

**Spokane Emergency Management
Emergency Support Function #15
Public Information**

Emergency Operations Center	
<p>Primary:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DEM <p>Support:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Departments/Agencies, All. 	<p>Likely Tasks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff the ECC “Public Information Officer” position. • Assist with the dissemination of warning and emergency instructions. • Prepare official emergency public information: Gather information; Verify information for accuracy; Monitor media reports. • Provide emergency public information: Coordinate releases to public; Inform the public about disaster damage, restricted areas, actions to protect and care for companion animals, farm animals, and wildlife, and available emergency assistance; Issue official emergency instructions and information to the public through all available means. • Establish communication links with local media. • Respond to media inquiries. • Monitor and respond to rumors. • Schedule news conferences. • Designate an information center where media representatives can be briefed, compose their news copy, and have telecommunications with their newspaper or station. • Establish, maintain contact with State EOC; Coordinate emergency information efforts. • Participate in, coordinate with state/federal Joint Information Center. • Maintain documentation: clip articles, log, and maintain list of releases sent.

PURPOSE

This Emergency Support Function is the base response document for the public information system. It sets forth policies and procedures and assigns responsibilities relating to the dissemination of public information to ensure that accurate and timely information is provided to Spokane County citizens on potential and actual emergency incidents and major emergencies/disasters.

POLICY

It is the policy of the Public Information System that information will be provided accurately and concise to the public during a significant event. The PIO assigned by their agency in accordance with the National Incident Management System and as per the Comprehensive Emergency Management basic plan, will provide information to the public as it is gathered from the specific agencies and coordinated if the incident involves multiple agencies/jurisdictions. Furthermore this document will discuss the following:

- Procedures for managing the public information system in support of an emergency/disaster operation.
- Principles of the public information system.
- Responsibilities of the public information section on an emergency/disaster operation.
- The relationship between the public information Section and other sections on an emergency/disaster.

PROCEDURES

Joint Information System/Joint Information Center Procedures

Protection of health and safety in the event of a major emergency or disaster requires many local, state, federal, and private industry organizations to provide accurate and timely information to the public.

A community's information system must be able to provide the public with all the information they need in order to cope with the emergency situation. The coordination of this information and its timely dissemination is extremely important.

Through a Joint Information System, it is possible for all public information releases to be coordinated by developing cooperative working relationships between local, state, and federal government agencies; business and industry organizations; and the news media.

A Joint Information Center needs to establish written procedures for operation during times of emergency or disaster. Procedures need to develop around the following functions:

- General JIS/JIC operation and guidance
- Gathering and verifying information
- Information coordination
- Rumor control
- Information dissemination

General JIS/JIC Operation and Guidance

The Joint Information System is intended to meet the needs of public information officials in a wide variety of situations. At the direction of the Incident/Unified Command, the municipal mayor(s) or manager(s) the Joint Information System may be activated during major emergencies/disasters or other situations deemed appropriate by local government officials, and/or those organizations that have statutory responsibility.

The JIC can be located with the Spokane Emergency Coordination Center.

General Guidance

The overriding concept of the JIS/JIC is that it recognizes that each of the individuals represented at the JIC may continue to represent his/her own agency, while at the same time receiving the benefits of a coordinated public information approach.

A JIC operation can result in the pooling of assets so that each individual agency will have far greater resources available than if it is functioning alone.

When the two prior recommendations are implemented effectively, the public will receive information faster, more accurately, more thoroughly, and with less risk of conflicting statements.

To ensure coordination among the parties present at the JIC, all PIO's will assemble in one general work area, and at briefings speak from one platform. Any conflict of information or opinion will be immediately identified, discussed, and hopefully resolved prior to news media briefings. All written releases will be coordinated through the Lead PIO's staff prior to their release to the public. To

ensure coordination between the JIC and those parties not present, the following principles will be followed, to the extent possible:

- Joint news conferences and briefings are preferred, however, in the event that this is not possible, scheduling will be coordinated so as to avoid conflict.
- Hard-copy releases and broadcast scripts will be exchanged whenever possible before release time.
- The JIC will make available to the media all emergency print and broadcast information releases received from other organizations.
- The JIC will refer news media inquiries to appropriate official spokespersons. If requested, JIC members will assist agencies in responding to inquiries.
- The JIC will make summaries of news conferences and fact sheets available to all organizations.
- The JIC will make every effort to assemble spokespersons from all responding agencies in one location.

The information flow to and from the JIC can come from many directions. A system has been established for information flow within the JIC. JIC participants will more than likely be receiving information from the following sources: media inquiries, updates from state and local on-scene personnel, updates from ECC personnel, and from news broadcasts.

The information coming into the JIC will either go to one of three areas—the local working PIO room, the rumor control room, or the Emergency Coordination Center.

Once the information request is in the JIC system an action must be taken. Several types of action may be necessary—the person receiving the call may be able to respond to the inquiry immediately if the answer is known. The information may be of the type that must be disseminated immediately. The inquiry may need to be routed to another agency PIO. The inquiry may require some research or some verification.

Whatever action is required the information needs to be coordinated with all agencies and the lead PIO.

As the information is being coordinated a decision will need to be made on what to do about the information. A media release may be required or a news conference may be needed to address the issue.

Once a decision has been made on the information, arrangements need to be made to disseminate the information.

Gathering and Verifying Information

The function of gathering and verifying information rests with the Local Working PIO's assigned to the JIC. The Local Working PIO's will have access to information from on-scene PIO's, ECC staff members, individual department sources, and from news broadcasts. **HOWEVER**, it is imperative that the all information released be approved by the IC and/or organizational policy.

Important Note:

If any federal or state PIO's function out of the JIC they will be responsible for following these procedures also!

Situation

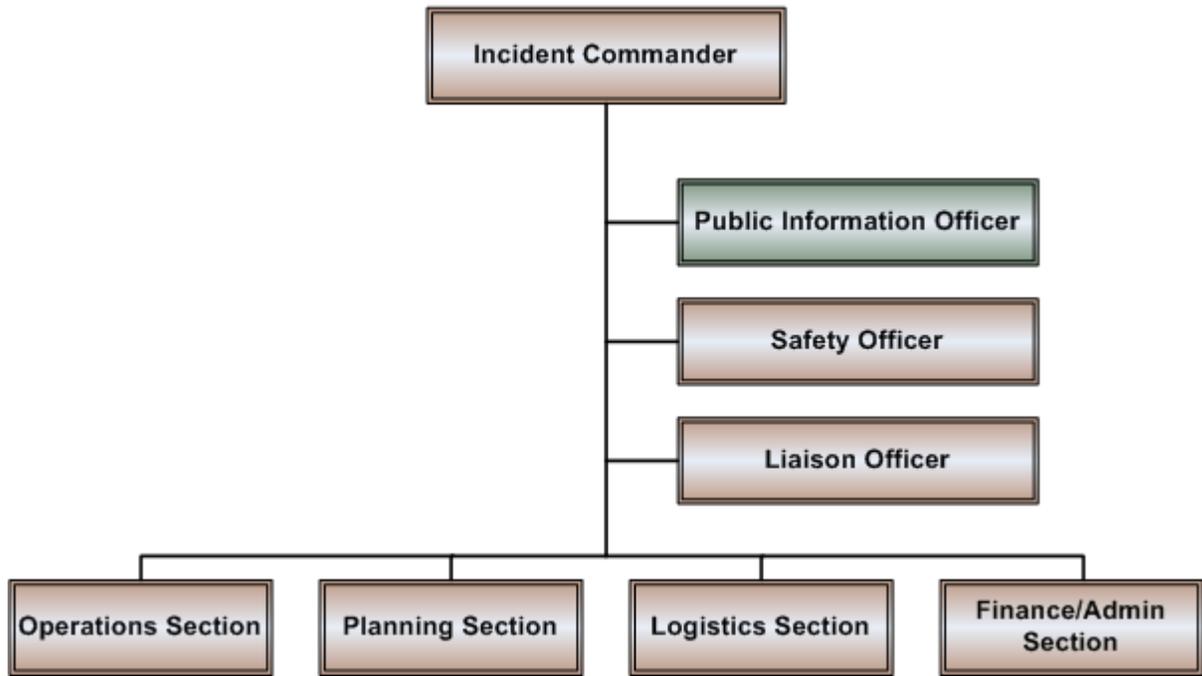
Spokane County and municipalities within the County have continuing programs that use various channels of communication, including the mass media, to provide necessary and desired information about local government activities and services to the general public.

In an effort to improve public safety and to minimize the loss of life and property during periods of emergency, the public needs, and generally desires, detailed information regarding protective actions. There are times, however, when disaster strikes without warning and the public information system cannot react rapidly enough to properly inform the public about the hazard. For this reason, it is important that prior to the emergency/disaster the public be made aware of potential hazards and of protective measures.

Incident Command System:

The Incident Commanders (ICs) structural organization builds from the top down; responsibility and performance begin with the ICS element and the IC. The IC(s) is/are responsible for the overall management of the incident. On most incidents, the command activity is carried out by a single IC. The need for a Unified Command (UC) occurs when an incident affects the statutory responsibility of more than one agency or jurisdiction. It provides guidelines to enable agencies with different legal, geographic, and functional responsibilities to coordinate, plan, and interact effectively. Command encompasses the IC and the Command Staff. Command Staff positions may be established to assign/delegate responsibility for command activities that the IC cannot perform due to the complexity of the incident or other situational demands. These positions may include the Public Information Officer, Safety Officer, and Liaison Officer, in addition to others as required and assigned by the IC.

The PIO is responsible for communicating with the public, media, and/or coordinating with other agencies, as necessary, with incident related information requirements. The PIO is responsible for developing and releasing information about the incident to the news media, incident personnel, and other appropriate agencies and organizations. Depending on the size or complexity of the incident, a lead PIO should be assigned for each incident and may have assistants, as necessary, including supporting PIOs representing other responding agencies or jurisdictions.



CONCEPT of OPERATIONS

A. Spokane County Agencies/jurisdictions:

1. Responsibilities include:

- Appoint a Public Information Officer (PIO).
- Conduct hazard awareness programs.
- Coordinate and maintain a working relationship with the media; particularly those who will disseminate emergency information to the public.
- Participate in periodic tests of the emergency alert system.
- Develop and maintain a public information and education program to include hazard awareness programs.
- Prepare emergency information for release during emergencies.
- Release emergency public information.
- Establish a means to monitor and respond to rumors.
- Schedule news conferences.
- Designate an information center that will be the single, official point of contact for the media during an emergency.
- Designate a facility where media representatives can be briefed, compose their news copy, and have telecommunications with their newspaper or station.
- List and maintain available media resources (call letters, names, addresses, and telephone numbers) that will disseminate emergency information to the public.
- During emergencies: Provide official public information; monitor and respond to rumors; schedule news conferences; designate an information center where media

representatives can be briefed, compose their news copy, and have telecommunications with their newspaper or station.

