

Emergency Communications

Being able to communicate is absolutely vital during an emergency situation. By developing a strategy, you can make sure your staff is safe, you can provide the public with the needed information, receive the assistance you need, and most importantly, get on the road to recovery.

June 16, 2009



Pacific County Sheriff's Office, Communications and Emergency Management Division
Stephanie Fritts, Director

Dates in Infamy.....

❖ What do these dates mean to you?

✓ January 20, 1993

✓ October 12, 1962



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December 2007 Storm

- ❖ Were we caught off guard?
- ❖ What were the biggest challenges?
 - **Issue and distribute public information and warning messages**



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What is in the Improvement Plan?

- ❖ Provide the public adequate information on an on-going and timely basis.
- ❖ Identify alternate and/or supplemental methods of distributing public information.
- ❖ Utilize fire and law enforcement frequencies for distribution of public information



What Does This Mean to You?

- The improvement plan is specific to what PCEMA can do.
- Success requires that each citizen and business also be prepared.
- So what can local businesses do in terms of emergency communications?



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High Level Interest

- ❖ Citizen Interest
- ❖ Governor Gregoire's support
- ❖ Senator Maria Cantwell's work

This work will result in enhanced weather system forecasting and the possibility of additional information being made available in respect to all weather patterns that affect the SW Washington coast.

- ❖ Each citizen, resident, and business must develop their own preparedness and communications plan.



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Emergency Communications Planning

- ❖ Developing your own emergency communications plan
- ❖ What are your objectives?
 - ✓ Communications only to employees, and only during a disaster?
 - ✓ Or is the intent to advise customers of interruptions to service?
 - ✓ Or is it for investors and stockholders? Or regulatory agencies?
 - ✓ Or is it some combination of these?



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Activation of the Plan

- ❖ Knowing when to activate a communications plan is critical to its success.
- ❖ Does a power outage warrant activating the communications plan?
 - ✓ Or air-conditioning problems?
 - ✓ Should the number of employees (or customers) impacted be the criteria?
 - ✓ Or the length of time, or severity, of the impact?
 - ✓ Some companies use a threshold of number of customers or employees impacted, or the amount and length of time revenue is disrupted, while others make it a judgment call
- ❖ Criteria, similar to the objectives, should be agreed upon, well understood, and widely published.



What Does the Plan Determine?

✓ How and with whom you will communicate!

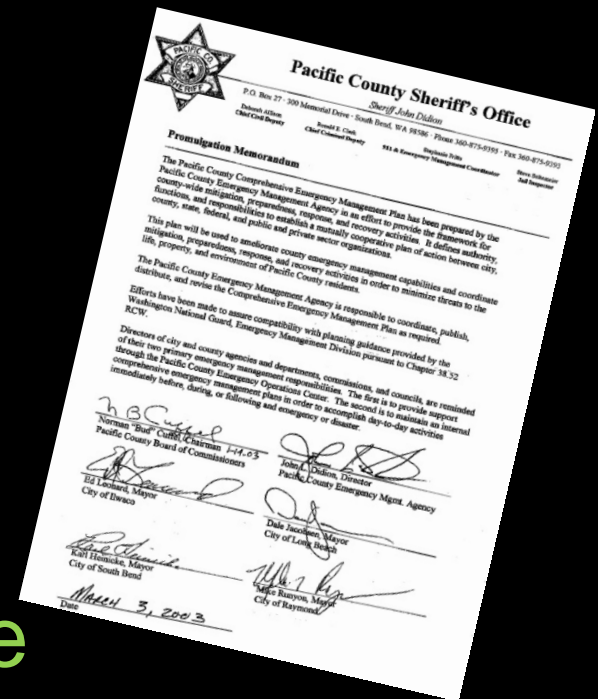
- Communicate and plan with vendors in advance
 - What if they don't hear from you on the appointed order day?

- Think about your communications options –
 - Satellite phones (Iridium)
 - Email
 - Amateur radio
 - POTS line telephone
 - Social media/Internet
 - Cell phones



6 Key Elements of Your Plan

1. Objectives
2. Criteria
3. Roles
4. Logistics
5. Publications and Training
6. Dry-run testing – Exercise the plan!



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follow “tsunamisteph” and “DisasterDenise” on Twitter

And check the PCEMA blog at

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