

Emergency Communications: Connecting, Informing, and Rebuilding Trust

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Why Emergency Comms Matter

Safety depends on clear communication

Silence creates fear

Trust is built before, during, after a crisis

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Steps for Handling an Emergency

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This isn't about perfection. It's about speed, clarity and consistency.

- Assess – What's Happening? What do we know?
- Confirm/Coordinate – Check with Police, Fire, EOC
- Communicate Quickly – Even if it's "We are aware, more soon"
- Keep it Simple – Short, Clear, Repeatable
- Use multiple channels – Website, social, alerts, media
- Update often – Even "no new info" is valuable
- Review/recover – Evaluate after the event



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Common Challenges

- Rumors spread faster than facts
- Too much detail can overwhelm
- Language and access barriers
- Staff fatigue

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Emergency Comms Triage Kit

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What you need in your kit:

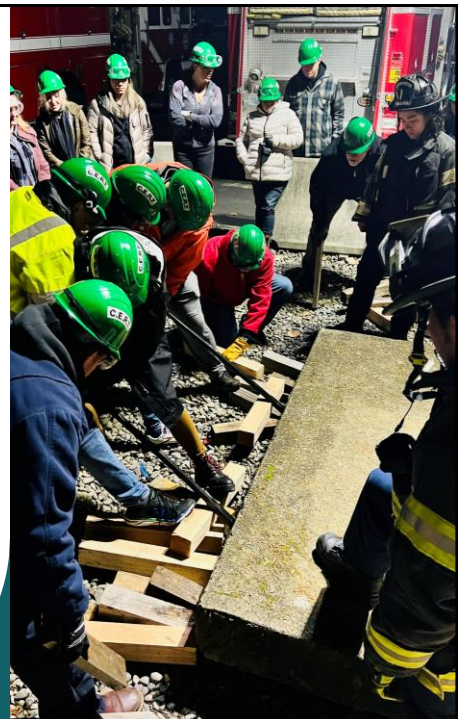
- ✓ Pre-scripted templates
- ✓ Contact list (PIOs, dept leads, media)
- ✓ Clear chain of command
- ✓ Platform access (social, web, alert systems)
- ✓ Visuals ready (maps, graphics, stock photos)
- ✓ Translation plan
- ✓ Offline backup (phone lists, templates)

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Lessons Learned

- Over-communicate > Under-communicate
- Lead with empathy, then facts
- Internal comms = just as critical
- Regional Partnerships reduce confusion



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Building Trust Before the Crisis

- Use “Blue-Sky Days” to build recognition
- Be transparent about limits
- Familiar voice = trusted voice in crisis

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Looking ahead:

- Expand translation & access
- Tech is great – but plan for outages
- Train more staff as communicators
- Always close the loop: get feedback

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Information is as
critical as
sandbags, plows
or fire engines.

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