- Ensure all information is cleared with the Incident Commander, Unified Command or DEM EOC Manager before it is released to the media.
- Provide public information officers as appointed by agency Department Head or requested by DEM in accordance with Interlocal agreement.

B. The Emergency Coordination Center (ECC) PIO Section

The primary responsibility of the ECC PIO Section on an emergency/disaster operation is to provide timely, consistent and accurate information to the media, public and local agencies. The PIO Section supports emergency/disaster operations by:

- Provide accurate, consistent, complete information.
- Provide the public with an understanding of the facts of the emergency.
- Address rumors, inaccuracies and misperceptions.
- Serve as a resource for emergency responders.
- Through education, minimize hostility and public misconceptions.

Phases of Emergency Management

1. Mitigation

Hazard Mitigation Public Information programs are critically important and challenging. Spokane County and all its municipalities will carry on a continuing effort in this area coordinated by the governmental Public Information Officer(s) (PIO) These PIO's will draw from their expertise, creativity, and the other resources of all appropriate agencies, organizations, and individuals.

While not regarded as "emergency: public information, Hazard Mitigation Public Information should be approached as a topic of major importance to be covered in the regular public information programs using the best available tools and techniques of public and media relations. An example of this type of activity or awareness campaign is the ongoing effort to inform the public about preparedness activities.

2. Preparedness

Emergency Public Information Preparedness includes the development and maintenance of plans, procedures, checklists, contact lists, and public information materials.

Training:

Required training for the Command and General Staff:

- Introduction to the Incident Command System (ICS-100) <http://training.fema.gov/EMIWeb/IS/is100.asp>
- ICS for Single Resources and Initial Action Incidents (ICS-200)
- <http://training.fema.gov/EMIWeb/IS/is200.asp>
- Intermediate Incident Command System (ICS-300) <http://www.fema.gov/about/contact/statedr.shtm>
- National Incident Management System (NIMS), An Introduction (IS-700)
- <http://training.fema.gov/EMIWeb/IS/is700.asp>

Recommended courses:

- Basic Public Information Officers Course (G-290) <http://training.fema.gov/EMIWeb/EMICourses/E388.asp> and

- Advanced Public Information Officer (E-388) <http://training.fema.gov/EMIWeb/EMICourses/E388.asp>
- National Incident Management Systems (NIMS), Public Information Systems (IS-702) <http://training.fema.gov/EMIWeb/IS/is702.asp>
- National Response Plan (NRP), An Introduction (IS-800) <http://training.fema.gov/EMIWeb/IS/is800a.asp>

3. Response

The Public Information Officer will have direct involvement in public warnings and instructions for personal safety. In major emergencies or disasters, the Public Information Officer being directly involved with public information activities will fully mobilize and disseminate emergency instructions and information to the public in the following order of priority:

- Lifesaving/health preservation instructions
- Emergency status information
- Other useful information, originated by the government or in response to media inquiries.

In both the Response and Recovery Phases, the PIO and staff may employ on-scene information officers, schedule regular media briefings at the Emergency Operations Center, and establish a Joint Information Center (JIC), as appropriate and possible, depending on the nature of the hazard and the size and characteristics of the emergency or disaster.

4. Recovery

During the Recovery Phase, attention is focused on restoring the channels of communication with the public. Appropriate information will continue to be released, particularly on the restoration of essential services, travel restrictions, and the availability of recovery assistance programs. As time allows, actions taken during the emergency/disaster will be addressed and plans and procedures modified, as necessary.

Direction

Within Spokane and its municipalities the Public Information Officer will coordinate public information (preparedness/awareness campaigns) during normal (day-to-day) times. When emergency incidents arise which call for the establishment of a Public Information Officer at the scene of an emergency/disaster, the Incident Commander on-scene is responsible for contacting the PIO for assistance, when necessary, or for establishing an alternate on-scene Public Information Officer.

Other appointed City/County Department PIO's will be available to advise their managers and/or department heads on media and public communications related to their specific departments, with coordination through the Joint Information System as appropriate. When the ECC is activated, all approved releases shall be provided to the ECC.

Coordination of Public Information

It is essential that the Public Information System organization and activity be recognized as a coherent system. Within Spokane County, this includes giving information input access to the unincorporated areas, Cities, Towns, Departments, Districts, private entities and others that are included in the Comprehensive Emergency Management System. For proper coordination in a major emergency or disaster, it is essential that emergency information be released timely, accuracy, consistency, and authenticity. The activation of the joint information system can prioritize

community messaging. The following approach is typical for emergency incidents and major emergencies/disasters.

1. Emergency Incidents –

At emergency incidents on-scene Information Officers will release information at a single location. It is desirable that the public information representatives from other involved agencies join the Information Officer in releasing information through a single coordination point on-scene. The Information Officer will coordinate all information releases with final approval given by the Incident Commander.

2. Joint Information System (JIS) Planning

The JIS integrates incident information and public affairs into a cohesive organization designed to provide consistent, coordinated, accurate, accessible, timely, and complete information during crisis or incident operations. The mission of the JIS is to provide a structure and system for developing and delivering coordinated interagency messages; developing, recommending, and executing public information plans and strategies on behalf of the IC; advising the IC concerning public affairs issues that could affect a response effort; and controlling rumors and inaccurate information that could undermine public confidence in the incident response effort.

The messages are approved by the Incident Commander/Unified Command. Each incident/agency and/or stakeholders approved message can be sent to a central location, referred to as a JIC, to coordinate the key message points from the jurisdictions/agencies having statutory responsibility. This system will ensure clear, concise and coordination of critical messaging to the public. The sharing of joint information at a central location can happen outside of a community ECC activation when several agencies having statutory responsibility are involved.

The JIC is a central location that facilitates operation of the JIS. It is a location where personnel with public information responsibilities perform critical emergency information functions and crisis communications. If possible, it is advised to have location(s) identified that could be used as a JIC before an incident occurs; ideally, in close proximity to the ECC. It is important that these locations meet the working needs of the PIO function and allow easy access for the media. Once a JIC has been identified and requested, it is recommended to have appropriate equipment and other resources available and operational. The PIO should develop standard operating procedures on the actual use of the JIC and the equipment and staff that may be needed.

ORGANIZATION AND ASSIGNMENT OF RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Organization

The Emergency Information System organization within Spokane and its municipalities are integral parts of the Direction and Control Organizations countywide. For most situations, the Emergency Information System will be handled by a single PIO. For major emergencies or disasters the Emergency Information System staff will be set up with an organization as shown below (see ECC Activation).

2. Assignment of Responsibilities

- Develop a capability to rapidly release emergency instructions and information to the public through all available means.
- Coordinate the receipt of all calls from the media and the public concerning an emergency situation and respond with official information or relay calls to other ECC staff, or the Emergency Management Coordinator.

- Obtain reports or situation summaries from ECC representatives of all emergency organization elements to maintain current status of the situation.
- Prepare news releases.
- Conduct situation briefings for visitors, media, etc.
- Conduct tours of the area affected by the disaster, as appropriate.
- Establish a field information center, if appropriate, at a location near the command post. Be prepared to work with the ECC and/or JIC if activated.
- Arrange interviews with key personnel, when requested by the media.

ADMINISTRATION AND LOGISTICS

The ECC PIO has designated space in the Spokane ECC; and PIO needs for communications, supplies, and equipment is covered in the ECC Plan.

The ECC has a designated area for press. If the ECC/JIC is activated – the primary location is 1618 N Rebecca, Spokane WA, 99217

A major activity of the Emergency Management organization in non-emergency times is the development and refinement of Emergency Information Materials.

Tabs

Tab 1 Normal (day-to-day) Activities Checklist

This section of the manual provides a general checklist for PIO's during normal (day-to-day) activities.

Updated 12/2014

1	Disseminate information by all available means to include the television, radio, newspaper, magazines, brochures, word-of-mouth, campaigns, presentations, special meetings, conferences, answering inquiries, newsletters, fliers, etc.
2	Involvement in emergency management mitigation and preparedness activities
3	Educate the public through awareness/preparedness campaigns.
4	Work with other PIO's in the community when developing awareness/preparedness campaigns.
5	Work with community leaders and department heads when developing awareness/preparedness campaigns.
6	Establish a yearly awareness/preparedness campaign program. Some topics that may be addressed will depend on the hazards in the community especially related to your organization.
7	Participate in the community's drill and exercise program. Emergency Information plans and procedures can best be tested during realistic drills and exercises. Changes to the plans and procedures can be undertaken after an exercise based on comments and suggestions from participants.
8	Prepare to provide information to the public for all kinds of emergencies and disasters. A thorough understanding of the hazards facing the community is essential.
9	Make an effort to create a good image for the department or agency they represent.
10	Maintain a comprehensive list of media and other government and industry contacts.
11	Establish a good working relationship with local media.
12	Be able to deal with the media, know how different types of media function, what deadlines different media have, and which audiences each of the different types of media target.
13	Be able to write media releases and articles when necessary.
14	Maintain a thorough knowledge of the department or agency you represent. Have an understanding of the audience you represent, the public, media, state and local public officials, public interest groups, service organizations, church groups, trade organizations, industry, business, etc. The target audience involves everyone who the PIO may need to contact for assistance during emergency situations.
15	Be familiar with the technology of the business, the tools of the trade! Technology changes daily, you must be able to keep up with the changing times!
16	Must be able to provide accurate, timely, understandable, and honest information!
17	Budget your time, an emergency can occur at any moment! Duties may seem to be endless, stay organized!
18	Schedule time for the emergencies, you need to be prepared!

Tab 2 EMERGENCY ALERT SYSTEM PLAN

A. Purpose

Upon determination to activate the Emergency Alert System from the ECC, the ECC PIO coordinates the dissemination of Emergency Public Information to the general public. This message will be given to the ECC Manager. Please see the Inland Northwest EAS Plan. [Reference ESF2]

The activation of the EAS system should only occur when there is an imminent potential for a disaster causing the loss of life or major property damage. Some examples of incidents that would warrant the activation of the EAS system are:

- Major fires that involve the evacuation of people, i.e. “Firestorm 1991” and the Spokane Hangman Hills fire.
- Significant and major hazardous/toxic materials spill, i.e. train derailments, commercial carrier spills, major gas line ruptures, etc.
- Significant and major spills may involve the evacuation of people. Significant spills are capable of environmental damage or have the potential for an immediate hazard to the public and may need state level response.
- The National Weather Service may issue EAS messages for severe weather warnings such as tornado, flash flood, severe thunderstorm, winter storm, or the rapid onset of flooding etc.; as well as updated messages for these events, providing that immediate notification to the public is essential and the messages meet the criteria for EAS notification.

