelves
- Attaching cabinets and files to low walls or bolting them together
- Moving work stations away from large windows
- Installing curtains or blinds that can be drawn over windows to prevent glass from shattering onto employees
- Anchoring water heaters and bolting them to wall studs

Consult a structural engineer or architect and your community's building and zoning offices for additional information.

Facility Shutdown

Facility shutdown is generally a last resort, but should be planned for to avoid confusion and injury. Work with your department heads to determine the best methods for shutting down.

Identify:

- The conditions that could require a shutdown
- Who can order a shutdown
- Who will carry out shutdown procedures
- How a partial shutdown would affect other facility operations
- The length of time required for shutdown and restarting

Preparedness at the Neighborhood and Community Level

Emergencies and disasters vary widely in scale. They can be confined to your facility or affect an entire region. Your first priority is to provide for the safety of your personnel and property. Once you have done this, you can begin to look out into the neighborhood and community to see how you can assist. Faith-based organizations in particular can be seen to have a calling to serve those in need beyond their immediate doorstep.

Reaching out to your neighborhood or community can provide a host of multilateral opportunities for you to provide service to others as well as gain access to the resources and talents of complementary organizations. This process of becoming familiar with potential collaborators should begin well before an emergency situation occurs.

Start simply by connecting with:

- Elected officials
- Providers of emergency services, such as local police precincts, firehouses, and hospitals
- Public works departments
- The American Red Cross
- Telephone company
- Electricity and utility providers
- Neighborhood groups

Once you have identified potentially cooperative organizations, begin a dialogue:

- Make emergency service providers aware of your plans, capabilities and likely needs in the event of an emergency.
- Ask how you can help them in a crisis situation. Perhaps you can help recruit and manage volunteers for neighborhood watch groups, blood drives, to help in hospitals or to donate goods. Maybe you can help disseminate information in the neighborhood about disaster preparedness or, after an event, about services that are available.
- Once you have established a good working relationship with emergency service providers, expand your vision to include other organizations in your area. Think about centers for seniors, the disabled or other people with special needs such as the vision or hearing impaired. Think of other churches and schools, community centers, homeless shelters, food pantries and soup kitchens, local business groups and chambers of commerce.

- The next practical step is to convene these organizations to discuss how you can collaborate on behalf of the community. Invite them to discuss their likely role in a disaster situation. How do they plan to serve their constituents? How can you help, and vice versa? Are there areas where organizations will be duplicating services? Are you or they connected to larger organizations or networks that can provide resources?
- Meet regularly to discuss plans, changing needs and emerging points of collaboration. Establishing a working relationship in advance of an emergency will increase efficiency when an event occurs.
- Develop a communications plan for your community group. Discuss how you can work together to spread information to area residents about emergency preparedness before an incident, and available services after an event.
- Develop a plan to serve people with special needs, as well as immigrant and non-English speaking populations. During an emergency, people such as the elderly and disabled often need help accessing necessities such as food and medicine. Immigrant and non-English speaking people face cultural and linguistic barriers that may prevent them from following proper procedures or accessing services. A collaborative outreach plan can help identify these individuals in advance of an emergency and include arrangements to serve them.
- Discuss sheltering options in the neighborhood. Work with OEM and the Red Cross to identify existing shelters and consider whether these are sufficient for the demand your neighborhood can anticipate in an emergency. Organizations in your group may be able to offer additional sheltering options.
- Planning to collaborate after an emergency can spillover into extensive daily collaborations. Working together to help people in need before a disaster can reduce their vulnerability to a disaster's aftermath.

IV. After an Emergency: Recovery for Your Organization and Community

The recovery phase begins after the immediate health and material needs of affected populations have been met; service providers begin work to meet longer-term needs, and efforts to return life to normal begin. Depending on the magnitude and effects of an emergency or disaster, the recovery phase can last from many months to several years.

As with emergency preparedness and response, recovery should be considered on three levels:

1. How can you manage the recovery process for your immediate organization?
2. How can your organization help the neighborhood recover from an emergency?
3. How can your organization contribute to the recovery of the community beyond your neighborhood?

Recovery for Your Organization

Resuming Operations

Immediately after an emergency, take steps to resume operations. Schools should aim to resume teaching as soon as possible. Churches should resume worship services when it is safe to do so. Suggested guidelines are:

- Establish a recovery team to set priorities for resuming operations and assessing recovery needs across the organization.
- Ensure the ongoing safety of personnel. Assess remaining hazards and maintain security at the incident scene.
- Conduct an employee briefing.
- Keep detailed records. Consider audio recording all decisions. Take photographs of or videotape the damage.
- Account for all damage-related costs.
- Notify employees' families about the status of personnel on the property. Notify off-duty personnel about work status.
- Notify insurance carriers and appropriate government agencies.
- Protect undamaged property and restore safety systems and power.
- Conduct an investigation and coordinate with appropriate organizations and government agencies.
- Conduct salvage operations. Segregate damaged from undamaged property. Keep damaged property on hand until an insurance adjuster has visited the premises, but you can move material outside if it's in the way and exposure to the elements won't make matters worse.
- Take an inventory of damaged property with insurance company personnel. If they remove any items, make sure they are signed out and accounted for.

- Restore equipment and property. For major repair work, review plans with your insurer and appropriate government agencies.
- Assess the value of damaged property and business interruption.
- Maintain contact with customers and suppliers.
- Administrative actions during and after an emergency include:
 - Maintaining telephone logs
 - Keeping a detailed record of events
 - Maintaining a record of injuries and follow-up actions
 - Accounting for personnel
 - Coordinating notification of family members
 - Issuing press releases
 - Maintaining records of air, water or other environmental samples
 - Managing finances
 - Coordinating personnel services
 - Documenting incident investigations and recovery operations

Emergency funding can be critical immediately following an incident. Consider what emergency funding mechanisms will be available in the wake of an event.

Check with legal counsel to determine what records you should have on hand before and after an incident.

The biggest disaster-related role for human service agencies is in the recovery phase. Medium- to long-term recovery poses multiple challenges across a variety of human service areas. A partial list of the most common areas in which human service agencies are active after a disaster includes:

- Sheltering
- Donations management
- Food
- Housing
- Volunteerism
- Disaster/family assistance centers
- Case management
- Spiritual care
- Mental health care
- Financial services
- Business services
- Legal services
- Job/vocational training
- Immigrant issues
- People with special needs/disabilities
- Faith response

Under the aegis of the New York City chapter of Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (NYCVOAD), numerous human service agencies have been working with

FEMA and OEM to make disaster recovery plans for many of the sectors listed above. This section profiles sectors in which the most advanced planning has been done so far. This is designed to help organizations learn about existing recovery mechanisms and to consider where they fit within this framework.

Mental Health Concerns

The emotional toll that disaster brings can sometimes be even more devastating than damage to property. Children and the elderly are special concerns in the aftermath of disasters. Even individuals who experience a disaster “second hand” through exposure to extensive media coverage, caregiving or volunteering can be affected.

Mental Health Assistance

If someone feels they need assistance, they should get it. Anonymous, free crisis intervention is available in New York City through the Mental Health Association’s (MHA) toll-free number, **1-800-LIFENET**. This service provides 24-hour confidential crisis intervention, referral and information service. Trained referral specialists will listen to problems, assess needs and get assistance quickly.

In New York City, most major mental health agencies have agreed to coordinate their emergency response and long-term recovery activities through the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DOHMH). DOHMH can be reached by calling 311. Their Web site is located at: <http://www.nyc.gov/html/doh/home.html>

For organizations, it is important to recognize the traumatizing effect of an emergency and the need to provide a healing mechanism for personnel. It is generally recommended that personnel be offered opportunities to discuss their experiences in group and individual sessions after an emergency.

Coping with disaster

You need to be aware of signs that people need help in coping with the stress of an emergency. FEMA provides the following about post-emergency mental health:

- No one who sees a disaster is untouched by it.
- It is normal to feel anxious about your own safety and that of your family and close friends.
- Profound sadness, grief and anger are normal reactions to an abnormal event.
- Acknowledging your feelings helps you recover.
- Focusing on your strengths and abilities will help you to heal.
- Accepting help from community programs and resources is healthy.
- We each have different needs and different ways of coping.
- It is common to want to strike back at people who have caused great pain. However, nothing good is accomplished by hateful language or actions.

