

*Making an Impact With Disaster Education  
FEMA Community & Family Preparedness Conference*

*Good ideas, case histories and the latest thinking on  
community disaster education*

Emergency Management Institute  
Federal Emergency Management Agency  
Emmitsburg, Maryland

June 9-12, 1998

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## **Introduction**

### *FEMA's Community & Family Preparedness Program*

Strengthening the network of disaster educators nationwide; documenting good ideas and effective programs; testing messages on disaster preparedness and mitigation; building an internet-based library of partners, case studies and materials; providing information and resources to state and local programs; forming partnerships with businesses and voluntary organizations; hosting an annual conference; developing training on community disaster education: Such is the work of FEMA's Community & Family Preparedness Program.

The program's goal is to ensure that all Americans have the necessary information, education and skills to protect themselves, their families, their neighbors, people in the community who have special needs, and their homes and businesses from the devastating consequences of disaster.

#### **Community & Family Preparedness Program**

The Community & Family Preparedness Program (CFP) is in FEMA's Preparedness, Training, and Exercises Directorate. The CFP Program's leadership at the time of the conference was:

- Kay Goss, Associate Director for Preparedness, Training, and Exercises
- John McKay, Director of the Training Division
- John Peabody, Chief, Preparedness Branch
- Ralph Swisher, Program Manager

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## *1998 Community & Family Preparedness Conference*

Every year FEMA brings together emergency managers, American Red Cross volunteers, representatives from other government agencies and voluntary organizations, and leaders from business and the academic community to exchange information, form partnerships, and tackle the great challenges in disaster education. The event has been a catalyst in the development of a body of knowledge on how to conduct a successful community disaster education program.

The American Red Cross -- FEMA's long-standing partner -- plays a major role in organizing and sponsoring the event.

FEMA's 8<sup>th</sup> annual disaster education conference brought 80 disaster educators together at the Emergency Management Institute (EMI) in Emmitsburg, Maryland on June 9-12, 1998. Through group discussions, presentations, a public education fair, and various network building exercises, participants shared ideas and information around the theme, *Making an Impact With Disaster Education*.

Conference objectives:

- Explore how disaster education can make communities more disaster resistant
- Share good ideas for building comprehensive disaster education programs
- Strengthen the network of disaster educators
- Foster the development of partnerships at all levels.

This report summarizes participants' suggestions and experiences in organizing programs that educate the public about disasters. Included are reports on public education activities from Project Impact pilot communities, approaches for involving young people and older populations in disaster preparedness; lessons learned from community and neighborhood-based programs; and information about leveraging resources, evaluating programs, and working the internet.

### **1998 Conference Team**

- Ralph Swisher  
Community & Family Preparedness Program Manager, FEMA
- Rocky Lopes  
Manager, Community Disaster Education, American Red Cross
- Cathy Henry  
Family Preparedness Officer, North Carolina Division of  
Emergency Management
- Marilyn Shigetani  
Conference Manager, Voluntary Agency Liaison, FEMA Region IX

## *New Community Disaster Education Training*

The nation's first training on how to organize and run a community disaster education program was initiated by FEMA's Community & Family Preparedness Program in 1997 and pilot tested at the Emergency Management Institute in June 1998, prior to the disaster education conference. A second pilot test is scheduled to be held in North Carolina.

The Organizer's Course, being developed in cooperation with the American Red Cross, is designed to teach state and local emergency managers, American Red Cross personnel, and others how to plan, implement, evaluate, and maintain a successful community disaster education program. Ideas on course content, methodology, and delivery of this and other potential public disaster education courses were offered during the pilot and conference. Participants' comments will be reflected in revised course materials and plans for future training. The Organizer's Course will be completed toward the end of 1998.

### ***Act Now Preparedness Update Now available online or by email***

Thanks to the Emergency Information Infrastructure Partnership (EIIP), the Community & Family Preparedness Program distributes its periodic disaster education newsletter -- the Act Now Preparedness Update -- to an electronic network of 750 disaster educators nationwide.

The Update offers practical ideas, case histories, information about partners' activities and resources, and other news about the growing field of disaster education.