Otherwise, alternative methods of dissemination, such as a “Safety Advisory” should be considered.

- Dam failures, i.e. Post Falls Dam, Upriver Dam etc.
- Natural disasters, i.e., Mount St. Helens, extreme avalanche potential, major earthquakes, etc.
- Civil disorder emergencies, i.e. riots, snipers, etc.
- Roadway failures, i.e. bridge failure, major road washout/collapse, etc.

EAS activation is not limited to these events alone. It is hoped that by using them as a measuring guide, it will help to determine if an incident meets the implied criteria for activation.

OFFICIALS AUTHORIZED TO ACTIVATE THE SYSTEM:

- (1) County Sheriff or trained designee
- (2) County Emergency Manager or trained designee
- (3) National Weather Service

EAS is for the initial message only. Originator must provide update information to the media using a PIO or through follow-up press releases or interviews. Update information should be provided at least hourly with information on the termination of an event provided rapidly.

B. Prepared Announcement for Emergency Alert System

"This is _____ of the _____.

We have requested the activation of the Emergency Alert System for Spokane County to inform the public of an emergency incident at the

_____.

Citizens in the _____ should do the following:

Important Note: *Announcements should 1) describe conditions, the area and people affected, 2) what procedures the public should follow, 3) be very specific and 4) be repeated at least twice. Conclude with specific information as to when further details and announcements will be available to the public.*

- C. Organization and Assignment of Responsibilities
 - The “designated official” for EAS broadcasts in Spokane County

EAS Activation Checklist

The checklist items in this section exist for use when activating the EAS. Persons authorized to activate the EAS are designated in the EAS plan.

1	If an emergency message is deemed necessary for transmission via the EAS. Emergency Information Organization officials will prepare the message for immediate broadcast.
2	Announcements should be very specific
3	Check pre-scripted messages for examples. A sample format has been included in the EAS plan.
4	Announcements should conclude with exact information on what citizens should do as a result of the emergency/disaster situation.
5	Check hazard specific checklists for information if appropriate.
6	Be specific on what areas of the community are affected by the situation.
7	While this is taking place other Emergency Information Staff should be preparing to disseminate additional public information via all other available media avenues. Follow-up announcements can also be prepared.
8	The designated official sending the EAS announcement will then be asked to further identify himself and officially request the activation of the Spokane County EAS and broadcast the emergency message.
9	Authorization procedures are kept at the EOC. All designated officials have been trained in the use of the procedures.

Tab 3 Emergency Incident Checklist

This section of the manual provides a general checklist for PIO's during emergency incidents. More specific checklists pertaining to other aspects of a PIO's role in an emergency management system are provided elsewhere in this manual.

This checklist should be reviewed periodically by members of the Emergency Information Organization and updated at least annually. This checklist is highly useful to new members of the public information staff, and they should review it when joining the organization.

1	Maintain updated media contact list. Media and other contact lists must to be updated for use during emergency incidents.
2	Make sure enough staff is on-scene at the incident to handle media requests. Any PIO may be called to assist with the information function at the scene of an emergency situation. PIO's must be prepared to function in the field when directed to do so!
3	The Incident Commander is in charge of the emergency incident. Take your directions from the Incident Commander. Establish quickly what information you can release on your own.
4	Maintain contact with the Incident Commander, even when members of the Information Officer's staff are briefing the media.
5	Be prepared to brief the media as soon as the Information Officer function is established. The media will more than likely already be on-scene when you arrive.
6	Establish a media staging area that is: 1) safe, 2) in close proximity to the action, 3) provides a backdrop for interesting video (i.e.; emergency equipment, etc., and 4) respects the privacy of any victims.
7	Do not use danger as an excuse for keeping the media away from a scene. In most cases you will be able to arrange for footage and pictures to be taken near the actual scene of the incident.
8	Know which media you have on the scene with you, this can prove to be beneficial later in the event!
9	Remember that normal procedures change during emergency situations. For example, the same media that has worked with you over the past several months in setting up a fire prevention campaign will begin to question aspects of policy decisions made during the incident.
10	Be prepared! Attend all on-scene briefings for emergency personnel and stay close to the Incident Commander. Do not release any information without verification and approval from the IC. Remember that due to the nature of emergencies, the first information you receive is often times wrong.
11	The media may want to talk to the Incident Commander and/or on-scene officials at some point in the operation. Arrange to make this happen at regular intervals.
12	Emergency incidents are dynamic and can often evolve into major emergencies or disasters. Be flexible and be prepared to change modes of operation when necessary.
13	When working on-scene as the PIO, remember to keep other members of the Emergency Information Organization informed.
14	Learn from mistakes! Review written reports of past incidents.

Tab 4 ECC Activation Checklist

Spokane County Emergency Management personnel utilize the Emergency Coordination Center (ECC) concept to assist with coordination during major emergencies and disasters. Depending on the scope of the emergency it may become necessary to activate the ECC.

Emergency Information is an essential ECC function and needs to be staffed accordingly. The following checklist has been developed to assist PIO's in their role of gathering, verifying, coordinating, and disseminating information.

1	Upon notification of ECC activation, PIO will be directed by their Agency Official to report to the ECC as stated in the basic plan of the CEMP.
2	Upon arrival report to the ECC Manager or Operations Officer for an update on the situation.
3	Contact the jurisdictional agency/community to begin coordination of public information activities.
4	Contact on-scene Incident Commanders and/or Field PIO on scene directly, if possible, for any additional information.
5	Review list of items needed to support PIO activities during ECC activation.
6	Review PIO procedures for emergencies and disasters/major emergencies.
7	Review PIO hazard specific checklists—if appropriate.
8	Call in additional support personnel if needed.
9	Prepare initial information summary as soon as possible after arrival.
10	Make sure media briefing area is set-up and ready for operation.
11	Begin release of information to public/media. Make sure all appropriate personnel/officials have seen and agreed to the information that is being released.
12	Post and disseminate released information to other ECC staff members.
13	Establish specific times for news releases, fact sheets, statements, or updates.
14	Have staff prepared to “receive” media at the briefing center.
15	Make sure every effort is made to coordinate with other emergency information staff to keep them informed.
16	Make sure you know where key county/city staff is located. You may need them to make statements to the public/media. Keep them briefed on important happenings.
17	Consider activation of Joint Information System to further enhance the coordination of information during the emergency/disaster situation.

Tab 5 PIO - Hazard Specific Checklists Samples

Included in this section are suggestions for specific hazards. Public Information Officers should review the checklist for the hazard the community is facing and incorporate the comments into news releases if appropriate. The checklists have been designed to serve as reminders to PIO's during an incident.

All hazard specific checklists should be reviewed several times a year and updated when necessary.

Checklists have been developed for the following hazards:

- Hazardous Materials Spill/Release
- Flood
- Winter Storm

Hazardous Materials Spill/Release

Hazardous Materials Safe Handling in the Home:

- Citizens should be encouraged to prevent chemical accidents at home; awareness programs can focus on the following items:
- Recognize that flammable liquids are extremely dangerous and should be used only in certain ways.
- Store all liquids such as gasoline, acetone, benzene, and lacquer thinner in tightly capped, metal cans, away from the house.
- Store 1 gallon or less of each.
- Use storage can with an Underwriter's Laboratories (UL) or Factory Method (FM) approved label.
- Keep hazardous materials away from heat sources and open flames.
- If materials are used in-doors, make sure the area is well ventilated.
- Never use gasoline or similar materials to start or freshen a fire.
- Paint thinner, kerosene, charcoal lighter fluid, turpentine, and other combustible liquids are flammable when heated, when in a spray, or when spread in a thin layer over a large surface. Keep all such materials away from heat.
- Store all toxic chemicals away from children.
- Always wash thoroughly after exposure to strong chemicals. Change clothes and allow them to dry in a well-ventilated cool area.
- The dangers from chemical exposure come from inhalation, skin exposure, swallowing, and eye exposure. Read the instructions on the chemical label for the first aid measure for each of these.

If a Chemical Accident Occurs in the Home:

- Get out immediately if there is a fire or explosion. Call the fire department. Do not fight the fire alone!
- Avoid breathing toxic fumes. Stay away from the house.
- Wash any chemicals off your skin immediately.
- Discard contaminated clothing.

In the Event of an Industrial/Transportation Chemical Accident:

- Stay out of the area.
- If near the area, don't panic. Follow the directions of those in charge.
- Leave instantly to avoid breathing the toxic fumes.
- Wash any chemicals off your skin. Discard contaminated clothing.
- Don't attempt to rescue someone who has been overcome by fumes unless you have proper respiratory equipment.
- Stay tuned to radio and television for directions from public officials.
- If directed to evacuate, move quickly, via designated routes, out of the area or to specified shelters.
- If directed to shelter-in-place, stay in-doors, seal windows and doors with tape, newspapers, plastic, or other similar material. Shut off any appliances, air conditioners, etc. that take in air from the outside. Remain calm and await further direction.

Flood

Flooding Preparedness Activities for PIO:

- Ensure flood warning information is disseminated to the public by radio, television, etc. Include information on shelters opened, evacuation routes, emergency assistance numbers, transportation assistance provisions, etc.
- Based on flood hazard information have a general knowledge of those areas in community prone to flooding.

Flooding Health and Safety Instructions:

- Stock food that requires little cooking and no refrigeration.
- Keep portable radio, flashlights, candles, etc. available.
- Keep first aid and critical medical supplies at hand.
- Keep automobile fueled.
- Keep materials like sandbags, plywood, plastic sheeting, and lumber handy for emergency waterproofing.
- Store drinking water in closed, clean containers. (water service may be interrupted)
- If time permits, and flooding is likely, move essential items and furniture to upper floors of home.
- If forced to evacuate, move to safe area as quickly as possible, before roads are closed.
- Shut off electric and water service to home and follow public announcements on what to do about gas service.

When Flooding Conditions Occur:

- Monitor flooding/weather conditions on radio and television.
- Get to high ground and stay there.
- Do not try to cross a flowing stream or travel through flooded intersections/roads in a vehicle. (many flood-related deaths have occurred in vehicles)
- Avoid areas subject to flooding.
- If your vehicle stalls, abandon it immediately and seek higher ground.
- During evacuation take warm clothing and blankets, flashlights, radio, personal documents and identification, and necessary emergency supplies to include special food and medicine.
- During evacuation follow recommended routes.

After the Flood:

- Use flashlights instead of lanterns, matches, or torches in damaged buildings.
- Report broken utility lines, etc. to proper authorities.
- Clean, dry, and check appliances and other equipment before use.
- Purify all water before drinking.
- Discard all food contaminated by floodwaters.
- Stay away from flood damaged areas. Sightseeing interferes with rescue efforts.
- Keep tuned to radio and TV for advice and instructions. Government should be providing information on where medical attention can be obtained, where to go for emergency assistance such as housing, clothing, food, etc., and other ways in which a citizen can recover from the flood emergency.