Signs that adults need crisis counseling/stress management assistance include:

- Difficulty communicating thoughts
- Difficulty sleeping

- Difficulty maintaining balance
- Easily frustrated
- Increased use of drugs/alcohol
- Limited attention span
- Poor work performance
- Headaches/stomach problems
- Tunnel vision/muffled hearing
- Colds or flu-like symptoms
- Disorientation or confusion
- Reluctance to leave home
- Depression, sadness
- Feelings of hopelessness
- Mood-swings and crying easily
- Overwhelming guilt and self-doubt
- Fear of crowds, strangers, or being alone

Ways to ease disaster related stress:

- Talk with someone about your feelings—anger, sorrow, and other emotions—even though it may be difficult.
- Seek help from professional counselors who deal with post-disaster stress.
- Don't hold yourself responsible for the disastrous event or be frustrated because you feel that you cannot help directly in the rescue work.
- Take steps to promote your own physical and emotional healing by staying active in your daily life patterns or by adjusting them. This healthy outlook will help you and your household (e.g., healthy eating, rest, exercise, relaxation, meditation).
- Maintain a normal household and daily routine, limiting demanding responsibilities of you and your household.
- Spend time with family and friends.
- Participate in memorials, rituals, and use of symbols as a way to express feelings.
- Use existing support groups of family, friends, and church.
- Establish a family emergency plan. Feeling there is something you can do can often help.

Children and Disasters

Emergencies can be especially disturbing for children. Their sense of safety and security is suddenly disrupted and this can lead to a variety of negative consequences. Parents, teachers and other caring adults have an opportunity to help with children's discomfort.

These adults can head off trouble by learning to recognize certain symptoms of distress and how to alleviate them. Below are suggestions provided by the National Association of School Psychologists for responding to children after a tragedy or traumatic event.

All Adults Should:

1. **Model calm and control.** Children take their emotional cues from the significant adults in their lives. Avoid appearing anxious or frightened.
2. **Reassure children that they are safe** and (if true) so are the other important adults in their lives. Depending on the situation, point out factors that help insure their immediate safety and that of their community.
3. **Remind them that trustworthy people are in charge.** Explain that the government emergency workers, police, firefighters, doctors, and the military are helping people who are hurt and are working to ensure that no further tragedies occur.
4. **Let children know that it is okay to feel upset.** Explain that all feelings are okay when a tragedy like this occurs. Let children talk about their feelings and help put them into perspective. Even anger is okay, but children may need help and patience from adults to assist them in expressing these feelings appropriately.
5. **Observe children's emotional state.** Depending on their age, children may not express their concerns verbally. Changes in behavior, appetite, and sleep patterns can also indicate a child's level of grief, anxiety or discomfort. Children will express their emotions differently. There is no right or wrong way to feel or express grief.
6. **Look for children at greater risk.** Children who have had a past traumatic experience or personal loss, suffer from depression or other mental illness, or those with special needs may be at greater risk for severe reactions than others. Be particularly observant of those who may be at risk of suicide. Seek the help of mental health professional if you are at all concerned.
7. **Tell children the truth.** Don't try to pretend the event has not occurred or that it is not serious. Children are smart. They will be more worried if they think you are too afraid to tell them what is happening.
8. **Stick to the facts.** Don't embellish or speculate about what has happened and what might happen. Don't dwell on the scale or scope of the tragedy, particularly with young children.
9. **Keep your explanations developmentally appropriate.** *Early elementary school* children need brief, simple information that should be balanced with reassurances that the daily structures of their lives will not change. *Upper elementary and early middle school* children will be more vocal in asking questions about whether they truly are safe and what is being done at their school. They may need assistance separating reality from fantasy. *Upper middle school and high school* students will have strong and varying opinions about the causes of violence and threats to safety in schools and society. They will share concrete suggestions about how to make school safer and how to prevent tragedies in society. They will be more committed to doing something to help the victims and affected community. **For all children, encourage them to verbalize their thoughts and feelings. Be a good listener!**
10. **Monitor your own stress level.** Don't ignore your own feelings of anxiety, grief, and anger. Talking to friends, family members, religious leaders, and mental health counselors can help. It is okay to let your children know that you are sad, but that you believe things will get better. You will be better able to support your children if you can

express your own emotions in a productive manner. Get appropriate sleep, nutrition, and exercise.

What Parents Can Do

1. **Focus on your children over the week following the tragedy.** Tell them you love them and everything will be okay. Try to help them understand what has happened, keeping in mind their developmental level.
2. **Make time to talk with your children.** Remember if you do not talk to your children about this incident someone else will. Take some time and determine what you wish to say.
3. **Stay close to your children.** Your physical presence will reassure them and give you the opportunity to monitor their reaction. Many children will want actual physical contact. Give plenty of hugs. Let them sit close to you, and make sure to take extra time at bedtime to cuddle and to reassure them that they are loved and safe.
4. **Limit your child's television viewing of these events.** If they must watch, watch with them for a brief time; then turn the set off. Don't sit mesmerized re-watching the same events over and over again.
5. **Maintain a "normal" routine.** To the extent possible stick to your family's normal routine for dinner, homework, chores, bedtime, etc., **but don't be inflexible.** Children may have a hard time concentrating on schoolwork or falling asleep at night.
6. **Spend extra time reading or playing quiet games with your children before bed.** These activities are calming, foster a sense of closeness and security, and reinforce a sense of normalcy. Spend more time tucking them in. Let them sleep with a light on if they ask for it.
7. **Safeguard your children's physical health.** Stress can take a physical toll on children as well as adults. Make sure your children get appropriate sleep, exercise, and nutrition.
8. **Consider praying or thinking hopeful thoughts for the victims and their families.** It may be a good time to take your children to your place of worship, write a poem, or draw a picture to help your child express their feelings and feel that they are somehow supporting the victims and their families.
9. **Find out what resources your school has in place to help children cope.** Most schools are likely to be open and often are a good place for children to regain a sense of normalcy. Being with their friends and teachers can help. Schools should also have a plan for making counseling available to children and adults who need it.

What Schools Can Do

1. **Assure children that they are safe,** and that schools are well prepared to take care of all children at all times.
2. **Maintain structure and stability within the schools.** It would be best, however, not to have tests or major projects within the next few days.
3. **Have a plan for the first few days back at school.** Include school psychologists, counselors, and crisis team members in planning the school's response.
4. **Provide teachers and parents with information** about what to say and do for children in school and at home.

5. **Have teachers provide information directly to their students**, not during the public address announcements.
6. **Have school psychologists and counselors available** to talk to students and staff who may need or want extra support.
7. **Be aware of students who may have recently experienced a personal tragedy** or a have personal connection to victims or their families. Even a child who has merely visited the affected area or community may have a strong reaction. Provide these students extra support and leniency if necessary.
8. **Know what community resources are available** for children who may need extra counseling. School psychologists can be very helpful in directing families to the right community resources.
9. **Allow time for age appropriate classroom discussion and activities.** Do not expect teachers to provide all of the answers. They should ask questions and guide the discussion, but not dominate it. Other activities can include art and writing projects, play acting, and physical games. These can be especially helpful in allowing younger children, whose verbal communication skills are not yet well developed, to communicate their feelings.
10. **Be careful not to stereotype people or countries that might be associated with the tragedy.** Children can easily generalize negative statements and develop prejudice. Talk about tolerance and justice versus vengeance. ***Stop any bullying or teasing of students immediately.***
11. **Refer children who exhibit extreme anxiety, fear or anger to mental health counselors** in the school. Inform their parents.
12. **Provide an outlet for students' desire to help.** Consider making get well cards or sending letters to the families and survivors of the tragedy, or writing thank you letters to doctors, nurses, and other health care professionals as well as emergency rescue workers, firefighters and police.
13. **Monitor or restrict viewing** scenes of the event as well as the aftermath.⁶

Mental Health for Caregivers

While caregivers provide vital support to disaster survivors, the caregivers themselves are susceptible to stress and secondary trauma. Clergy, teachers, caseworkers and others who have direct contact with disaster survivors should be aware of stress symptoms and seek out care and support as they perform their duties.

According to the long-term recovery committee of National Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (NVOAD), some of the external factors that contribute to stress in caregivers include:

- Emotionally taxing work with people who have major problems

⁶ A detailed description of how schools and other organizations can design and implement an extensive after care system for children is available in "Safeguarding Our Children: An Action Plan," developed by the National Association of School Psychologists, the Department of Education and the Department of Justice. This document is available on the NASP Web site, www.nasponline.org.