To subscribe, visit <http://www.emforum.org/vlibrary/pubs.htm>. Or simply browse the Update online at <http://www.emforum.org/vlibrary/actnow.htm>.

For more information about the Update, email Ralph Swisher, Community & Family Preparedness Program Manager, at [ralph.swisher@fema.org](mailto:ralph.swisher@fema.org).

## **Making Communities More Disaster Resistant**

*“Education is vitally important to reducing the personal and economic hardships caused by disasters,” said Kay Goss, FEMA Associate Director for Preparedness, Training, and Exercises. “This is why disaster education is a central component of Project Impact.”*

*Representatives from Project Impact pilot communities were invited to the community and family preparedness conference to talk about their disaster education programs, and to learn how others are using public education to make their communities more resistant to natural disasters. Highlights of their remarks begin on the next page.*

### ***Project Impact***

Project Impact is a national effort to reduce the personal hardships and financial costs of disasters. In Project Impact communities, government agencies, businesses, voluntary organizations and individuals come together in a partnership to assess their community’s vulnerabilities and work to protect families, homes, businesses and communities from disasters -- to make their community more disaster-resistant. FEMA provides technical support and funding to the initiative.

FEMA is partnering with seven communities to pilot the program: Allegany County, Md.; Deerfield Beach, Fla.; Oakland, Cal.; Pascagoula, Miss.; Seattle, Wash.; Tucker and Randolph Counties, W.V.; and Wilmington/New Hanover County, N.C. In officially launching the program in a Washington, D.C. news conference on June 3, 1998, FEMA Director James L. Witt invited 50 local towns and cities to become disaster resistant communities.

#### **Project Impact Resources**

Visit <http://www.fema.gov> to obtain a Project Impact Guidebook, factsheets and other publications that you can download and use.

To obtain the Disaster Resistant Communities Resource Kit, call 1-800-480-2520. The kit is for Project Impact organizers and partners.

## *Disaster Education in Oakland, California*

Presented by:

**The Oakland Fire Services Agency, Office of Emergency Services**

Carrie Barnecut Emergency Planning Coordinator Project SAFE/ Project Impact cbbarnecut@oaklandnet.com	Coleen Bell Project Coordinator Project SAFE/ Project Impact cabell@oaklandnet.com	Mary O'Toole Media and Outreach Committee Project SAFE/ Project Impact
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Promoted by eight federally declared disasters in the last 16 years and millions of dollars in infrastructure damage from El Nino, Oakland's Office of Emergency Services has been actively developing programs to educate the public and mitigate the effects of disasters. The office's success in collaborating with city and neighborhood organizations was a major factor in the selection of Oakland as a Project Impact pilot community, according to Coleen Bell, project coordinator for Project SAFE / Project Impact.

Project SAFE -- Safety and Future Empowerment -- is the city's own name for Project Impact. "We wanted to give a local feel to the national initiative," said Carrie Barnecut, Emergency Planning Coordinator for the program. The goal of the program is to reduce the loss of life and property from disaster, and to reduce costs associated with disaster recovery.

### **Neighborhood Training -- CORE**

Oakland is making a concerted effort to train people in disaster preparedness at the neighborhood level via CORE -- Citizens of Oakland Respond to Emergencies. "One of the best ways to promote community and family action is face to face, and CORE gives us that interface with people," Barnecut said.

CORE is modeled after the nationally recognized Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) concept. (Please see page 26 for information about CERT.) The training covers disaster preparedness in the home, fire safety and suppression, and neighborhood preparedness, which focuses on how neighbors can respond together as a team.

"People want to know what they can do to protect themselves before, during and after a disaster," said Coleen Bell, program coordinator for Project SAFE. "People want to be empowered, to know they can become self sufficient." About 1000 people participate in the program each year.

So far, CORE has been successful in the higher socioeconomic neighborhoods. It has been difficult working the program in lower income areas. CORE leaders are trying to collaborate with other city programs that reach special populations.

