



KnoWhat2Do: A Regional Public Education Program

Full Mitigation Best Practice Story

Multiple Counties, Texas

Tarrant County, TX – When it comes to disaster preparedness, residents in North Central Texas have access to a wealth of information. As a result, citizens in North Central Texas will “KnoWhat2Do” in the event of a wide-scale disaster or crisis situation.



“KnoWhat2Do” is a public education and outreach campaign, which is presently in Phase II of development.

Phase I of the project includes a variety of resources that educate the public on how to think, prepare, and act in case of an emergency. Two resources, the disaster preparedness guidebook and DVD, come in both English and Spanish. The DVD has a subtitle option for the hearing impaired.

Other materials include a “Think. Prepare. Act. - Words to Live By” brochure, standup charts defining hazards and listing steps to disaster preparedness, monthly press releases, related pamphlets, the program’s website, and promotional items (playing cards and perpetual calendars detailing disaster preparedness facts and tips, pens, hand soaps, and t-shirts).

The “KnoWhat2Do” disaster preparedness program was developed through the collaboration of local governments in the North Central Texas area. It arms citizens with the knowledge and skills needed to effectively manage nearly every possible disaster or crisis situation common to North Central Texas, including severe weather and exposure to hazardous materials. Evacuation procedures are also addressed.

“In 2005, municipalities in North Central Texas made a commitment to educating our residents,” said Summer Wilhelm, Emergency Management Officer II of the Fort Worth – Tarrant County Office of Emergency Management. “The cities of Dallas, Fort Worth, and Arlington pulled their UASI (Urban Area Security Initiative) funds together and started Phase I of the regional campaign that was geared towards a more comprehensive public education format with one message.”

Each jurisdiction allocated money from their individual UASI awards.

“The main reason we pooled our funds was because we found out that we were competing against ourselves,” added Juan Ortiz, Emergency Management Coordinator. “We decided to join forces and maximize our dollars.”

Wilhelm explained the program more in depth. “The three-part program begins with think, which provides detailed information on severe thunderstorms and lightning, tornados, flooding and flash floods, terrorism, extreme heat, drought and wildfire, hail, storm spotting, storm watching and warnings, and chemical hazards,” she said.

“Next is prepare, which provides ideas for creating a personal safety plan that includes a home emergency supply kit, a vehicle emergency kit, a communications plan with emergency contact telephone numbers, care plan for individuals with special needs, and planning for pets and livestock welfare,” she continued.

“The final part is act, which advocates taking personal responsibility in developing a household preparedness plan and emergency supply kit, staying alert to severe weather and being knowledgeable about hazards. It also encourages becoming involved in volunteer services such as disaster relief groups, community safety organizations, fire departments, emergency medical services, and first responders. Those efforts include training in emergency preparedness, response capabilities, fire suppression, first aid, cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR), and search and rescue procedures,” finished Wilhelm.

The Department of Homeland Security funded the program for the North Texas counties through UASI. The amount of federal funds received was \$250,000 for Phase I and \$337,500 for Phase II.

In Phase II of the program, sections of the preparedness guide will be expanded to better serve the public. It will also have an advertising component which will include outdoor billboards, radio, and television commercials.

“We are not done yet,” Wilhelm said. “We are bringing in a youth program with the help of the Texas Education Association. We are also working on creating a welcome kit for new homeowners. The kit will include a small disaster supply kit, names, and contact information of local hospitals, fire, and police departments and information on how to prepare for hazards in the area. Homebuilders, real estate agents, and insurance agents will be targeted in fostering the program.”

“We want to show that we can develop a high quality product,” Ortiz said. “Over 200 municipalities are a part of the initiative. Latin America, Australia, and several airports have requested copies of the program.”

Activity/Project Location

Geographical Area: **Multiple Counties in a State**

FEMA Region: **Region VI**

State: **Texas**

County: **Collin County; Dallas County; Denton County; Ellis County; Erath County; Hood County; Hunt County; Johnson County; Kaufman County; Navarro County; Palo Pinto County; Parker County; Rockwall County; Somervell County; Wise County**

Key Activity/Project Information

Sector: **Public/Private Partnership**

Hazard Type: **Severe Storm; Tornado; Flooding; Hurricane/Tropical Storm; Extreme Temperatures; Fire; Nuclear; Terrorism; Drought; Chemical/Biological**

Activity/Project Type: **Education/Outreach/Public Awareness**

Activity/Project Start Date: **03/2007**

Activity/Project End Date: **Ongoing**

Funding Source: **Other FEMA funds/ US Department of Homeland Security**

Activity/Project Economic Analysis

Cost: **Amount Not Available**

Non FEMA Cost: **0**

Activity/Project Disaster Information

Mitigation Resulted From Federal Disaster? **No**

Value Tested By Disaster? **Unknown**

Repetitive Loss Property? **No**

Reference URLs

Reference URL 1: <http://www.knowwhat2do.com/en/>

Reference URL 2: http://www.fema.gov/areyouready/why_prepare.shtm

Main Points

- North Central Texas has implemented a public education and outreach campaign called "KnoWhat2Do".
- Having two phases, it is currently in Phase II.
- Phase I of the project includes a variety of resources that educate the public on how to think, prepare and act in case of an emergency.
- In Phase II of the program, sections of the preparedness guide will be expanded to better serve the public. It will also have an advertising component which will include outdoor billboards, radio, and television commercials.
- The Department of Homeland Security funded the program for the North Texas counties through UASI. The amount of federal funds received was \$250,000 for Phase I and \$337,500 for Phase II.



KnoWhat2Do information poster



Summer and Juan with Poster