- Poorly defined duties which often cause caregivers to work harder to meet needs
- Viewing survivors as a group, rather than individuals who need help
- Desiring money or prestige as a reward for efforts
- Working with people in need can leave caregivers feeling burdened, angry or suspicious
- Stress can lead to self-destructive behavior, such as alcohol or drug use

Results of unmanaged stress can include:

- Reduced trust in other people
- Feeling helpless or overwhelmed
- Decreased esteem for others
- A reduced feeling of safety as a result of seeing the destruction of a disaster
- A feeling of isolation. Caregivers want to talk about their experiences, but few people want to listen or truly understand.
- The abnormal stress of caregiving in a post-disaster environment can cause people to shut down.

Unless caregivers take care of themselves, they won't be able to take proper care of others. Some recommended strategies for self-care include:

- Monitor and, as necessary, reduce use of caffeine, alcohol, tobacco and sugar. Each can reduce our ability to cope with stress.
- Distinguish between self-care and self-indulgence. The latter can lead to destructive behavior.
- Set or negotiate reasonable limits on your job, the hours you work, and the tasks you are expected to perform.
- Use work plans to manage your work. Establish one at the beginning of each week and adjust it as necessary at the beginning of each day.
- Don't handle pieces of paper more than once. Don't open your mail until you have time to read it.
- Find and engage in one or two activities that occupy your mind and relax you at the same time.
- Learn the difference between good and bad stress.
- Learn and use relaxation techniques.

Tips for Managers of Caregivers

Managers of caregivers should realize that the work their staff does is stress inducing. They should build a culture of reflection and self-care to reduce and cope with the stress their staff is under. Some measures include:

- Provide access to opportunities for self-reflection through workshops and counseling and relaxing activities.

- Make sure caregivers receive sufficient time off.
- Offer group retreats and debriefings. These will provide caregivers a chance to share their experiences with others who truly understand what they have experienced.
- If possible, offer sensitivity training to caregivers. This will smooth the interaction between caseworkers and victims and reduce the likelihood of stress.
- Pre-brief caregivers on what they can expect to encounter in their work.
- Offer multi-lingual care to clients. This will provide better service to non-native English speaking clients and reduce a potentially stress inducing communications gap.

Spiritual Care

The deep human needs and psychological scars left after a disaster require care beyond the restoration of physical needs. Putting lives back together requires real care, hope and love. Counseling, understanding and direction are needed to enable persons to cope with grief expressed as anger, guilt, loneliness and turmoil.

Many emergency victims and survivors seek comfort more readily from spiritual care providers (or chaplains) than mental health professionals. However, not every faith leader is suited or qualified for the unique demands of post-emergency chaplaincy.

Among other things, being prepared to fill the role of disaster chaplain requires:

- An awareness and knowledge of proper crisis intervention procedures
- Knowing when to make a referral to mental health caregivers
- Experience working with people in grief and being able to recognize when a current emergency has triggered past grief
- Being able to work in a multi-faith environment and counsel people of different faiths than your own
- Knowing that proselytizing is improper and generally forbidden in post-emergency situations
- An ability to manage a heavy workload, recognize personal limits and provide for self-care
- Being prepared to handle questions of a religious nature, such as “Why did God allow this to happen?”, in a soothing manner

Proper care requires effective listening. William J. McKay, author of *Beginnings: A ChristCare Group Experience Group Member Guide*⁷ by Stephen Ministries offers these points in a session entitled, “Listening as an Act of Love.”

“Listening means paying attention to the other person—real attention, the kind that drops everything else and ignores distractions to focus on what the other person is saying and feeling.”

⁷ Used by permission. This book is part of the ChristCare Small Group Ministry System, developed by Stephen Ministries, St. Louis, Missouri. For more information on this book, ChristCare, or other caring materials from Stephen Ministries, contact www.stephenministries.org.

McKay continues to define the task of listening by highlighting Six Important Facts about Listening summarized below.

Fact 1: Listening is hard work. Your full attention and focus are on the person speaking.

Fact 2: Listening is an important way to show care. Giving your time and effort says to the other that they are valuable to you.

Fact 3: Listen to more than just words. Notice facial expressions, body language and tone of voice.

Fact 4: Listening involves talking too. Say just enough to demonstrate attention and encourage the other person.

Fact 5: Listening also involves a response, such as asking appropriate questions. Ask open-ended and clarifying questions.

Fact 6: The goal of listening is to draw out the other person, not to find solutions or smooth over a problem. Listen with patience and care to help the other discover solutions to problems.

Given these criteria for disaster chaplaincy, it is important that only qualified, pre-screened clergy are deployed at emergency scenes. In New York City, the Office of Emergency Management ("OEM"), the Red Cross and Disaster Spiritual Care Services ("DSCS") mobilize and manage spiritual care provision when they respond to a disaster. However, they do not respond to every emergency that occurs. Organizations should establish a relationship with DSCS prior to an incident. This will allow DSCS to provide proper assistance in an emergency situation.

Assisting People with Special Needs

Who are people with special needs? They include people who:

- Are homeless
- Are mobility, visually or hearing impaired
- Have severe emotional or cognitive impairments
- Have medically related needs, such as diabetes, seizure disorders, or other chronic medical conditions
- Are elderly and suffer from memory disorders, such as Alzheimer's or dementia, or conditions that limit activities, such as arthritis or heart problems

The National Organization on Disability estimates that there are 54 million Americans with disabilities. Extrapolating from this data, the Special Needs/People with Disabilities Group of NYCVOAD estimates there are nearly 4 million New Yorkers with disabilities.

Given these statistics, it is very likely that your facility hosts personnel who live with one or more form of disability. Accounting for their needs is an essential element of emergency planning for your organization.

Beyond planning for your immediate organizational needs, examine how you can work on behalf of the special needs population in your local community. As mentioned earlier, you can join with other organizations to identify disabled persons in the neighborhood and plan for their care in an emergency. During a disaster or emergency, examples of

community assistance include assisting during an evacuation, delivery of food and medicine to the homebound and elderly, performing household chores and maintenance, and providing information on post-disaster assistance.

Immigrant Populations

Virtually any organization in the New York City area must incorporate the concerns and special issues associated with immigrant populations into their emergency planning. To highlight this fact, consider the numbers.

- 40 percent of New Yorkers are immigrants
- Two-thirds of New Yorkers are immigrants and their children
- 50 percent of New Yorkers speak a language other than English in their home
- More than 50 percent of the foreign-born population are from Latin America, 24 percent are from Asia, and 3 percent from Africa⁸

Any disaster or sizable emergency in New York will likely affect immigrants in some direct or indirect way. More importantly, immigrants are often affected more harshly than non-immigrants.

For instance, disasters and emergencies can exacerbate existing difficulties for immigrants, such as relationships with employers, landlords, customers, and neighbors. They may even face increasingly negative racial sentiments or even backlash. Linguistic, cultural and legal barriers often prevent immigrants from receiving disaster assistance, or from seeking it in the first place.

As neighborhood based institutions, schools and parishes are usually very familiar with the cross-cultural nature of their surroundings. As such they are in a position to be valuable in preparing for and recovering from community emergencies.

- To operate effectively in their host neighborhoods, schools and parishes are likely to employ people who know the local languages and cultures. This, coupled with physical proximity, puts schools and parishes in a good position to gather, interpret and pass along information about immigrant needs in their neighborhood.
- They can inform the larger human service agencies about specific linguistic and cultural issues and barriers related to service delivery. These can include gender roles, family and lifestyle models, traditional attitudes toward “outsiders” and authorities, and the effects of various immigration statuses.
- They can advise on alternative methods of disseminating information to immigrant populations, such as local newspapers written in immigrants’ native languages, grocery stores and sports facilities.

⁸ Source: New York Immigration Coalition and the Immigrant Affairs Working Group of New York City Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster.

Helping Your Community After a Disaster

After a disaster has hit a community, there is usually plenty of work to be done and the need often persists for many months, if not years. Individuals can make valuable contributions in several ways

Donations

Immediately after a disaster, material items may be in short supply. However, please DO NOT donate items such as blankets, clothing and food unless they are specifically requested by relief agencies. An unnecessary influx of donated goods distracts relief workers from their core work. It is usually better to donate cash to relief agencies so they can purchase items they need through pre-established supply networks.