### **CORE Elements**

#### **CORE I – Home and Family Preparedness**

- One 2-hour class taught in neighborhoods
- Content: family activities necessary to survive for three days following a disaster
- Materials have been translated into Spanish and Chinese (the city is currently working on Vietnamese version)
- About 50% of CORE I participants take the CORE II class. "But everyone who takes CORE I is a major success, whether they go on to CORE II or not," Barnecut said.

#### **CORE II -- Neighborhood Response Organization**

- One 2-hour class taught in the neighborhoods.
- Content: benefits of organizing as a neighborhood and how to respond as a team in a disaster, including light search and rescue, first aid/CPR.

#### **CORE III -- Specialized Fire Safety Training**

- Three 2-hour classes (taught at the Fire Training Center) and an emergency drill
- A 90-minute table-top discussion in the neighborhood
- The instructors are on-duty firefighters

#### **CORE IV -- Citizen-Level Fire Suppression**

- Four 3-hour classes and a fire suppression exercise in the neighborhood
- Content: wildfire hazards, wildfire awareness and neighborhood actions necessary to minimize the risk.

### **What makes CORE work?**

How do you get the public interested in disaster preparedness training? And how do you keep them involved so that the learning will stick? The Oakland presenters offered these suggestions:

- *Work with groups that represent your target audience.* Establish contacts with neighborhood associations and programs that work in neighborhoods. This approach is key to reaching youth, senior citizens and low income populations. About a third of CORE participants belong to other neighborhood groups.
- *Keep participants talking, solving problems.*

- ✓ Oakland formed a *CORE Citizens Advisory Task Force* to address program, curriculum, and funding issues. The task force keeps people involved in the effort and enhances collaboration among neighborhood groups. Calling themselves a program "think tank," the task force consists of members of the neighborhood core groups. The task force meets once a month.
- ✓ The city sponsors an annual *CORE leadership conference* and an *annual citywide exercise*.
- ✓ Chevron sponsors a *Coalition Training Forum* to help neighborhood groups maintain and strengthen the program. Participants share good ideas and materials, and learn how to motivate people and how to collaborate on programs.
- ✓ Recognize people who get things done; people with energy and ideas.
- *Create incentives*
  - ✓ Establish partnerships with home supply stores to offer discounts on disaster supplies. Invite neighbors to purchase disaster supplies in bulk – it's cheaper and it helps keep neighbors working together as a team.
  - ✓ Bargain with contractors to offer discounts on mitigation work for a selected group of homes.
- *Be visible.* "When neighbors see what other neighbors are doing in disaster planning, they start to take it seriously and usually become involved," Barnecut said. "No one wants to be left out."
  - ✓ Classes are held in the neighborhoods, in a home, church or city facility.
  - ✓ Extracurricular activities such as dinners and picnics keep participants together and thinking as a team. Non CORE participants are invited as well.
  - ✓ When neighbors are out working the program, they're visible and newsworthy. Invite the media to neighborhood events.
  - ✓ For neighborhood exercises, participants wear vests. "We want to be identified as a group," Barnecut said.
- *Link with established programs and events.* Oakland takes advantage of California's Earthquake Preparedness Month events in April to promote activities targeting the public and businesses. A citywide exercise is also held in April.
- *Keep the information flowing.* CORE group leaders distribute a quarterly newsletter to CORE participants and their neighbors (distributed to 5000 people). Some use the

newsletter to introduce themselves face-to-face to people in the neighborhoods. With distribution comes conversation and learning.

- *Emphasize collaboration, not just individual preparedness.* In presentations and newsletters, show that people are working together. Show collaboration among neighborhoods, training teams and community groups. A single group leader can inspire the others when there's collaboration among groups.

## Mitigation Services for Senior Citizens -- Project Springbreak

In 1998, the Oakland Office of Emergency Services teamed with CARD (Collaborating Agencies Respond to Disaster), the Oakland Housing Authority, and the Corporation for National Service's Americorps program to provide disaster education and mitigation services to senior citizens in the inner city -- Project Springbreak. The effort was supported by FEMA and held in conjunction with similar programs around the country.

CARD was initiated in 1987 to provide disaster services to special populations in the Oakland area. The program consists of 15 city and community-based organizations that service senior citizens, people who speak a language other than English, people living with HIV and AIDS, homeless youth, people addicted to drugs and alcohol, and U.S. veterans.