Winter Storm

Winter Storm Preparedness Activities for the PIO:

- Ensure Winter Storm information is disseminated to the public by radio, television, etc. Include information on shelters opened, evacuation routes, emergency assistance numbers, transportation assistance provisions, etc.

Winter Storm Preparedness Activities for the Public:

- Insulate homes. Caulk and weather-strip doors and windows or cover windows with plastic. Walls and attics should also be insulated.
- Maintain a two-week supply of food, water, heating fuel, and clothing. Keep battery-operated radio and flashlight on hand.
- Prevent fire hazards due to overheated coal or oil burning stoves, fireplaces, heaters, or furnaces by installing adequate heat sources.
- If citizens live in rural areas they should be instructed to make trips for necessary supplies before the storm develops.
- Winterize vehicles.
- Keep a full tank of gas. In addition to being prepared to travel, this will lessen the chance of tank freezing.
- Carry a winter storm kit in vehicle. Include: 1) blankets, 2) matches or candles, 3) first aid kit, 4) shovel, 5) sack of sand, 6) flashlight, 7) windshield scraper, 8) booster cables, 9) tow chains, 10) road maps, 11) extra clothing, 12) empty coffee can with lid for melting snow to drink, and 13) high-energy, nonperishable food.

Instructions to Prevent Pipes From Freezing During a Winter Storm:

- Keep pipes from freezing by wrapping them in insulation or layers of old newspaper, lapping the ends, and tying them around the pipes. Cover newspaper with plastic to keep out the moisture.
- When it is extremely cold, let faucets drip a bit. This may prevent freezing.
- Know where the valve is for shutting off the water. Shutting off the main valve and draining all the pipes may prevent freezing and bursting.
- Have emergency heating equipment, such as wood, kerosene, or coal burning stove, or fireplace, in case furnace won't operate, be sure to allow for good ventilation.
- Monitor the weather service bulletins for news of approaching storms.

During the Winter Storm:

- Stay indoors.
- If outdoor activity is necessary don't overwork. Dress warmly in loose-fitting, layered, lightweight clothing. Wear a hat. Mittens will keep hands warmer than gloves.
- Watch for signs of cold weather exposure when outdoors. These include uncontrollable shivering, such as, vague, slow, slurred speech, memory lapses, immobile or fumbling hands, frequent stumbling, lurching walk, drowsiness, exhaustion, and inability to get up after a rest.
- Cold weather exposure can be treated as follows: get victim into dry clothing; put victim in a warm bed with a hot water bottle, warm towels, heating pad, or some heat source; concentrate heat on the trunk of the body first; keep the head low and feet up; give victim warm drinks; never give the victim alcohol, sedatives, tranquilizers, or pain relievers; keep the person quiet, don't massage or rub; call for professional help if symptoms persist.

If house is without heat do the following:

- Use alternate heat source such as wood stove or fireplace.
- Use only one or two rooms. Close off the rest of house.
- Hang blankets over windows. Stuff cracks around doors with rugs or newspapers.
- Have all members of family dress warmly in layers.
- Eat well-balanced meals and quick-energy food such as raisins or other dried fruit.
- Wear hats, especially when sleeping.
- Sleep with several light blankets rather than one heavy one.
- Do not travel. Travel only if essential, keep a full tank of gas, travel in pairs, convoy with other vehicles, plan travel routes before departing, select alternate routes, identify shelters along your route. If possible travel only during the day, keep radio on for the latest weather information and seek shelter immediately if the storm becomes worse.

If Trapped in a Vehicle in a Winter Storm:

- Avoid overexertion.
- Stay in your vehicle.
- Keep fresh air in the vehicle; beware of carbon monoxide poisoning, run motor/heater only when necessary.
- Turn on inside light at night so work crews can see vehicle.
- Exercise by clapping hands and moving arms and legs.
- Avoid staying in one position.
- Keep watch, one person should always stay awake.

Tab 6 Media Release Information Instructions

The purpose of this form is for gathering information needed about a given situation in an orderly fashion to brief and update all media groups on the current situation. The form can also be used to write media releases. It also gives the PIO a formal record of all information released to the media.

It is suggested that one of these forms be prepared for every release of information to the media. Any announcement formats used should have copies attached to this form for the record.

Instructions For Completing the Form (attached)

Field	Definition
PIO	The name of the public information officer assigned to this situation. This may or may not be the same person preparing the form.
Location	The physical location of the media release point. (i.e.; Command Post, EOC, JIC, Office, etc.)
Date	The date of the release.
Time	Time of release.
Release	Initial, Update, or Final. Number each release.
Incident Name	Every incident is given a name.
Incident Number	Every incident is given a number for reference purposes.
Incident Commander	Every incident has a commander, a person in-charge of the situation. During a major emergency or disaster this may be the Emergency Management Coordinator.
Jurisdictions Involved	List all cities, counties, states, etc. working at the event.
Type of Incident	List general type of incident—flood, fire, earthquake, hurricane, etc.
Area Involved in Incident	Indicate area involved in the incident—river flood basin, industrial park, etc.
Time Began	Approximate time and date the incident began to unfold. When it was first reported or declared to be an emergency situation.
Estimated Date/Time Situation will be Contained	The official time estimated that the situation would be brought under control. (if it can be estimated)
Geographic Area of Involvement	The actual borders of the situation. Use streets, roads, highways, city boundaries, etc.
Percent Contained	Relates to fires or floods. Give description if applicable.
Control Declared	Relates primarily to wildland fires. Give date and time the situation is under control.
Current Threats	List things that are being watched out for and attempts are being made to protect from damage or injury.
Current Problems/Potential Threats	What special problems are currently being faced? Wind, heavy rain, access problems, equipment shortages, etc.
Estimated Loss Value/Current	Estimated value of lost or damaged property, structures, equipment, etc.
Injuries	List number and type.

Field	Definition
Deaths	List number and type.
Cooperating Agencies	Who responded?
Current Weather Conditions	Temp, humidity, winds, and any other important and relevant general weather information.
Predicted Weather (Next 24 Hours)	From NWS
Number of Personnel Involved	How many involved in the response?
Number of Pieces of Equipment	Total number of apparatus on scene.
Prepared Narrative/rDEMrks	Type any prepared format comments you want to release or general rDEMrks or continued information from any of the above boxes.
List of Equipment	By agency, types, etc.
Plans for Next 24 Hours	General plans that have been formulated for dealing with the situation.
Prepared By	Name of person collecting the information.
IC Approval	Incident Commander approval.
Release Authorized by	Name of individual authorizing release of information and the earliest date/time at which it is authorized for release.

Tab 7 Pre-scripted Media Release Samples

General

509-----

Telephone Number

Name & Title of Approver

EMERGENCY STATUS RELEASE

News Release Number: _____

Date/Time: _____

Subject: General Emergency

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

This is _____ from the Spokane Department of Emergency Management. The Flooding
_____ has caused traffic problems/ hazards in the area of _____
bounded by _____

Please avoid these roads/streets. If you must travel, please avoid the areas affected by this situation.

Other comments:

Flooding

509-----

Telephone Number

DEM Coordinator

Name & Title of Approver

PUBLIC ADVISORY RELEASE

News Release Number: _____

Date/Time: _____

Subject: Flooding

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The National Weather Service has issued a flood watch for persons living in (what areas?). (Name, Title) for the National Weather Service has advised that continued heavy rainfall over the next (#) hours may cause (minor? major?) flooding along the (name?) river. The river is expected to rise above its flood stage of (#) feet on (time/day). Evacuation may be necessary. Government officials from Spokane County are monitoring the situation. Stay tuned for further information.

The Spokane Department of Emergency Management advises that persons residing in (what areas?) should take the following precautions to provide for the safety and security of their family and property:

1. Determine if your property is above or below predicted flood levels.
2. Gather essential items you will need in case evacuation is necessary—medicine, special foods, clean water in containers, first aid supplies, valuable documents, flashlights and batteries, etc. You will also need these items in case you are stranded in your home by floodwaters.
3. Learn the safest route from your home to safe areas.
4. Keep a battery-powered radio tuned to a local station to receive emergency instructions.
5. Gather sandbags, plywood, plastic sheeting, and lumber for emergency waterproofing.
6. Keep your automobile fueled.

According to DEM, if evacuation is necessary shelters will be opened for public use. Report to the reception centers/shelters established. Be sure to check on any neighbors who may need assistance.

DEM urges residents not to use the telephone for additional information, but rather rely on the radio and TV broadcasts and follow whatever instructions are given. For special assistance call 2-1-1. Stay tuned to local radio and television programming for further updates and emergency instructions.

Winter Storms

509-

Telephone Number

DEM Coordinator

Name & Title of Approver

PUBLIC AWARENESS RELEASE

Subject: Winter Storm

Date: _____

It's the middle of winter and it's snowing heavily outside. Over _____ inches of snow has fallen in the last 12 hours. The temperature is dropping fast and strong winds are blowing the loose snow into large drifts, hampering traffic and cutting down visibility. You are in the midst of a blizzard—the most dangerous type of winter storm. According to the Spokane Department of Emergency Management, winter weather can turn brutal with surprising swiftness. A winter storm can become a killer, unless you plan ahead. Every year, needless lives and property are lost and countless people suffer hardships due to winter storms that bring extreme cold, strong winds, freezing rain, ice and snow. DON'T become a winter statistic. Educate yourself and the members of your family on how to get through rough winter weather. DEM urges residents to learn how to cope with various winter storm situations. “Know what to do if you become isolated in your home during a snowstorm, or when you experience treacherous driving conditions or become stranded in your car. Beware of exposure to freezing temperatures, overexertion from shoveling, fires from overheated or faulty furnaces, and other winter emergencies. Check your supply of food, fuel, medicines, first aid supplies, and batteries for radios and flashlights before the cold weather arrives. Keep a blanket, flashlight, extra gloves and hat, and shovel in your car in case of an emergency. Keep your car in good condition, properly serviced, equipped with snow tires and filled with gas.” According to DEM, “being prepared for winter's harsh weather could save your life. For advice and information call 509.477.2204 during normal business hours.

Winter Storms
509
Telephone Number

DEM Coordinator

Name & Title of Approver

PUBLIC ADVISORY RELEASE

News Release Number: _____

Date/Time: _____

Subject: Winter Storm

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The National Weather Service has issued a Winter Storm Watch for Spokane County. The National Weather Service has advised that severe weather conditions are possible, including heavy snow, sleet, freezing rain and high winds. A large winter storm, currently centered over (area) is expected to hit (insert name of jurisdiction) sometime on (day morning/afternoon). The storm has dropped up to (#) inches of snow in some areas, and is accompanied by (sleet? freezing rain? hail? etc) and winds reaching (#) miles per hour, causing severe drifting.