Volunteer

Disaster relief and recovery is multi-faceted work that usually outstrips agencies' existing capacity. New volunteers are usually welcome provided they follow proper procedures and undergo any training that may be required to perform tasks safely. Common tasks performed by volunteers include staffing shelters and respite centers, serving food and drink, and performing intake for case management.

Some agencies, such as the Red Cross, will only deploy previously trained volunteers. Other so-called "spontaneous" volunteers in the New York area can sign up to help through New York Cares (www.nycares.org), which has a cooperative arrangement with the Office of Emergency Management and numerous human service agencies. Other local opportunities may be available through your parish or other community organizations.

Red Cross Resources in New York

The American Red Cross in Greater New York also provides numerous disaster related resources to families and organizations alike. They offer a class called "Preparing for the Unexpected." This 90-minute session, taught by Red Cross instructors, offers information to families and organizations on:

- How To Create An Emergency Communications Plan
- How To Assemble A Disaster Supplies Kit
- What To Do If Disaster Strikes
- Evacuation
- Basic First Aid

The class is offered regularly at the Red Cross headquarters at 150 Amsterdam Avenue. The Red Cross will come to offices, community/civic organizations, places of worship or other gathering places of 15 people or more to deliver this program. The program is available weekdays, evenings and weekends.

To schedule a class at your site call 877- REDCROSS or send an e-mail request to preparing@arcgny.org. A Community Outreach representative will contact you. The class is also offered regularly at locations throughout the community. Check the Community Outreach section of the Red Cross Web site, www.arcgny.org, for dates, times and locations.

While this guide provides basic information on dealing with children in the wake of a disaster, the Red Cross now offers a book called *Facing Fear* that provides a more detailed approach. The Red Cross' description of Facing Fear follows:

Facing Fear was developed to address a demand by educators and caregivers of children for materials to help children cope in uncertain times. Lessons are aligned with national health, social studies, and language arts standards.

Curriculum Components

The lesson plans and activities in these materials are arranged in three chapters:

- Chapter 1: "Feelings," includes lessons and activities that are timely immediately following a tragic event. Lessons in this chapter address dealing with feelings of loss, sadness and anger.
- Chapter 2: "Facts and Perspectives," gives information on how the media plays a role in conveying information and how to be able to discern facts as reported in media coverage, yet not continue to frighten children. This chapter also covers the important fundamental principles of the Red Cross.
- Chapter 3: "Future," provides positive ways for children and their families to respond to past events and plan for future uncertain times.

The materials consist of four lesson plans for each of the three chapters, with approximately 27 hands-on, student and family oriented activities that engage students in learning and offer families comfort, knowledge and disaster preparedness skills.

National Standards Alignment

The lessons are aligned with national health, social studies and language arts curriculum standards to facilitate implementation of these curriculum materials in schools where standards orientation is a major concern.

Ordering Information

"Facing Fear" in printed form is available from the American Red Cross in Greater New York chapter. Please contact the chapter by calling 1-877-REDCROSS for more information. The American Red Cross in Greater New York is providing "Facing Fear" to all schools within our jurisdiction that want the curriculum free of charge.

Additional information about Red Cross safety programs is available on their Web site.

V. APPENDICES

Appendix A – Emergency Scenarios for Exercises and Training

Appendix B – Hazard Specific Information: Fires, Hurricanes and Technological Emergencies

Appendix C – Sample Press Releases

Appendix D – Emergency Agency Contacts

Appendix E – Glossary of Emergency Related Terminology

Appendix A: Emergency Scenarios for Exercises and Training

SCENARIO 1: Chemical Release Affecting a School and/or Parish
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Part 1

Two days after a serious snowstorm, a tanker truck loaded with a toxic substance is en route to an industrial facility near your building. When the tanker is less than two blocks from your location, it hits a patch of ice, skids severely and flips. Another truck immediately behind it also hits the patch of ice and is unable to avoid slamming directly into the already damaged tank. The tank ruptures and noxious fumes are released into the air.

Your building is immediately downwind from the accident. There has not been sufficient time for emergency responders to reach the scene, let alone alert you and your staff to the dangers.

Within minutes of the accident, people in your building complain about the smell and begin experiencing watery eyes and mild to moderate respiratory difficulty. Still there is no notification from emergency response officials, but a late-arriving employee rushes in and informs the administrative office that a chemical tanker has overturned in the vicinity and “toxic” fumes are being released. Although you do not know it yet, your facility will be the most directly affected in the area.

1. Once news of the chemical spill reaches your school, who is informed?
 - a. What is the communication flow within your organization?
 - b. How do the individuals receiving information about the incident know whom to contact?
2. Who decides what actions should be taken in response to the incident?
 - a. What are the top response priorities?
 - b. What communications chain does he/she follow to inform others?
 - c. If he/she is absent, who is the alternate decision maker?
3. What decision should be made?
 - a. Should you evacuate your facility or shelter in place?

- b. What factors should you consider in making a decision?
4. What duties must be performed and who will perform them? Do you have a designated emergency response team?
 - a. Do you contact outside emergency officials? Whom do you contact?
 - b. Who contacts them and coordinates with them?
5. Once a decision is made about evacuating or sheltering in place, how will it be communicated to other staff?
 - a. Has staff been pre-briefed in emergency procedures such as where to go?
 - b. What do they take with them?
 - c. Step by step, how do you execute the evacuation or sheltering in place? Include major response components such as personnel movement, roles and responsibilities, facility changes, logistics, internal and external communications, and accounting for personnel.
6. Do you have a mechanism to determine if there are casualties in your organization?
 - a. Who communicates this and other information to emergency officials?
 - b. What other information should your people be prepared to provide?
7. If you decide to evacuate, do you have a designated place to take your people?
 - a. Is transit to this location safe?
 - b. Is it a safe distance away?
8. If you decide that sheltering in place is the best move, do you have a designated area to do so?
 - a. What measures do you take to maximize the safety of your internal shelter?
 - b. What supplies do you have there?
9. Do you have a plan for communicating with the families of people in your building?
 - a. At what point do you activate it?
 - b. How do you carry it out?
10. How do you determine when it is safe to return to your facility (if you evacuated) or leave your internal shelter?

Part Two

Several hours after the incident, emergency officials inform your organization that it is safe to resume normal operations. Reporters are swarming around your building seeking interviews with anyone they can find. Staff and clients may have witnessed serious physical debilitation and many feared for their own lives. You realize that although the immediate incident is over, the broader crisis for your organization is not finished.

1. Who should speak with the media?
 - a. Do you involve emergency officials?
 - b. What information should be provided to reporters?
 - c. Do you allow them unfettered access to your building and people?
 - d. Should media be treated as a nuisance or an asset?
2. Although it is physically safe to do so, do you resume full operations?
 - a. Which operations in your organization are vital and which can be put off?
 - b. Do you have a plan for reuniting people with their families? If so, how is it implemented?
3. In addition to contacting the families of your personnel, who else do you contact when the immediate incident has passed?
 - a. Is there a parent organization?
 - b. Insurance company?
 - c. Do you have relationships established with other organizations in your area that may lend assistance?
4. Recognizing that staff and clients may have been traumatized, do you arrange for any kind of mental health or spiritual care?
 - a. What resources are available to help you do this?
 - b. Do you treat adults and children differently, and if so, how?
 - c. Should assistance be provided on an individual or group basis? Over what time frame?
5. How do you assess the affects of the incident on your organization?
 - a. What categories (such as human resources, property and finance) do you examine to determine the incident's impact?
 - b. Who performs these auditing functions and to whom do they report?
 - c. Once this "after action report" is done, what do you do with it? Do you integrate lessons learned into your existing plans and procedures? How?

SCENARIO 2: SARS Outbreak in New York City

It is mid-January. For nearly two months, the World Health Organization and the Centers for Disease Control have tracked outbreaks of Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS), first in Asia, and subsequently in Europe and North America. The virus appears to be spreading to new regions via business and leisure travelers. Worldwide, there are an estimated 35,000 people who have been infected. So far, the mortality rate is between 5 and 10 percent with all deaths occurring outside the U.S.