The project team recruited 150 high school and college students from Americorps, and trained them in home mitigation methods such as how to secure shelving and furniture to wall studs. Over a two-week period the students conducted mitigation projects in 155 senior citizens' homes. Each senior received a disaster supplies kit as well. Promotional activities included a kick-off event, media, and a "volunteer recognition" reception.

"Seeing young people interact with seniors is something you just can't put a label on," Bell said. "They work very well together -- it's incredibly inspiring."

Numerous agencies, businesses and voluntary organizations worked together to make the project a success (please see page 10). "Beyond the mitigation in the home, seniors now have a greater sense of well being for being better prepared," Bell said.

"One problem was that not everyone wanted strangers in their homes. But with each project, we hope to gain the trust needed to include seniors in preparedness education," Bell added.

<b>Project Springbreak: a partnerships case study</b> Project Springbreak illustrates how groups can work together to achieve a common goal.	
<p><b><u>Community and voluntary organizations</u></b>            Youth volunteers from the Oakland area</p> <p>Corporation for National Service/Americorps, Volunteers in Service to America, National Civilian Community Corps</p> <p>Collaborating Agencies Responding to Disaster, CARD Project of Alameda County</p> <p>California State Commission of Improving Life Through Service</p> <p>The American Red Cross, Bay Area Chapter</p> <p>Spanish Speaking Citizens Foundation, East Bay Habitat for Humanity, Retired Senior Volunteer Program, Cal. Conservation Corps</p>	<p><b><u>Activities</u></b>            Conducted mitigation projects seniors' homes</p> <p>Project coordination, recruitment, training</p> <p>Provided non-structural hazard mitigation training and on-site building coordination</p> <p>Advisor and coordinator</p> <p>Meals and on-site project coordination</p> <p>Provided guidance in working with special populations in the inner city</p>
<p><b><u>Government agencies</u></b>            Oakland Emergency Management Board, Project Safe, Oakland Office of Emergency Services            Oakland Housing Authority</p> <p>Unified School District</p> <p>California Office of Emergency Services</p> <p>FEMA</p>	<p>Organization and partnership development            State workers served as technical advisors</p> <p>Identified residents who needed assistance, made appointments, provided training space</p> <p>Outreach to students</p> <p>Maps of vulnerable areas, promotion and outreach assistance</p>
<p><b><u>Businesses partners</u></b> (\$8,000 in savings in the purchase of materials and supply kits)</p> <p>Home Depot, Earthquake Outlet, Earthquake Protective Services, Kinkos</p> <p>LAI Insurance Agency</p> <p>Airporter Express, McDonalds, Noah's Bagels</p> <p>Cellular One, Lawrence Livermore Nat'l Labs</p> <p>Tenant and Owner Development Corporation</p> <p>NASA / AMES</p> <p>Oakland A's, Signet Theatres</p>	<p>Provided tools, materials, office supplies, and training</p> <p>Advised on liability insurance issues</p> <p>Donated meals and snacks for workers</p> <p>Provided use of communications equipment</p> <p>Loaned earthquake training videos</p> <p>Produced a video of the project</p> <p>Gifts for volunteers</p>

## *Disaster Education in Deerfield Beach and Broward County, Florida*

Presented by:

**The Project Impact team of the City of Deerfield Beach**

<b>Rick Powell</b> <b>Division Chief</b> <b>Deerfield Beach Fire &amp; Rescue</b> <b>City of Deerfield Beach</b>	<b>Ron Ruback</b> <b>Hurricane Mitigation Officer</b> <b>City of Deerfield Beach</b>	<b>Noble Watkins</b> <b>Hazard Mitigation Coordinator</b> <b>Home Depot</b>
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"We found that that the way to become disaster resistant is CERT," said Rick Powell, Division Chief for Deerfield Beach Fire & Rescue. "It allows for consistency in training and enables disaster educators to network with the entire community."