According to the Spokane Department of Emergency Management, residents are advised to take the following precautions to provide for the safety and security of their family and property during a winter storm:

1. Keep your radio or television tuned to a local station to keep informed of current weather conditions and forecasts.
2. Be prepared for isolation at home by keeping adequate supplies of heating fuel, non-perishable food, lean water, flashlights with extra batteries, first aid supplies, extra blankets, and a battery-powered radio. A fire extinguisher is also recommended, in case the help of the fire department is not available.
3. Keep some kind of emergency heating equipment and fuel on hand so you can keep at least one room of your house livable in case your power is off. Keep the room ventilated to avoid the buildup of toxic fumes.
4. Stay indoors as much as possible. If you must go outdoors, dress warmly, in loose-fitting, layered, lightweight clothing. Your outer garment should be water repellent. Avoid overexertion from shoveling or walking to get supplies.
5. Avoid driving if you can use public transportation. If you must use your car, make sure it is in good working condition and filled with gas. Keep emergency supplies in the car, such as a shovel, extra gloves and hat, a blanket, a flashlight with extra batteries, food, a towrope or chain, and extra money. Travel by daylight and use major highways whenever possible. Most importantly, drive with extreme caution.

DEM urges residents not to use the telephone for additional information, but rather rely on the radio and TV broadcasts and follow whatever instructions are given. For special assistance call 2-1-1. Stay tuned to local radio and television programming for further updates and emergency instructions.

Winter Storm
509-
Telephone Number

DEM Coordinator

Name & Title of Approver

EMERGENCY STATUS RELEASE

News Release Number: _____

Date/Time: _____

Subject: Winter Storm

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

A severe winter storm has moved into the area from (what direction?) and has dropped (#) inches of snow over the past (#) hours. Freezing rain and winds of (#) miles per hour continue to make travel extremely dangerous. The Spokane Department of Emergency Management said many roads are impassable due to drifting snow, including (what roads?). Power and telephone lines are down in many areas, leaving (how many?) residents without electricity or telephone service.

Residents are urged to stay indoors as much as possible and avoid travel unless absolutely necessary.

Road crews are attempting to clear routes for emergency vehicles. Utility crews from _____ are attempting to restore power and telephone to residences as quickly as possible. (Name, title) from _____ estimates power will be restored by (when?)

_____, has declared a “Local State of Emergency” and activated the Spokane County Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan. According to DEM the Spokane County Emergency Coordination Center has been activated and emergency response functions are being coordinated from this center.

DEM urges persons residing in (what areas?) who are without heat or power to report to a public shelter when conditions permit. Shelters are open at (where?).

DEM urges residents not to use the telephone for additional information, but rather rely on the radio and TV broadcasts and follow whatever instructions are given. For special assistance call 2-1-1. Stay tuned to local radio and television programming for further updates and emergency instructions.

Tab 8 RISK COMMUNICATION ASSESSMENT

- Initial assessment of the intensity of a crisis event is vital.
- To complete, begin by checking the boxes below that are applicable to your event.
- Don't spend a lot of time considering whether or not to check a box - this matrix is meant to be a general guide and should only take a few minutes to complete.
- This is not a test and there is no right or wrong answers.

EVENT ASSESSMENT

Criteria Number	Check if applicable	Criteria Intensity (0-8)	Crisis Criteria
1	<input type="checkbox"/>	+++++++	Initial event is clearly recognized as an emergency requiring immediate public communication to prevent further widespread illness/death.
2	<input type="checkbox"/>	++++	Deaths are expected within a short window of time (catastrophic event). Diagnosis and/or treatment are uncertain.
3	<input type="checkbox"/>	++++	The media and public perceive event as the "first," "worst," or "biggest," etc.
4	<input type="checkbox"/>	++++	Deaths are expected well above normal levels.
5	<input type="checkbox"/>	+++	The event is occurring in a metropolitan area (with dense media outlets) versus a sparsely populated area (with fewer media outlets).
6	<input type="checkbox"/>	+++	The event is sudden, is national in scope, or has the potential to have a national health impact.
7	<input type="checkbox"/>	+++	The government is perceived as a cause of or responsible for the event.
8	<input type="checkbox"/>	+++	The event predominantly impacts children or previously healthy adults.
9	<input type="checkbox"/>	+++	The event is possibly "man-made" and/or deliberate.
10	<input type="checkbox"/>	+++	Controlling event may require widespread public civil rights suspension.
11	<input type="checkbox"/>	+++	Persons involved must take steps to protect personal health and safety.
12	<input type="checkbox"/>	+++	Responsibility for mitigating event falls within the scope of your organization.
13	<input type="checkbox"/>	++	The event has some "exotic" aspect.
14	<input type="checkbox"/>	++	A well-known product, service, or industry is involved.
15	<input type="checkbox"/>	++	Sensitive international trade or political relations are involved.
16	<input type="checkbox"/>	++	A well-known "celebrity" is involved.
17	<input type="checkbox"/>	++	An ongoing criminal investigation is involved.
18	<input type="checkbox"/>	++	The incident issue is not well understood by the general population, or the general population is misinformed about the situation.
19	<input type="checkbox"/>	++	The event is "acute." Your organization is faced with explaining the event and the aftermath (e.g., a laboratory accident or chemical release).
20	<input type="checkbox"/>	+	Long-term effects for humans involved in the event are uncertain.
21	<input type="checkbox"/>	+	The event is evolving. Its progression is uncertain and may become more or less serious.
22	<input type="checkbox"/>	+	The event site does not have a well-equipped and resourced public information response capability.
23	<input type="checkbox"/>	0	Event occurred internationally with little chance of affecting U.S. population.
24	<input type="checkbox"/>	0	Treatment or control of exposure is generally understood and within the person's control.

- After completing the Event Assessment matrix, compare the boxes you checked to those cited in the Event Evaluation "Crisis Criteria" column in the table below to determine the level of crisis that you are dealing with and how you may want to respond.
- Reassessment is expected as more information about the event is gathered.

EVENT EVALUATION

Event Evaluation Factors			
Crisis Level	Crisis Description	Crisis Criteria	Recommended Outcome*
A	Highly intense in the initial phase. The need to disseminate information rapidly to the public and media is critical. Life and limb will be at risk if the public is not notified about the risk and public health recommendations.	<i>First box must be checked. From among boxes 2, 3, and 4, at least two boxes must be checked.</i>	Operate 24 hours a day, 7 days a week for media and public response, with an expectation that relief and replacement staff will be needed. Per your plan, form or join a Joint Information Center (JIC).
B	Intense. The need to directly provide public health recommendations to the public and media to save life or limb is not immediate. The public and media, however, believe their health and safety are or could soon be at risk. There is a high and growing dDEMnd for more information.	<i>First box not checked, and third and fourth boxes checked.</i>	Operate 20 hours a day, 7 days a week during the initial phase. Set up routine times for media briefings, allow public to e-mail or leave phone messages during non-duty times, and move into maintenance phase when possible. Be prepared to face “initial phase” dDEMnds, depending on developments during the maintenance phase (maintenance phases with bumps). May need to form a JIC.
C	Moderately intense. Media frenzy develops. Interest is generated because of the event novelty versus a legitimate and widespread or immediate public health concern. Interest could die suddenly if a “real” crisis occurred.	<i>Third box checked, and boxes 1, 2 and 4 not checked. Three or more of the ++ boxes checked, and one or more of the +++ boxes checked.</i>	Operate 10–12 hours a day, 5–6 days a week and assign a single team member for after-hour purposes during the initial phase. Operate on weekend if event occurs on a weekend; otherwise use on-call staff only on weekends, not during full operation. Attempt to move the media and public to maintenance phases with prescribed times and outlets for updates. No need to form a JIC.
D	Minimally intense. Builds slowly and may continue for weeks, depending on the outcome of further investigation. Requires monitoring and reassessments.	<i>Boxes 1, 2, and 3 not checked. More + or ++ boxes checked than +++ boxes.</i>	Operate normally in the initial phase while preparing to move to 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, if needed. Notify relief and replacement staff that they may be called for duty depending on how the event develops. Do not “burn out” staff with long hours before the public and media dDEMnd escalates. Practice your crisis communication operations (during normal duty hours) to ensure the system works. Consider operating a JIC if information release is shared.

Public and media emergency communication response recommendations are based on crisis level. Remember with reassessments an ongoing event may move from one level to another.

Tab 9 THE FIRST 24 HOURS

Activity	Contact Person	Contact Information
Contact the County ECC to check in.		
Gather known facts		
Determine the organization/office/individual in charge of managing the crisis. Ensure direct and frequent contact with the office in charge is possible		
Initiate Activity Log process		
Understand Chain of Command		
Determine who must approve information releases before they are issued. What is the chain of command?		
Determine spokesperson		
Determine need for Joint Information Center		
Determine communication devices required		
Determine phone staffing requirements		
Contact Communicable Disease & Prevention, Environmental Health, and/or Community Health as needed to ensure accurate and timely development and distribution of public information materials.		
Determine who is being affected by this crisis. What are their perceptions? What do they want and need to know?		
Contact partners as appropriate		
Determine what the public should be doing		
Activate media monitoring		
Activate internet monitoring		
Assure web page updates		
Write initial Situation Report		
Identify current priorities		
Set media briefing schedule		
Determine the communications office staffing schedule		
Set up rumor control		
Develop first media message		
Determine need for fact sheet		
Determine need for interpreters		
Conduct after event evaluation		

Tab 10 CONTACT LISTS
 SPOKANE COUNTY COMMUNICATIONS CALL DOWN LIST

Contact	Home	Work	Cell	Message	Passwords

OUTSIDE EMERGENCY RESPONSE CONTACTS

Notifications	Contact Person	Contact Information
Mayor/county commissioners public information officer		
City/county hospital public information department head		
City/county fire, police public information office		
State health director		
State epidemiologist		
State public information officer		

INTER-AGENCY COMMUNICATIONS

Department/University/Organization	Contact Name	Business Phone	Business Fax	E-mail
Agriculture				
State University				
Commerce				
Corrections				
Education				
Fish and Game				
Governor's Office				
National Guard				
Industrial Commission				
Insurance Fund				
Labor				
Library				
Parks and Recreation				
Police				
Public Utilities Commission				
Tax Commission				
Transportation				
Higher education				
Water Resources				