Eighteen days ago, the first confirmed SARS cases were reported in New York City. At first, only a handful of people were affected—all travelers returning from abroad—but now there are several hundred New Yorkers officially diagnosed with SARS. Many of the infected New Yorkers apparently contracted the virus through close contact with infected travelers.

Your school/parish is located very close to a major transportation hub (an airport, train, subway or bus station) that is frequently used by domestic and international travelers. Moreover, people who attend your institution and their family members often use that transportation hub.

The SARS outbreak has coincided with cold and flu season, making it difficult to identify quickly who is suffering from SARS and who has a more common ailment. The outbreak dominates local news and public concern is high.

1. Your constituents begin calling your institution to ask what your response will be. They ask:
 - a. How will you safeguard them and their children?
 - b. Should they stop attending your institution?
 - c. Will your institution remain open?
2. Clearly, you must formulate some reaction.
 - a. Who at your institution fields external inquiries?
 - b. Who meets to talk about your response to the situation?
 - c. You need expert advice on risks and preventive measures associated with SARS. Who gets this information?
 - d. To whom do you turn for accurate information? What public health entities do you contact?
 - e. Are you part of a larger network, such as a school district or diocese, with which you should coordinate?
 - f. Do you put together an agenda of tasks to accomplish? What items are included on your agenda? What timeline do you assign to it? How do you delegate tasks?
3. When you talk to outside experts, what questions do you need answered?
 - a. How is SARS transmitted?
 - b. Who is at risk?
 - c. What are the symptoms?

- a. What preventive measures can be taken?
 - b. What treatments are available, and from whom?
 - c. What other information should you get to be prepared?
 - d. What do the experts recommend you tell your personnel and their families?
4. Once you have gathered sufficient information, you have to communicate it to the right people.
- a. Who devises your communications plan?
 - b. Who implements your communications plan?
 - c. With what key constituencies do you need to communicate?
 - d. What methods of communication do you use?
 - e. What tone do you use in your communications?
 - f. Are there mechanisms for optimizing chances that the information will get to the right people?
 - a. Are your communications appropriate for people with special needs or non-English speaking people? Are there alternative methods for communicating with them?
 - b. Do you establish separate communications plans, one for preparedness, and one for an actual incident? If so, how do they differ?
 - c. What information do your communications convey?
 - d. Once you have covered all communications needs related to your immediate institution, is there a role for you to play in the community as well?
5. There is a realistic possibility that someone associated with your institution may become ill with SARS. You need to develop a plan to respond in case that occurs.
- a. Who devises your response plan? What parties outside your institution are consulted?
 - b. What mechanisms do you put in place to monitor for possible infections?
 - c. What information do you pass along to staff? What are their roles and responsibilities?
 - d. If one or more people at your institution become ill, what will your response be? Who is in charge and what is the chain of command?
 - e. With whom do you consult before implementing your response?
 - f. Do you continue normal operations or alter operations in some way?
 - g. Under what conditions do you consider closing? In consultation with whom?
 - h. How do you communicate closure and re-opening? Remember, you must be prepared to communicate with staff, clients, their families and the media.

6. No new cases of SARS have been reported in nearly 3 weeks. The outbreak appears to have been contained. You are now in the recovery phase.
 - a. If your normal operations were disrupted, how do you decide whether and when to return to normal operations? Do you remain vigilant in any way? If so, how?
 - b. It is time to evaluate how your organization responded to this emergency. Who is involved in the evaluation process? What criteria are assessed?
 - c. When your assessment is complete, how do you integrate “lessons learned” into your emergency response plans?
 - d. With whom do you share your performance evaluation?

SCENARIO 3: Bus Accident

It is a Thursday afternoon in the spring. In cooperation with a neighboring school or parish, your organization has organized an outing to a Mets vs. Yankees baseball game. To transport people to and from the game, you chartered a bus from the same firm that transports many of your students to and from school. Approximately 45 eighth graders, 3 parent chaperones and 4 school/parish staff (including the CEO of each institution) went to the game, all taking the bus.

Twenty minutes after the fully-loaded bus departs, your CEO calls your administrative office. The bus has been in an accident en route to the game. Details are not yet clear, but several people have suffered injuries, some potentially serious. Emergency personnel have responded to the scene and are treating the injured. Some passengers are being taken to a local hospital.

There is nothing immediate you can do to help the victims at the scene of the accident. That is the role of the emergency responders. Your immediate responsibility lies with serving the staff and clients still at your facility, their families and the families of the people on the bus.

1. This incident illustrates that key decision makers are not always “in position” when an emergency occurs. In your CEO’s absence, who is in charge of your institution? Who is the Incident Commander? Perhaps more than one member of your emergency response team is absent. Do you have alternates for filling their roles? Have alternates been involved in the preparedness process?
 - a. Which people meet to consider your organization’s response? What elements must be included in your response?
 - b. Who is in charge of gathering and updating information about the incident?
 - c. To whom do you disseminate this information? How and on what time schedule?
 - d. How do you communicate with the families of people on the bus? What do you tell them?

- e. You can assume there will be intense media scrutiny. Who interacts with media and what information is provided? Is your interaction with the media short term, long term, or both?
 - f. Does your organization keep operating normally or do you send people home?
2. The company from which you chartered the bus is also your vendor for transporting other clients to and from your facility on a daily basis. You do not know yet whether this vendor, its employees or equipment were responsible in any way for the accident. In light of the accident, do you permit them to transport clients home that day? And in the days that follow?
- a. Who makes this decision and how? Are there alternative means of transportation available?
 - b. Are you contractually obligated to the vendor and what are the legal ramifications of suspending use of their service? Whom do you consult to determine this?
 - c. What is your organization's legal exposure to the accident? What mechanism did you have for evaluating the safety of the vendor? How often was the safety issue revisited? What safety information are you prepared to release to the media?
 - d. How should potential liability issues shape your organization's response?
 - e. What are the potential risks to your institution's reputation? How do you safeguard your institution's reputation during and after the incident? What are the ramifications if this is not done properly?
3. The incident is over and all injured parties are recovering well. What steps does your organization take?
- a. Is there an investigation into the incident? Who from your organization is involved? With whom do you cooperate/collaborate?
 - b. What are the parameters for the investigation? What criteria are involved?
 - c. What measures do you take regarding clients, staff and families after the incident?
 - d. What lessons did this incident teach? Will you make any changes to your procedures as a result of this emergency?

Appendix B – Hazard Specific Information: Fires, Hurricanes and Technological Incidents

The following information about fire, hurricane and technological emergencies is from FEMA's *Business and Industry Preparedness Guide*.

Fire Emergencies

Consider the following when developing your plan:

- Meet with the fire department to talk about the community's fire response capabilities. Talk about your operations. Identify processes and materials that could cause or fuel a fire, or contaminate the environment in a fire.
- Have your facility inspected for fire hazards. Ask about fire codes and regulations.
- Ask your insurance carrier to recommend fire prevention and protection measures. Your carrier may also offer training.
- Distribute fire safety information to employees: how to prevent fires in the workplace, how to contain a fire, how to evacuate the facility, where to report a fire.
- Instruct personnel to use the stairs — not elevators — in a fire. Instruct them to crawl on their hands and knees when escaping a hot or smoke-filled area.
- Conduct evacuation drills. Post maps of evacuation routes in prominent places. Keep evacuation routes including stairways and doorways clear of debris.
- Assign fire wardens for each area to monitor shutdown and evacuation procedures.
- Establish procedures for the safe handling and storage of flammable liquids and gases.
- Establish procedures to prevent the accumulation of combustible materials.
- Provide for the safe disposal of smoking materials.
- Establish a preventive maintenance schedule to keep equipment operating safely.
- Place fire extinguishers in appropriate locations.
- Train employees in use of fire extinguishers.
-
- Install smoke detectors. Check smoke detectors once a month, change batteries at least once a year.
- Establish a system for warning personnel of a fire. Consider installing a fire alarm with automatic notification to the fire department.
- Consider installing a sprinkler system, fire hoses and fire-resistant walls and doors.

- Ensure that key personnel are familiar with all fire safety systems.
- Identify and mark all utility shutoffs so that electrical power, gas or water can be shut off quickly by fire wardens or responding personnel.
- Determine the level of response your facility will take if a fire occurs.