The training program, conducted by Deerfield Beach firefighters, trains between 100 and 150 people a year (25 participants per 7-week course). Eight out of 28 municipalities in the county have CERT teams in place. Current interest in the course exceeds the program's capacity. Deerfield Beach funds the program; FEMA provides course materials and train-the-trainer workshops.

### Lessons on CERT Training

- *Recruit carefully.*
  - ✓ "The key to getting CERT started is to recruit a few key influential people from all aspects of the community," Powell said. "Once involved, they can solicit participation among their own groups. We went into areas that involved a lot of youth and minorities, and recruited people who were genuinely interested in the program."
  - ✓ "Try to reach the top political people. Involve the mayor, city council, city manager and police chief. When they go through the training, they get invested and are more willing to help with budgets," Powell said. "When the mayor says yes to a program, things fall in place." (A conference participant stated that in West Virginia endorsements from the extension service or churches are more important than those of local political leaders.)
- *Pick the right crew to help you get started.* Make sure you have a sufficient base of instructors. "We had to go out and sell the program to fire fighters. We now have 23 certified instructors," Powell said. "Look for instructors who enjoy people, can entertain, not just lecture, and understand the value of disaster education."

- *Start slowly and build your membership over time.* "It takes a multiyear commitment to train a community. These programs are very high maintenance," Powell said. "Plan carefully, give yourself enough lead-time, and plan for growth."
- *Hold volunteers accountable.* Treat them as professionals as if they were paid. "We have high standards," Powell said.
- *Emphasize empowerment.* Disaster training empowers people, and empowerment motivates people to action -- use empowerment as a motivational message for recruitment. (Another incentive is that people who are CERT trained are allowed in certain areas after a disaster.)
- *Keep training participants involved.* If participants want to participate beyond their own training, find a way to keep them involved. Some CERT programs in the county have a cadre of volunteer instructors, for example. "The worst thing you can do is train a trainer and then ignore them during an emergency," Powell said.

## Want to Be a Disaster Resistant Community?

"You need to develop partnerships with local public and private sector organizations," Said Ron Ruback, Hurricane Mitigation Officer, City of Deerfield Beech.

City projects include retrofitting the high school (the city's primary shelter space) and the main fire station, and installing shutters on about 100 homes. A complementary state program is retrofitting homes (up to \$10,000 per home). The state produced a 23-page checklist on wind hazards and provides training to home inspectors. Questionnaires were sent to homeowners in high risk areas to ascertain their interest in the state's mitigation program -- 477 out of 1600 responded.

Here are ideas on becoming disaster resistant:

- *Form a community alliance or working group.* This gives the program structure and visibility. Include business and public sector partners. Meet regularly to plan events, e.g., activities for hurricane awareness week. "Involve people, work together and communicate," Ruback said. "We raised \$13,000 in corporate sponsorships."
- *Keep the issues in the public eye.*
  - ✓ The Project Impact team participates in a local cable TV program on hurricane preparedness, evacuation, disaster supplies, and home retrofitting issues. They first broached the idea to a producer and then to the president of the company. "Sometimes you just have to go for it," Ruback said. "We had never been on TV before, but you learn by doing."

- ✓ The city has a web site and newsletter, and gives presentations to civic clubs, homeowners associations, and condominium associations. "Don't reinvent the wheel for information -- we use FEMA materials," Ruback said. A "model home" built by State Farm Insurance will be used for presentations on mitigation.
- *Remember your internal audiences.* Local government employees are an important audience. Make them aware of your program. Determine linkages with municipal programs. Perhaps they're trying to reach the same external audiences). Each city employee is given a family disaster plan and evacuation plan.
- *Emphasize the economic incentives to retrofitting in presentations and materials.* The public needs to understand the numbers before investing in home mitigation projects.

## Getting Businesses Involved

"Businesses need to know each other and be able to call on each other in a disaster," said Noble Watkins, Hazard Mitigation Coordinator for Project Impact/Home Depot. "It's in their interest to get involved in partnerships -- they want to know how to strengthen their family and business, to be prepared," he said.