Regional Contacts

Regional States	Contact Name	Business Phone	Business Fax	E-mail

OTHER COMMUNITY CONTACT LISTS

Agency/Organization	Contact Name	Business Phone	Business Fax	E-Mail
Hospitals (including Infection Control Practitioners, Emergency Room Directors, Nurse Managers, and Public Relations offices)				
Laboratory				
Medical Reserve Corps (MRC)				
First Responders (e.g. Police, Fire and Rescue, Emergency Management)				
Spokane County Medical Association				
Local Association for Professionals in Infection Control and Epidemiology (APIC) chapter				
Department of Agriculture				
Media (e.g. newspapers, radio, TV)				
Epidemiology				
County Health Department Directors				
Red Cross				
Spokane County Departments and Services				
Public Schools (District Offices, Parent-teacher associations, principals, etc.)				
Nursing Homes and Assisted Living Facilities				
Correctional Facilities				
Shelters				
Food banks				
Community Health Centers				
Major Businesses and Employers				
Factories and Malls				
Transportation facilities, Airports, Ports, Safety or				

Agency/Organization	Contact Name	Business Phone	Business Fax	E-Mail
Security Officers				
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)				
Federal Bureau of Investigations (FBI)				
Church organizations				
Civic organizations (Urban League, United Way)				
Elder service organizations				
Poison Information Center				
Health-Related Hotline Services				
Mental Health Resources				
Postal service				
Social Service Organizations				
Colleges and Universities				
Municipal and local government				
Libraries				
OTHER				

Tab 11 EXAMPLE TEAMS/FUNCTIONS ROLES AND TASKS

Team/Function	Role: <i>To ensure that timely, accurate and appropriate incident information reaches the public, partner agencies and other constituent audiences.</i>	Staff Member (Contact Information)
Lead PIO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prime Tasks: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Advise Incident Commander regarding public affairs strategy <input type="checkbox"/> Advise Command Staff regarding public affairs implications of decisions <input type="checkbox"/> Identify constraints on release of incident information <input type="checkbox"/> Serve as lead spokesperson for the incident <input type="checkbox"/> Host news briefings, community meetings, and other incident events <input type="checkbox"/> Coordinate Joint Information System communications <input type="checkbox"/> Advise Incident Command (IC)/Unified Command (UC) if a Joint Information Center is needed <input type="checkbox"/> Coordinate all activities of the Joint Information Center <input type="checkbox"/> Ensure that all incident information is accurate and approved by IC/UC prior to its release <input type="checkbox"/> Represent Joint Information Center interests at Command Staff meetings <input type="checkbox"/> Provide information briefing to PIO team <input type="checkbox"/> Ensure that all PIO on scene have signed in <input type="checkbox"/> Designate Public Information Officers into staff positions within the system to fulfill the needs of the incident and complete the Information Management Cycle. 	

Team/Function	Role: <i>To gather incident information and package it in ways that are useful to key incident audiences</i>	Staff Member (Contact Information)
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<p>Information Gathering and Production</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Use all available resources to gather current incident facts to include incident PIO's <input type="checkbox"/> Analyze incident information for trends/emerging issues <input type="checkbox"/> Look to resources outside of incident for broader perspective (e.g. context of incident compared to other like events nationally) <input type="checkbox"/> Triage information jointly to identify gaps and determine actions required <input type="checkbox"/> Prepare facts for distribution in whatever format is most appropriate <input type="checkbox"/> Craft messages and talking points for incident leadership <input type="checkbox"/> Write EAS messages, media advisories, press releases, fact sheets, daily updates, web stories and other such incident info as requested <input type="checkbox"/> Maintain accurate, chronological log of released information <input type="checkbox"/> monitoring of TV, radio, newspapers, websites, blogs and chat rooms for balance, accuracy, timeliness, official presence and emerging issues <input type="checkbox"/> Collect current Situation Reports (SitReps) and Incident Action Plans (IAPs) from Plans Section <input type="checkbox"/> Report to Lead PIO <input type="checkbox"/> Maintain perspective on the BIG PICTURE 	
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Team/Function	Role: <i>To Ensure Essential Information and to distribute incident information to incident staff, partner agencies, the public, and the press</i>	Staff Member (Contact Information)
Information Dissemination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Proactively respond to emerging trends/issues <input type="checkbox"/> Use technological resources, public forums, and the media to educate constituent audiences about incident response <input type="checkbox"/> Respond to requests from local, regional and national media for information, interviews and access <input type="checkbox"/> Coordinate with other agency/organization PIOs <input type="checkbox"/> Ensure that the crafted message has been approved by the IC/UC <input type="checkbox"/> Ensure that news directors and assignment editors are receiving incident information, and understand the story <input type="checkbox"/> Correct misinformation before it becomes accepted as fact. That means contacting the reporter, news director, partner agency or other offending party to correct misstatements or errors <input type="checkbox"/> On-scene Media <input type="checkbox"/> Ensure JIS members have the information and resources necessary to provide information if the Public Inquiry Center and/or the ECC is activated by Incident Command. 	

Team/Function	Role: <i>To leverage media reach to share vital incident information with the public</i>	Staff Member (Contact Information)
Media Relations/ Field PIO's	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Coordinate with other Information Officers (e.g. partner agencies) working in the field <input type="checkbox"/> Facilitate media tours and interviews with lead on-site incident responders <input type="checkbox"/> Make courtesy visits to radio stations, TV stations, and newspapers to discuss incident response <input type="checkbox"/> Appear on media programming to discuss incident response <input type="checkbox"/> Provide feedback to Lead PIO and PIO in Information Gathering Section regarding information requests/emerging trends <input type="checkbox"/> Keep JIS members informed of information 	

Tab 12 EQUIPMENT AND SUPPLIES

Equipment		Location	How to Obtain It
<input type="checkbox"/>	Web site (24/7)		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Fax machine (for broadcast fax releases)		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Laptop computers		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Printers for every computer		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Copier (and backup)		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Scanner		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Several tables		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Cell phones		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Flip charts		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Paper		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Color copier		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Podium		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Satellite hookup		
<input type="checkbox"/>	TV/VCR		
<input type="checkbox"/>	CD-ROM		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Paper shredder		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Copier toner		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Printer ink, paper		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Pens		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Markers		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Highlighters		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Erasable markers		
<input type="checkbox"/>	FedEx and mail supplies		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Sticky notes		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Tape		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Notebooks		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Standard press kit folders		
<input type="checkbox"/>	B-roll beta copies		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Formatted computer disks		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Color-coded supplies		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Organizers		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Expandable folders		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Staplers (several)		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Paper punch		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Three-ring binders		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Organization's press kit or its logo on a sticker		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Paper clips (all sizes)		

Tab 13 MESSAGE DEVELOPMENT FOR CRISIS COMMUNICATIONS

First, consider the following:

Audience:	Purpose of Message:	Method of delivery:
<input type="checkbox"/> Relationship to event <input type="checkbox"/> Demographics (age, language, education, culture) <input type="checkbox"/> Level of outrage	<input type="checkbox"/> Give facts/update <input type="checkbox"/> Rally to action <input type="checkbox"/> Clarify event status <input type="checkbox"/> Address rumors <input type="checkbox"/> Satisfy media requests	<input type="checkbox"/> Print media release <input type="checkbox"/> Web release <input type="checkbox"/> Through spokesperson (TV or in-person appearance) <input type="checkbox"/> Radio <input type="checkbox"/> Other

Six Basic Emergency Message Components:

1. Expression of empathy: _____

2. Clarifying Facts / Call for Action:

Who? _____

What? _____

Where? _____

When? _____

Why? _____

How? _____

3. What we do not know: _____

4. Process to get answers: _____

5. Statement of commitment: _____

6. Referrals: _____

For More Information: _____

Next Scheduled Update: _____

Finally, Check Your Message for the Following:

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Positive action steps• Honest/open tone• Applied risk communication principles• Test for clarity• Use simple words, short sentences	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Avoid jargon• Avoid judgmental phrases• Avoid humor• Avoid extreme speculation
---	---

Develop a Notification Schedule!

Tab 14 TRANSLATION SERVICES INFORMATION

GENERAL INFORMATION:

INTERPRETERS

A=Advanced I=Intermediate B=Basic

Language	Name	Phone Number	Location	Speak	Read	Write
Spanish						
Spanish						
Sign						

Tab 15 EXTERNAL RESOURCES

1. Language Line Services.

Language Line Services enables users to access interpreters to more than 150 languages by telephone. The primary use of this service is to gain basic information whenever a bilingual employee or contract interpreter is unattainable. Federal law requires that we provide equal access to programs and services to all individuals who qualify. Having this service contract provides assurance that we can provide for an accurate exchange of information with the public, no matter which language the person speaks.

2. Commission on Hispanic Affairs.

3. Office for Refugees.

4. Relay Service.

5. School for the Deaf and Blind.

6. State Council on the Deaf and Hard of Hearing.

7. Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired.

8. National Federation of the Blind.

9. Network Interpreting Service (NIS):
1-800-284-1043 (voice)
1-800-284-5176 (TTY)

Network Interpreting Service is a 24-hour-a-day service that coordinates and supplies American Sign Language interpreting service to all settings. NIS accepts all requests for interpreters regardless of their timeliness. As a general rule, however, the more advance notice you can request the service, the greater likelihood resources will be available. You can access their website at <http://aslnis.com>.

Tab 16 Resources

Every community needs to have established guidance for the management of resources in an emergency situation. Procedures must be established for requesting assistance and resources during an emergency. A resource inventory is essential for any integrated emergency management system.

A comprehensive resource manual for use during normal (day-to-day) activities and during emergencies. The resource manual contains listings for the following agencies and organizations to include private resources:

- Key Facilities and Critical Workers
- Information Listing
- Emergency Management
- Communications
- Fire Service
- Law Enforcement
- Emergency Medical
- Public Works/Utilities
- Health
- Medical Facilities
- Private Resources Available
- Shelter Information
- Transportation
- Educational Facilities
- Social Services
- Special Facilities
- Emergency Water Facilities
- National Guard Facilities
- Disaster Assistance Center Locations
- Disposal Areas
- Media Resources

Because of the role of the Public Information Officer in gathering, verifying, coordinating, and disseminating information during times of emergency it is important that they have a handle on the emergency resources that can be utilized during an event.

When updating the media or providing assistance to citizens a complete knowledge and understanding of the community's resource inventory is beneficial to a PIO.

Tab 17 SPOKESPERSON TIPS

Role of Spokesperson in an Emergency:

- Take your organization from an “it” to a “we.”
- Build trust and credibility for the organization.
- Remove the psychological barriers within the audience.
- Gain support for the public health response.
- Ultimately, reduce the incidence of illness, injury, and death by getting it right.

Recommendations for Spokespersons:

- Do not over reassure.
- Acknowledge uncertainty.
- Express that a process is in place to learn more.
- Give anticipatory guidance.
- Be regretful, not defensive.
- Acknowledge people’s fears.
- Acknowledge the shared misery.
- Express wishes. “I wish we knew more.”
- Stop trying to allay panic. (Panic is much less common than we imagine.)