Hurricanes

The following are considerations when preparing for hurricanes:

- Ask your local emergency management office about community evacuation plans.
- Establish facility shutdown procedures.
- Establish warning and evacuation procedures. Make plans for assisting employees who may need transportation.
- Make plans for communicating with employees' families before and after a hurricane.
- Purchase a NOAA Weather Radio with a warning alarm tone and battery backup.
- Listen for hurricane watches and warnings.

Hurricane Watch — A hurricane is possible within 24 to 36 hours. Stay tuned for additional advisories. Tune to local radio and television stations for additional information. An evacuation may be necessary.

Hurricane Warning — A hurricane will hit land within 24 hours. Take precautions at once. If advised, evacuate immediately.

- Survey your facility. Make plans to protect outside equipment and structures.
- Make plans to protect windows. Permanent storm shutters offer the best protection. Covering windows with 5/8" marine plywood is a second option.
- Consider the need for backup systems:
 - Portable pumps to remove flood water
 - Alternate power sources such as generators or gasoline-powered pumps
 - Battery-powered emergency lighting
- Prepare to move records, computers and other items, either within your facility or to another location.

Technological Emergencies

Technological emergencies include any interruption or loss of a utility service, power source, life support system, information system or equipment needed to keep the business in operation.

The following are suggestions for planning for technological emergencies:

- Identify all critical operations, including:

- Utilities, including electric power, gas, water, hydraulics, compressed air, municipal and internal sewer systems, wastewater treatment services
 - Security and alarm systems, elevators, lighting, life support systems, heating, ventilation and air conditioning systems, electrical distribution system
 - Manufacturing equipment, pollution control equipment
 - Communications systems, both data and voice computer networks
 - Transportation systems including air, highway, railroad and waterway
- Determine the impact of service disruption.
 - Ensure that key safety and maintenance personnel are thoroughly familiar with all building systems.
 - Establish procedures for restoring systems. Determine need for backup systems.
 - Establish preventive maintenance schedules for all systems and equipment.

Appendix C: Sample Press Statements

Press Statement 1 - Example of a “Day-One” Statement

Contact: John Smith

XYZ School Statement on January 1, 2004 Fire

New York, NY, January 1, 2004 – A portion of the classroom building at the XYZ school, 100 Elm Street, was destroyed by fire at approximately 1:00 p.m. today. Thirty students and seven faculty members were taken to Metropolitan Hospital for treatment of smoke inhalation. Names of students and faculty are being withheld until their families are notified. The cause of the fire is being investigated. The school will remain closed pending safety inspection and location of alternate facilities.

The XYZ School, a kindergarten through 12th-grade school, has been open since 1963. According to initial reports, fire alarms and sprinkler systems appear to have worked properly during the fire. An internal team headed by Principal Nancy Waters will work with fire officials to investigate the incident.

“Our thoughts and prayers are with the victims and their families,” said Principal Waters. “Our internal team, working with the fire department, will try to determine the cause of the accident as quickly as possible and work to prevent future fires. Our existing emergency response plan, which includes regular evacuation drills, appears to have served us well. Detection of the fire, evacuation of students and faculty, as well as notification of emergency responders and families, were all conducted in a timely fashion.”

Waters commended the behavior of employees and students during the fire. “Our emergency response preparations paid off today. Planning and conducting drills made people familiar with emergency procedures and helped them remain calm. Everyone knew where to go and what to do when the fire occurred. Preparing for a crisis helped prevent more serious injuries and more severe damage to the school.”

XYZ School will issue additional statements as more information becomes available.

Press Statement 2 - Example of a “Day-Two” Statement:

Contact: John Smith

XYZ School Says Fire Cause Still Under Investigation

New York, NY January 2, 2004 – XYZ School Principal Nancy Waters today said that the cause of yesterday’s fire is still under investigation, but that records show the affected building passed a fire inspection as recently as November 15, 2003.

Four students and a teacher affected by smoke inhalation were kept overnight for observation at Metropolitan General Hospital. All are due to be released today. The four students’ names are not being released. The teacher, Walter Evans, is a seven-year member of the school’s faculty. The students and Mr. Evans are all expected to make a full recovery.

Principal Waters said XYZ School is working with fire investigators to determine the cause of the fire and establish procedures to prevent a recurrence. The school is working with the school district and insurers to assess damage make prompt repairs and re-open the school. Until repairs are complete, the school will hold some classes in the gymnasium. Classes are scheduled to resume tomorrow.

Principal Waters said her top concern is the health of students and employees. “We are pleased to hear that all the students and faculty who were treated are going to recover fully. In the wake of this incident, our emergency planning group will re-examine our safety procedures and determine what changes need to be made.”

According to Principal Waters, the school district will provide group and individual counseling to students and staff. “We recognize that this was an upsetting incident,” Waters said. “Our goal is to make sure that everyone affected is prepared to move forward with learning.”

Results of the fire investigation will be released when they are available.

Appendix D: Emergency Contacts List

Federal	
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention	(770) 488-7100
Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (formerly Health Care Financing Administration) (during business hours)	(212) 264-4488
Federal Bureau of Investigation	
New Jersey	(973) 792-3000
New York City	(212) 384-1000
Nassau and Suffolk Counties	(631) 501-8600
Orange, Rockland, and Sullivan Counties	(845) 615-1700
Putnam and Westchester Counties	(914) 989-6000
Occupational Safety & Health Administration	1-800-321-OSHA (800-321-6742)
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Emergency Preparedness National Disaster Medical System	(301) 443-1167/1168 1-800-USA-NDMS (1-800-872-6367)
Connecticut	
Connecticut Department of Public Health	(860) 509-8000
Connecticut Office of Emergency Management	(860) 529-6893
Connecticut State Police (Bethany Area)	(203) 393-4200
Connecticut State Police (Bridgeport Area)	(203) 696-2500
New Jersey	
New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection Action Hotline	1-877-927-6337
New Jersey Department of Health and Senior Services	
Business hours:	(609) 292-7837
Nights and weekends:	(609) 392-2020
New Jersey Department of Mental Health (during business hours)	1-800-382-6717
New Jersey Office of Counter-Terrorism	(609) 341-3434
New Jersey Office of Emergency Management	(609) 882-4201
New Jersey State Police	(609) 882-2000
New York State	
New York State Department of Environmental Conservation	
New York City Office	(718) 482-4900
Spills Hotline (24 hour number to report a chemical spill)	1-800-457-7362
New York State Department of Health — (nights and weekends) — all matters	(518) 465-9720
New York State Department of Health (during business hours)	

	Bureau of Communicable Disease Control	(518) 473-4436
	Bureau of Hospital Services	(518) 402-1003
	Center for Community Health	(518) 474-5073
	Center for Environmental Health	(518) 402-7500
	Emergency Medical Services	(518) 402-0996
	Hauppauge Area Office	(631) 231-1880
	New Rochelle Area Office	(914) 654-7000
	Metropolitan Area Regional Office (New York City, Long Island, and Lower Hudson Valley)	(212) 268-7185
	Wadsworth Center Laboratories	(518) 474-2160
	New York State Office of Mental Health	1-800-349-8174
	New York State Police	(718) 319-5100
	Terrorism Hotline	1-866-SAFE-NYS (1-866-723-3697)
New York City		
	New York City Department of Environmental Protection-water and sewer emergencies	(718) 337-4357
	New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene - Bureau of Communicable Disease	
	Business hours:	(212) 788-9830
	Nights and weekends (Poison Control Center):	1-800-222-1222 or (212) POISONS (764-7667)
	New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene - Mental Health Services	1-800-543-3638
	New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene - Poison Control Center	1-800-222-1222
	New York City Department of Sanitation (during business hours)	(212) 219-8090
New York City Fire Department		
	Bronx	(718) 999-3333
	Brooklyn	(718) 999-4444
	Manhattan	(212) 999-2222
	Queens	(718) 999-5555
	Staten Island	(718) 999-6666
	New York City Fire Department — Emergency Medical Services (to request diversion)	(718) 422-7197
	New York City Fire Department — Emergency Medical Services Supervisor (for other notifications)	(718) 422-7397
	New York City Office of Emergency Management	(718) 422-8700
	New York City Office of the Chief Medical Examiner	(212) 447-2030
	New York City Police Department — Investigation Liaison Unit	(212) 374-5000
	New York City Police Department — Terrorism Hotline	1-888-NYC-SAFE (1-888-692-7233)