At some point, be willing to address the “what if” questions. These are questions that every person is thinking about and for which they want expert answers. If the “what if” could happen and people need to be emotionally prepared for it, it is reasonable to answer this type of question. If you do not answer the “what if” questions, someone with much less at stake regarding the outcome of the response will answer these questions for you. If you are not prepared to answer the “what if” questions, you lose credibility and the opportunity to frame the “what if” questions with reason and valid recommendations.

Ask more of people by giving them things to do. Perhaps the most important role of the spokesperson is to ask people to bear the risk with you. You can then ask the best of them, to bear the risk during the emergency, and work toward solutions.

The preceding recommendations come largely from the work of Dr. Peter Sandman.

General recommendations for spokespersons in all settings:

- Know your organization’s policies about the release of information.
- Stay within the scope of your responsibilities. Unless you are authorized to speak for the entire organization or a higher headquarters, do not do it.
- Do not answer questions that are not within the scope of your organizational responsibility.
- Tell the truth. Be as up-front as possible.
- Follow up on issues.
- Use visuals when possible.
- Illustrate a point through examples, stories, and analogies. Ensure that they help you make your point and do not minimize or exaggerate your message. Test the stories on a small group first.

When Emotions and Accusations Run High In An Emergency Public Meeting.

- Do not show inappropriate hostility. You can be angry at the organisms or natural disasters that cause illness and death but do not show outrage or become indignant toward your detractors.
- Ask for ground rules. To avoid the appearance of biases, ask a neutral third party to express ground rules.
- Hire a facilitator or moderator. An organization is usually better off to hire a facilitator/moderator for the meeting from the beginning. (NOTE: this person should be neutral.)
- Acknowledge the anger up front. Acknowledge any expressions of anger up front and explain what you hope to accomplish. Refer back to your objectives if the communication deteriorates.
- Do not react with temper. Do not lose your temper when confronted with accusations.
- Practice self-management. Remind yourself of your greater purpose. Display confidence and concentration. Visualize a verbal attack and mentally rehearse a temperate response. Do not be caught off guard. Anticipate the attack and practice not feeding the anger.
- Exhibit active listening. Active listening is exemplified by the ability to express the other person’s point of view. Concentrate on what the person is saying instead of thinking about what you will say next when it is

your turn to respond.

- Do not say, “I know exactly how you feel.” Refrain from using expressions such as, “I know exactly how you feel,” since the audience is not likely to believe that you do. Instead, acknowledge the feeling.
- Avoid interrupting, but set limits. If a hostile speaker dominates, appeal to him or her that you want to address the concerns of others in the room.
- Do not overreact to emotional words. Remember, you are the professional. Others have a totally different investment in what is happening. Words you interpret in one way may mean something else to others. Give them the benefit of the doubt.
- Use open body language. Sit or stand with your arms relaxed by your sides. Do not cross your arms or put your hands on your hips. Make eye contact when possible.
- Modulate your voice. Use a slightly lower tone and volume of voice than the angry individual.
- Do not take personal abuse. A certain amount of anger and negative emotion directed at you is understandable. If it becomes personal, however, you have a right to express the inappropriateness of that behavior and ask the person to join with you in getting back to the issues. You are your organization. You are not alone. You are not the true focus of the attack. If you know that the audience will be hostile, bring along a neutral third party who can step in and defuse the situation.
- State the problem, then the recommendation. When explaining your position, state the problem before your answer.
- Commit to a response. Write down people’s comments, issues, inquiries, and get back to them.
- Do not promise what you cannot deliver. Explain the limitations of the situation and express that you are doing everything you can to keep the response on track.
- Look forward, not back. Acknowledge past mistakes: “I wish we had met with you sooner to hear your concerns.” Then talk about where you want to go in resolving problems rather than where you have been.
- Do not search for the single answer. One size may not fit all. Consider many possible solutions and do not view a negotiation as either/or proposition.

Pitfalls for Spokespersons during an Emergency.

- Remember that jargon confuses communication and implies arrogance. If you have to use a technical term or acronym, define it. If you can define it, do you need to use it? Jargon and euphemisms are security blankets. Try to give yours up.
- Use humor cautiously. Humor is a minefield. Soft, self-deprecating humor may be disarming for a hostile audience, but be careful.
- Refute negative allegations without repeating them. Don’t own the negative by repeating the accusation.
- Use positive or neutral terms whenever possible.
- Don’t assume you have made your point. Ask whether you have made yourself clear.
- Money will become an issue. During the early stage of an emergency, don’t lead with messages about money.
- Avoid one-liners, clichés, and off-the-cuff comments at all costs. Any statement that trivializes the experience of the people involved by saying something such as “there are no guarantees in life” kills your credibility.
- Discuss what you know, not what you think.
- Do not express personal opinions.
- Do not show off. This is not the time to display an impressive vocabulary.

What Spokespersons Should Know When Communicating Through the Media?

- Go into media interviews with a purpose. Have a specific message to deliver.
- Make sure the reporter gets your name and title right. This will help avoid later confusion and lack of reliability.
- Stick to your message. Do not let a reporter put words in your mouth; use the words of your previously developed message.
- Reframe leading or loaded questions. If the question contains leading or loaded language, reframe it to eliminate the language and then answer the questions.
- Do not react to new information that a reporter gives you. Do not assume the reporter has it right if he or she claims that someone has lodged an allegation. Do not react to new information that a reporter

- gives you. Instead, say, “I have not heard that” or “I would have to verify that before I could respond.”
- Don’t answer a question a second time or add to your answer. If a reporter leaves a microphone in your face after you have answered the question, stop. Do not answer the question again or add on to your answer.
 - There is no such thing as “off the record.” Background and deep background do not mean you would not be quoted. Do not say anything before, during, or at the conclusion of an interview that you are not prepared to see in print the next day.
 - Anticipate questions. List as many expected questions as possible and draft answers.
 - Make your point first. Have prepared message points. Try to say it in 30 seconds and in fewer than 90 words.
 - Do not fake it. If you do not know the answer, say so. If it is not in your area of expertise, say so. Commit to getting the answer.
 - Do not speak disparagingly of anyone. Never speak disparagingly of anyone, not even in jest.
 - Do not react to hypothetical questions. Do not buy in to hypothetical questions.
 - Record sensitive interviews. Be sure the reporter knows you are doing so.
 - Do not ask to review articles or interviews. To avoid a perception that you are trying to edit a message, or their reporting, do not ask reporters to allow you to review their articles or interviews.
 - Break down questions. Break down multiple-part, or complex, questions into manageable segments. Answer each part separately.
 - Do not raise unwanted issues. Do not raise issues you don’t want to see in print or on the news.
 - Do not say “no comment” to a reporter’s question. Never just say “no comment” to a reporter’s question. Instead, state why you cannot answer that question. Say that the matter is under investigation, that the organization has not yet made a decision, or simply that you are not the appropriate person to answer that question.
 - If you deal with sensational questions, answer as briefly as possible, then return to your key messages. If you have to deal with sensational or unrelated questions, answer in as few words as possible without repeating the sensational elements. Then return to your key messages. Here are a few recommended “bridges” back to what you want to say:
 - ◇ “What I think you are really asking is . . .”
 - ◇ “The overall issue is . . .”
 - ◇ “What is important to remember is . . .”
 - ◇ “It is our policy to not discuss this issue, but what I can tell you is . . .”
 - ◇ “What I am really here to discuss . . .”
 - ◇ “Your readers/viewers need to know . . .”

This material is based largely from the information provided on the Center for Disease Control and Prevention’s “Emergency Risk Communication CDCynergy” tool.

Tab 18 ANTICIPATED QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS WORKSHEET

Use these worksheets to write anticipated questions about a specific event; then develop appropriate answers for the public and sound bites for the media.

Step 1: Review the following list of questions commonly asked by the media. The spokesperson should have answers to these questions prepared and change/update as necessary throughout the duration of the crisis:

Questions Commonly Asked by Media in a Crisis (Covello, 1995)
What is your (spokesperson's) name and title?
What effect will it have on production and employment?
What happened? (Examples: How many people were injured or killed? How much property damage occurred?)
What safety measures were taken?
When did it happen?
Who is to blame?
Where did it happen?
Do you accept responsibility?
What do you do there?
Has this ever happened before?
Who was involved?
What do you have to say to the victims?
Why did it happen? What was the cause?
Is there danger now?
What are you going to do about it?
Will there be inconvenience to the public?
Was anyone hurt or killed? What are their names?
How much will it cost the organization?
How much damage was caused?
When will we find out more?

Step 2: Using the Answer Development Model below, draft answers for the public and sound bites for the news media in the space provided below the model. Then go back and check your draft answers against the model. Don't forget that sound bites for the news media should be 8 seconds or less and framed for television, radio or print media.

Answer Development Model	
In your answer/sound bite, you should.....	By.....
1. Express <u>empathy and caring</u> in your first statement.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Using a personal story • Using the pronoun "I" • Transitioning to the conclusion
2. State a <u>conclusion</u> (key message).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limiting the number of words (5-20) • Using positive words • Setting it apart with introductory words, pauses, inflections, etc.
3. <u>Support</u> the conclusion.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At least two facts • An analogy • A personal story • A credible 3rd party
4. <u>Repeat</u> the conclusion.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Using exactly the same words as the 1st time
5. Include <u>future action(s)</u> to be taken.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listing specific next steps • Providing more information about <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Contacts - Important phone numbers

This material is based largely from the information provided on the Center for Disease Control and Prevention's "Emergency Risk Communication CDCynergy" tool.

Tab 19 CRISIS COMMUNICATION SPOKESPERSON CHECKLIST

Criteria	YES	NO
Message Preparation*		
1. Did you mobilize resources and staff quickly?		
2. Did you recognize that public perceptions matter more than facts?		
3. Did you seek outside help, including volunteers?		
4. Did you coordinate efforts with other emergency response organizations?		
5. Did you enlist support from credible third parties?		
6. Did you monitor and listen closely to what the news media, public officials, and other important players were saying and questions they are asking?		
7. Did you refrain from trying to control the flow of information?		
8. Did you withhold names of injured or deceased until next-of-kin were properly notified?		
Message Content*		
1. Did you express and show concern, empathy, and compassion consistently for damages, injuries, and any inconvenience?		
2. Did you emphasize dedication, commitment, and social responsibility?		
3. Did you provide an early or immediate apology?		
4. Did you provide a list of facts and an action plan?		
5. Were you open and honest about capabilities, needs, and problems?		
6. Did you know exactly what you wanted to say to the media and did you use two key messages?		
7. Did you acknowledge responsibility but avoid placing blame?		
8. Did you indicate that investigations are under way to determine the cause?		
9. Did you tell the truth as best you knew it?		
10. Did you use examples, human-interest stories, and concrete analogies to establish a common understanding?		
11. Did you use simple visuals and graphics as much as possible?		
12. Did you test your message content prior to delivery?		
13. Did you refrain from going “off the record”?		
14. Did you avoid saying “no comment”?		
15. Did you avoid evading statements and shifting responsibility?		
16. Did you avoid statements that imply that cost is more important than public safety, health, or environment?		
17. Did you avoid the use of technical and legal jargon?		
18. Did you avoid providing too much technical detail?		

Criteria		
Message Delivery*		
1. Was top management involved and visible?		
2. Did you go immediately to the scene?		
3. Were you easily accessible to the media?		
4. Did you stay calm? (not lose your temper)		
5. Did you practice what you planned to say to the media aloud and did you test it?		
6. Did you indicate that you would get back by a specific time with an answer if you did not know an answer to a question?		
7. Did you avoid conjecture and speculation (“what if” questions)?		
Nonverbal Communication**		
1. Were you sensitive to the non-verbal messages you were communicating?		
2. Did you sit up straight, showing that you are paying attention and respecting your audience?		
3. Did you make eye contact? (Avoiding eye contact can make you look deceitful. If it is very difficult to make eye contact, focus on the back of the room, not on your notes or the floor.)		
4. Did you avoid defensive, argumentative, and unreceptive body language (e.g., arms crossed)? Did you stand with your arms straight at your sides?		
5. Did you avoid fidgeting, shuffling papers, or playing with your pen? (Keeping your feet planted on the ground, sitting or standing still will make you look more controlled and confident.)		

*This material is based largely on the findings of advanced environmental communication research conducted by Dr. Vincent T. Covello and the staff of the Center for Risk Communication, 1995.

**This material is based largely on the ATSDR Handbook 8-01.

Tab 20 MEDIA CONTACT LIST

Newspaper	City	Newspaper	Contact Information
------------------	-------------	------------------	----------------------------

In Case of Power Outage

Broadcast facilities that have back-up generators to allow them to broadcast during a power outage:

TV	City	Newspaper	Contact Information
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Radio	City	Newspaper	Contact Information
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Tab 21 MEDIA COMMUNICATION TOOLS

Issuing a Press Release

Access on PIO's computer the template for press releases.

- Message development
- Access on PIO's computer fact
- Public information releases **MUST BE** approved by the Incident Commander before being issued.
- To issue a press release, use the broadcast fax in the _____. Fax lists exist for TV, Radio, Print, Police, Sheriff, Fire, Hospitals, Physicians, Schools, City and/or County Gov't.
- In addition to faxing to outside agencies, all public information materials should be sent through the department's system to "Everybody."
- Post the information release on the agency's website.

Calling a Press Conference

- Determine date, time, place, and spokespersons for the press conference.
- Write a "Media Alert".
- Submit "Media Alert" to the ECC Manager, or Incident Commander for approval before issuing.
- Issue the "Media Alert" to the press via fax by accessing the broadcast fax machine in the _____. Fax lists exist for TV, Radio, Print, Police, Sheriff, Fire, Hospitals, Physicians, Schools, Libraries, City and/or County Government.
- Prepare a statement for the press conference.
- Map your messages.
- After the press conference, write a follow-up press release about the issues discussed during the media briefing and issue it to the press as you would a press release.

Writing / Issuing a Fact Sheet

- Access on PIO's computer the template for fact sheets.
- Fact sheets **MUST BE** approved by the Incident Commander before being issued.
- To issue a fact sheet, access the broadcast fax machine in the _____. Fax lists exist for TV, Radio, Print, Police, Sheriff, Fire, Hospitals, Physicians, Schools, City and/or County Government.
- In addition to faxing to outside agencies, all fact sheets should be sent through the department's system to "Everybody."
- Post the fact sheet on the agency's website.

Tab 22 IMMEDIATE RESPONSE TO INQUIRIES

By Phone to Media:

- “We’ve just learned about the situation and are trying to get more complete information now. How can I reach you when I have more information?”
- “All our efforts are directed at bringing the situation under control, so I’m not going to speculate about the cause of the incident. How can I reach you when I have more information?”
- “I’m not the authority on this subject. Let me have XXXX call you right back.”
- “We’re preparing a statement on that now. Can I fax it to you in about two hours?”
- “You may check our web site for background information and I will fax/e-mail you with the time of our next update.”

At Incident Site or Press Conference:

Response to Inquiries (you are authorized to give out the following information)

Date: _____ Time: _____

Approved by: _____

This is an evolving emergency and I know that you, just like we do, want as much information as possible right now. While we work to get your questions answered as quickly as possible, I want to tell you what we can confirm right now:

At approximately, _____ (time), a (brief description of what happened)

At this point, we do not know the number of (persons ill, persons exposed injuries, deaths, etc.).

We have a system (plan, procedure, operation) in place for just such an emergency and we are being assisted by (police, FBI, EOC) as part of that plan.

The situation is (under)(not yet under) control and we are working with (local, State, Federal) authorities to (e.g., contain this situation, determine how this happened, determine what actions may be needed by individuals and the community to prevent this from happening again).

We will continue to gather information and release it to you as soon as possible. I will be back to you within (amount of time, 2 hours or less) to give you an update. As soon as we have more confirmed information, it will be provided. We ask for your patience as we respond to this emergency.

Scripts for Media Relations:

For Use When Answering the Phone or Dealing with Customers

If NO Information is being released to the Public:

Thank you for your phone call. We are preparing a statement to the press at this time. Please tune into the local media _____ for further information about this situation.

If Information Has Been Released to the Public:

This is an evolving emergency and I know that you, just like we do, want as much information as possible right now. This is what we can confirm at this point:

At approximately _____ (time), a (brief description of what happened)

At this point, we do not know the number of (persons ill, persons exposed injuries, deaths, etc.)

We have a system (plan, procedure, operation) in place for just such an emergency and we are being assisted by (police, FBI, Local Emergency Planning Committee) as part of that plan.

The situation is (under, not yet under) control and we are working with (local, state, federal) authorities to (e.g., contain this situation, determine how this happened, determine what actions may be needed by individuals and the community to prevent this from happening again).

We will continue to gather information and release it to the media as soon as possible. Please tune into the local media _____ for further information about this situation. We ask for your patience as we respond to this emergency.

Tab 23 CALL TRACKING

Call taken by: _____

Date of call: _____ Time of call: _____ a.m. p.m.

Caller's name: (print first and last)

Phone(s): _____ Fax _____

Caller's contact information:

E-mail: _____ Gender: M F

Call Urgency:

Level A ___ (Extremely Urgent) Level B ___ (Moderately Urgent) Level C ___ (Not Urgent)

Media Call: Y N

Deadline: ___ 2 hours ___ Today a.m. ___ Today p.m. ___ ASAP ___ Other

Media outlet:

- Local ___ TV ___ Daily/Wire ___ Radio ___ Magazine ___ Other
- Regional ___ TV ___ Daily/Wire ___ Radio ___ Magazine ___ Other
- National ___ TV ___ Daily/Wire ___ Radio ___ Magazine ___ Other

Nature of Call:

Specific information request:

- Disease or illness-related
- Treatment-related
- Prevention-related
- Clarify recommendations
- Current status of the incident
- Other _____

Request for referral:

- For more health information
- For medical attention
- Other _____

Feedback to agency:

- Complaint about specific contact with agency
- Complaint about recommended actions
- Concern about ability to carry out recommended action
- Report information
- Rumor or misinformation verification (briefly describe) _____

Outcome of Call:

Calmed caller based on scripted information:

- Referred caller to:
- DEM employee/EOC Staff: _____
- Expert outside the EOC _____
- Personal doctor or health care professional: _____
- Emergency room: _____
- Red Cross or other non-government organization: _____
- FDEM or state emergency management agency: _____

Action Needed:

- None Return call to: _____

Tab 24 OBTAINING FEEDBACK, CONDUCTING EVALUATIONS

As soon as is feasible following a crisis, conduct an evaluation of the organization's response.

- Compile and analyze comments and criticisms from the customer base.
- Compile and analyze media coverage.
- Conduct a “hot wash” (an immediate review of what went right and what went wrong) to capture lessons learned.
- Develop a Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats (SWOT) report on the crisis communication operation.
- Report results of content analysis and Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats to leadership.
- Share results within your organization.
- Consider whether journal articles could be developed from the analyses.
- Determine need for changes to the crisis communication plan.
- Determine need to improve policies and processes.
- Institutionalize changes with appropriate training.
- Revise crisis plan policies and procedures based on lessons learned.

Conducting Public Education

- Once the crisis has subsided, the organization may need to carry out additional public education activities.
- Should the organization be educating the public about public health issues related to this crisis?
- What are the public's perceptions and information needs related to this crisis?
- Does the public understand the organization's health messages on this issue? Are they taking appropriate actions?
- Should we also consider audiences that were not involved in the crisis for public education?
- Should a public health message related to this crisis event be incorporated into other health communication activities (e.g., Public Health Week or National Infant Immunization Week)?
- Should we use this event to highlight any related public health messages?
- Should any Web sites be updated as a result of this crisis?
- Should any of the crisis materials be institutionalized?
- Would a series of post-crisis “canned” articles be useful in this situation?

Monitoring Events

- Crisis monitoring protocols include:
- Media monitoring (Forms to assist in media monitoring)
- Internet monitoring
- Ongoing exchanges of information with yours and other organizations, state health departments, etc.
- Ongoing communication with subject matter experts and partners
- Monitoring of public opinion data and other research.
- Evaluations of this communication plan will take place on a regular basis.

EVALUATION PLANNING WORKSHEET

Use this worksheet to plan the evaluation of your emergency risk communication work against your original objectives. Revisit this worksheet often to make program notes, suggestions for future work, and observations.

Site Name

Date

1. Baseline data against which you can measure (e.g., prevalence of activities or beliefs you hope to change)

2. Planning (formative) evaluation to test messages and materials

2a. What are you evaluating?

2b. How will you evaluate it?

2c. What were the results?

3. Immediate impact (process) evaluation to review and document activities conducted

3a. What are you evaluating?

3b. How will you evaluate it?

3c. What were the results?

4. Midpoint (outcome) evaluation to determine whether short-term objectives were met

4a. What are you evaluating?

4b. How will you evaluate it?

4c. What were the results?

5. Results (impact) evaluation to assess long-term effects

5a. What are you evaluating?

5b. How will you evaluate it?

5c. What were the results?

WRITE INITIAL SITUATION REPORT

Answer the following questions when writing the initial situation report:

- What are the facts? What happened?
- What is our policy on this issue?
- What is our organization doing about this issue? How are we solving the problem?
- What can our organization do to keep this from happening again?
- What other agencies or third parties are involved? What are they saying?
- What should the public be doing?
- What public information is available?
- When will more information be available?