New York Counties Outside of New York City	
Nassau County Emergency Management Office	(516) 571-9627
Nassau County Department of Health	
Business Hours:	(516) 571-3471
Nights and Weekends:	(516) 742-6154
Nassau County Police	(516) 573-7000
Nassau, Suffolk, and Westchester Poison Control	(516) 663-2650 / (516) 542-2323
Poison Control (in all areas, connects with local poison control center)	1-800-222-1222
Putnam County Department of Health	(845) 278-6558
Putnam County Sheriff's Department	(845) 225-4300
Rockland County Department of Health Disease Control Center (during business hours)	(845) 364-2525
Suffolk County Department of Health Services — Bureau of Epidemiology and Disease Control	
Business Hours:	(631) 853-3005
Nights and weekends:	(631) 852-4820
Suffolk County Emergency Management Office	(631) 852-4900
Suffolk County Police	(631) 852-6000
Westchester County Department of Emergency Services	(914) 231-1900
Westchester County Department of Health	(914) 813-5000
Westchester County Police	(914) 864-7710
Other	
American Red Cross	
Blood Donations	1-800-GIVE LIFE (1-800-448-3543)
Blood Services	(215) 451-4111
Con Edison	1-800-75CONED (1-800-752-6633)
New York Blood Center	
Blood Donations	1-800-933-BLOOD (1-800-933-2566)
Blood Services	(212) 570-3000 / (212) 468-2000
Shelters	
In the event of an emergency, information regarding shelters will be posted on OEM's website at www.nyc.gov/oem .	
Each institution should identify for its own purposes its own vendor contact information:	
Cellular service	
Electricity	
Elevator repair	
Heating, ventilation, and air conditioning	
Information systems	

Medical gas	
Natural gas	
Pager	
Radio	
Regulated medical waste	
Sewer	
Steam	
Structural contractor	
Telephone service	
Transportation	
Water	

Appendix E: Glossary of Emergency Management Terms⁹

A

Affected Structure - a structure that received damage but is usable for its intended purpose.

After action report - a report covering response actions, application of SEMS, modifications to plans and procedures, training needs, and recovery activities.

American Red Cross ("ARC") - A quasi-governmental agency largely for relief of suffering and welfare activities during war and disaster. The ARC operates under a Congressional charter and is supported by the public. Internationally, it operates in accordance with the Treaty of Geneva.

Assistance - the provision on a humanitarian basis of material aid and services necessary to enable people to meet their basic needs for shelter, clothing, water and food. Assistance is available for extended periods, unlike relief supplies and services which are provided, free of charge, in the period immediately following a crisis.

C

Command - the act of directing, and/or controlling resources at an incident by virtue of explicit legal, agency, or delegated authority. May also refer to the Incident Commander.

Communications Unit - an organizational unit in the Logistics Section responsible for providing communication services at an incident or an EOC. A Communications Unit may also be a facility (e.g., a trailer or mobile van) used to provide the major part of an Incident Communications Center.

D

Damage Assessment - the preparation of specific, quantified estimates of physical damage resulting from a disaster, and recommendations concerning the repair, reconstruction or replacement of structures, equipment, and the restoration of economic activities. Also, the appraisal or determination of the actual effects on human, economic, and natural resources resulting from man-made or natural disasters.

Disaster Management A collective term encompassing all aspects of planning for and responding to disasters, including both pre- and post-disaster activities. It refers to the management of both the risks and the consequences of disasters.

Disaster - the occurrence of a sudden or major misfortune which disrupts the basic fabric and normal functioning of a society (or community). An event or series of events which gives rise to casualties and/or damage or loss of property, infrastructure, essential

⁹ This glossary is an adapted version of a glossary on the Web site of the Pacific Emergency Management Institute, <http://members.uia.net/simeon/glossary.html>.

services or means of livelihood on a scale which is beyond the normal capacity of the affected communities to cope with unaided.

Documentation Unit - functional unit within the Planning Section responsible for collecting, recording and safeguarding all documents relevant to an incident or within an EOC.

Drought.- a prolonged period without rain.

E

Emergency - an extraordinary situation in which people are unable to meet their basic survival needs, or there are serious and immediate threats to human life and well being. An emergency situation may arise as a result of a disaster, a cumulative process of neglect or environmental degradation, or when a disaster threatens and emergency measures have to be taken to prevent or at least limit the effects of the eventual impact.

Emergency Broadcast System ("EBS") - a voice radio communications system consisting of broadcast stations and interconnecting facilities authorized by the Federal Communications Commission ("FCC"). It is designed for use by the President and other national, State, and local officials to broadcast emergency information to the public in time of war, state of public peril, disaster, or other national emergencies as provided by plans.

Emergency Response The actions taken in response to a disaster warning or alert to minimize or contain the eventual negative effects, and those taken to save and preserve lives and provide basic services in the immediate aftermath of a disaster impact, and for as long as an emergency situation prevails.

Emergency Shelter.- a shelter provided for the communal care of individuals or families forced from their homes by a major disaster or an emergency.

Evacuation Area - the total area encompassed by the reception area necessary to receive evacuees from a risk area or group of closely related risk areas.

Evacuation - organized, phased, and supervised dispersal of civilians from dangerous or potentially dangerous areas, and their reception and care in safety areas.

Evacuees. Persons removed or moving from areas threatened or struck by a disaster.

Expected Losses/Effects - the expected number of lives lost, persons injured, damage to property and disruption of essential services and economic activity due to the impact of a particular natural or man-made hazard. It includes physical, social/functional and economic effects.

E

Finance/Administration Section - one of the five primary functions found of Incident Command Systems which is responsible for all costs and financial considerations.

Flash Flood Warning - issued when a flash flood is reported or is imminent. Take necessary precautions.

Flash Flood Watch - issued when flash flooding is possible in the area, a "be alert warning."

Flash Flood - follows a situation in which rainfall is so intense and severe and runoff so rapid that it precludes recording and relating it to stream stages and other information in time to forecast a flood condition.

Function - in ICS, function refers to the five major activities in the ICS, i.e., Command, Operations, Planning, Logistics and Finance/Administration.

H

Hand Crew - predetermined individuals that are supervised, organized, and trained principally for clearing brush as a fire suppression measure.

Hazard - a hazard is a natural or man-made phenomenon which may cause physical damage, economic losses, or threaten human life and well-being if it occurs in an area of human settlement, agricultural, or industrial activity.

Hazard Mapping - the process of establishing geographically where and to what extent particular phenomena are likely to pose a threat to people, property, infrastructure, and economic activities. Hazard mapping represents the result of hazard assessment on a map, showing the frequency/probability of occurrences of various magnitudes or durations.

Hazard - a condition with the potential of injuring personnel, damaging equipment or structures, losing material, or reducing ability to perform a prescribed function.

Human-made disasters - disasters or emergency situations where the principal, direct cause(s) are identifiable human actions, deliberate or otherwise.

Hurricane Warning - issued when hurricane conditions are expected in a specific coastal area within 24 hours or less. When a warning is issued, take immediate action to protect life and property.

Hurricane Watch - issued for coastal area when tropical storm or hurricane conditions threaten within 24-36 hours.

Hurricane - a tropical cyclone, formed in the atmosphere over warm ocean areas, in which wind speeds reach 74 miles per hour or more, and blow in a large spiral around a relatively calm center or "eye."

I

Incident Action Plan - the plan developed at the field response level which contains objectives reflecting the overall incident strategy and specific tactical actions and supporting information for the next operational period. The plan may be oral or written.

Incident Base - location at the incident where the primary logistics functions are

coordinated and administered. (Incident name or other designator will be added to the term "Base.") The Incident Command Post may be collocated with the Base. There is only one Base per incident.

Incident Command Post ("ICP") - the location at which the primary command functions are executed. The ICP may be collocated with the incident base or other incident facilities.

Incident Command System ("ICS").- the nationally used standardized on-scene emergency management concept specifically designed to allow its user(s) to adopt an integrated organizational structure equal to the complexity and demands of single or multiple incidents without being hindered by jurisdictional boundaries. ICS is the combination of facilities, equipment, personnel, procedures, and communications operating within a common organizational structure, with responsibility for the management of resources to effectively accomplish stated objectives pertinent to an incident.

Incident Commander - the individual responsible for the command of all functions at the field response level.

Incident - an occurrence or event, either human-caused or by natural phenomena, that requires action by emergency response personnel to prevent or minimize loss of life or damage to property and/or natural resources.

Information Officer - a member of the Command Staff responsible for interfacing with the public and media or with other agencies requiring information directly from the incident. There is only one Information Officer per incident. The Information Officer may have assistants. This position is also referred to as Public Affairs or Public Information Officer in some disciplines. At SEMS EOC levels, the information function may be established as a Coordinator or as a section or branch reporting directly to the EOC Director.

L

Life-Safety - refers to the joint consideration of both the life and physical well-being of individuals.

Logistics Section -one of the five primary functions found at all SEMS levels. The Section responsible for providing facilities, services and materials for the incident or at an EOC.

M

Mass Care Center - a place where care for both medical and personal needs is provided. Mass care centers are usually temporary in nature and established for a specific event.

Mitigation - a collective term used to encompass all activities undertaken in anticipation of the occurrence of a potentially disastrous event, including preparedness and long-term risk reduction measures. The process of planning and implementing measures to reduce the risks associated with known natural and manmade hazards and to deal with disasters which do occur.

O

Operations Section - one of the five primary functions found at all SEMS levels. The Section responsible for all tactical operations at the incident, or for the coordination of operational activities at an EOC.

P

Planning Section - (also referred to as Planning/Intelligence) one of the five primary functions found at all SEMS levels. Responsible for the collection, evaluation, and dissemination of information related to the incident, or an emergency, and for the preparation and documentation of Incident or EOC Action Plans. The section also maintains information on the current and forecasted situation, and on the status of resources assigned to the incident. At the SEMS Field Response level, the Section will include the Situation, Resource, Documentation, and Demobilization Units, as well as Technical Specialists. Other units may be added at the EOC level.

Preparedness Activities - preparedness activities enhance the abilities of individuals, communities, and businesses to respond to a disaster. Disaster exercises, disaster-preparedness training, and public education are examples of preparedness activities.

Preparedness - involves the development and regular testing of warning systems (linked to forecasting systems) and plans for evacuation or other measures to be taken during a disaster alert period to minimize potential loss of life and physical damage; the education and training of officials and the population at risk; the establishment of policies, standards, organizational arrangements and operational plans to be applied following a disaster impact; the securing of resources (possibly including the stockpiling of supplies and the earmarking of funds); and the training of intervention teams. It must be supported by enabling legislation.

Public Information Officer ("PIO") - the individual who has been delegated the authority to prepare public information releases and to interact with the media. Duties will vary depending upon the agency.

Recovery Phase Activities (post-disaster) - the period and actions taken following the emergency phase to enable victims to resume normal lives and means of livelihood, and to restore infrastructure, services, and the economy in a manner appropriate to long-term needs and defined development objectives. Recovery encompasses both rehabilitation and reconstruction, and may include the continuation of certain relief or welfare measures in favor of particular disadvantaged, vulnerable groups.

Relief phase - the period immediately following the occurrence of a sudden disaster (or the late discovery of a neglected/deteriorated slow-onset situation) when exceptional measures have to be taken to search and find the survivors as well as meet their basic

needs for shelter, water, food and medical care.

Resources. - personnel and equipment available, or potentially available, for assignment to incidents or to EOCs.

Response - activities to address the immediate and short-term effects of an emergency or disaster. Response includes immediate actions to save lives, protect property, and meet basic human needs. For example, Red Cross mass care, spontaneous and professional search and rescue, damage assessment, and communications are ways that people and organizations respond.

Risk Assessment -the process of identifying the likelihood and consequences of an event to provide the basis for informed decisions on a course of action.

Risk Management -the process whereby decisions are made and actions implemented to eliminate or reduce the effects of identified hazards.

Section Chief - the ICS title for individuals responsible for command of functional sections. Operations, Planning/Intelligence, Logistics and Administration/Finance. At the EOC level, the position title will be Section Coordinator.

Section - that organization level with responsibility for a major functional area of the incident or at an EOC, e.g., Operations, Planning, Logistics, Administration/Finance.

Severe Thunderstorm Watch - issued when thunderstorms may develop that could produce large hail (3/4 inch in diameter or larger, winds of 58 mph or more, lightning and heavy rainfall.

Slow-onset Disaster (Sometimes Creeping Disasters or Slow-onset Emergencies) - situations in which the ability of people to acquire food and other necessities of life slowly declines to a point where survival is ultimately jeopardized. Such situations are typically brought on or precipitated by drought, crop failure, pest diseases, or other forms of "ecological disaster, or neglect.

Span of control - the supervisory ratio maintained within an ICS or EOC organization. A span of control of five-positions reporting to one supervisor is considered optimum.

Spill Event -a discharge, in harmful amounts, of oil or hazardous substances on land or water.

Staging Area Managers - individuals within ICS organizational units that are assigned specific managerial responsibilities at Staging Areas. (Also Camp Manager.)

Staging Area - staging Areas are locations set up at an incident where resources can be placed while awaiting a tactical assignment. Staging Areas are managed by the Operations Section. Also, that location where incident personnel and equipment are assigned on a three (3) minute available status or immediate deployment to an operational site within the disaster area.

Sudden Natural Disasters - sudden calamities caused by natural phenomena such as earthquakes, floods, tropical storms, or volcanic eruptions. They strike with little or no

warning and have an immediate adverse impact on human populations, activities, and economic systems.

I

Technological Disasters - situations in which large numbers of people, property, infrastructure, or economic activities are directly and adversely affected by major industrial accidents, severe pollution incidents, nuclear accidents, air crashes (in populated areas), major fires, or explosions. In the context of an organization, this can apply to the failure of IT systems and other technology related systems.

Terrorism - the calculated use of violence or the threat of violence to attain goals that are political, religious, or ideological in nature. This can be done through intimidation, coercion, or instilling fear. Terrorism includes a criminal act against persons or property that is intended to influence an audience beyond the immediate victims.

Thunderstorm/Tornado Watch - issued when conditions are favorable for both tornadoes and severe thunderstorms.

Tornado - a local atmospheric storm, generally of short duration, formed by winds rotating at very high speeds usually in a counterclockwise direction. The vortex, up to several hundred yards wide, is visible to the observer as a whirlpool-like column of winds rotating around a hollow cavity or funnel. Winds have been estimated to be in excess of 300 miles per hour.

Tropical Storm Warning - may be issued when winds of 39-73 mph are expected. If a hurricane is expected to strike, tropical storm warnings will not usually be issued first.

Unified Command - in ICS, Unified Command is a unified team effort which allows all agencies with responsibility for the incident, either geographical or functional, to manage an incident by establishing a common set of incident objectives and strategies. This is accomplished without losing or abdicating agency authority, responsibility or accountability.

Unity of Command - the concept by which each person within an organization reports to one and only one designated person.

V

Volcano - an eruption from the earth's interior producing lava flows or violent explosions issuing rock, gasses, and debris.

Vulnerability Analysis - the process of estimating the vulnerability to potential disaster hazards of specified elements at risk. For engineering purposes, vulnerability analysis involves evaluation of theoretical and empirical data concerning the effects of particular phenomena on particular types of structures. For more general socioeconomic purposes, it involves consideration of all significant elements in society, including physical, social and economic considerations (both short- and long-term), and the extent to which essential services (and traditional and local coping mechanisms) are able to

continue functioning.

Vulnerability -the extent to which a community, structure, service, or geographic area is likely to be damaged or disrupted by the impact of a particular disaster hazard, on account of their nature, construction, and proximity to hazardous terrain or a disaster-prone area. For engineering purposes, vulnerability is a mathematical function defined as the degree of loss to a given element at risk, or set of such elements, expected to result from the impact of a disaster hazard of a given magnitude. It is specific to a particular type of structure, and expressed on a scale of 0 (no damage) to 10 (total damage).

Vulnerable Groups - categories of displaced persons with special needs, variously defined to include: unaccompanied minors, the elderly, and the mentally and physically disabled.

W

Warning.-a warning is issued by the National Weather Service to let people know that a severe weather event is already occurring or is imminent. People should take immediate safety action. (See also "watch.")

Watch - a watch is issued by the National Weather Service to let people know that conditions are right for a potential disaster to occur. It does not mean that an event will necessarily occur. People should listen to their radio or TV to keep informed about changing weather conditions. A watch is issued for specific geographic areas, such as counties, for phenomena such as hurricanes, tornadoes, floods, flash floods, severe thunderstorms, and winter storms.