Deerfield's Project Impact team formed a business alliance, which has grown to about 150 companies (about 50 are active). The alliance is planning a series of contingency planning seminars to teach disaster preparedness to small businesses. Sessions will cover such issues as backing up computer systems, maintaining customer records, property retrofitting, storm shutter installation, and closing up a business.

The plan is to have the larger businesses serve as mentors. "We're asking the larger companies to donate one person one day a month to teach contingency planning to small businesses that can't afford to have their own plans done," Watkins said.

Watkins emphasized that businesses need to have a plan to reopen after the disaster. "Nine out of 10 businesses that don't open within 72 hours of a disaster never open again," he said.

Family preparedness is an important part of any business plan. Give employees information about how to survive without emergency services, how to evacuate, and how to communicate with the company when disasters occur. Encourage employees to practice their home emergency plan regularly.

Watkins also suggested that businesses identify their suppliers and establish a system to communicate with suppliers following a disaster. Another idea is to sign a pre-disaster contract with an area contractor so that you have someone committed to working for you when you need repair work after a disaster.

## Disaster Education in Seattle, Washington

Presented by:

**The Project Impact Team of Seattle**

<b>James Mullen</b> <b>Director</b> <b>Division of Emergency Management</b>	<b>LuAn Johnson</b> <b>Community Preparedness Program</b> <b>Manager</b> <b>Division of Emergency Management</b>
<b>Bill Steele</b> <b>University of Washington</b>	<b>Doug Chandler</b> <b>Vice President of Contingency Planning</b> <b>Washington Mutual Bank</b>

### Principles on Building Sustainable Programs

"The most important lesson I've learned is to listen to people. Even if you have a great idea, you need to hear the perspectives of others, the ultimate idea will never be what you think," said James Mullen, Director of the Seattle Division of Emergency Management.

In its first meeting, the Project Impact team defined three projects: 1) strengthen the infrastructure of city schools, 2) develop scientific tools for public policy makers, and 3) retrofit and strengthen older homes in Seattle. What emerged from the presentations were more than program descriptions, they were these program development principles:

- *Be credible.* Make a commitment to long term sustainability, to program content over glitz. Build a good project, be realistic, make sure things work well. Develop the grassroots. "We're in this for the long term, even if the Federal dollars dry up," Mullen said. Develop the real workings of a program and the accolades will come in due time.
- *Start small and let the program grow as resources and experience allow.* "We're not looking for a big splash in the media," said Doug Chandler, Vice President of Contingency Planning, Washington Mutual Bank. "We're trying to develop the guts of the program from the grassroots. Be careful how you disperse the message. You need to make sure that you can deliver on what you promise," he suggested. "Try to be methodical in the way you approach your business and Project Impact partners."
- *Develop credible partnerships.* "We don't go after everyone, we look for partners that want to get involved, organizations that really want to make the program work, not just big businesses. If we're credible they'll come, and they do," Mullen said.

- *Get people talking from different professions.* "The most important part of this project is that we've put everyone in the same room and got people talking. We have more good ideas than we can deal with," Mullen said. "Involve people from different disciplines. You will really benefit from the interaction in your community by working together -- we're nothing if we don't form coalitions."
- *Keep an open mind about the possibilities.* Bill Steele from the University of Washington spoke about the great potential that lies within a community. "The community is always larger than I recognize," he said. "That's why coalitions are so important. We are continually redefining our community, it's an open box that is growing all the time. There is a lot to uncover in your community."
- *Develop portable projects.* Success comes from leveraging resources, getting other to assume leadership, allowing others to learn from your mistakes. Seattle's Project Impact team structures its programs to be transferred easily to other jurisdictions
- *Invest in research and development.* Study the history of hazards in your community. Use research to predict damages. Take advantage of new technologies. The University of Washington and U.S. Geological Survey provide Seattle with scientific and academic support. One project is the development of probabilistic landslide hazard mapping tools for policy makers.
- *Integrate mitigation strategies into local programs.* Not all programs need to be started from scratch. Consider how your program can link with ongoing government initiatives. Seattle's Project Impact involves such agencies as environment, housing, and health and human services, the governor's office, the insurance commissioner, and state energy regulators.

## Building Neighborhood Teams: SDART

*LuAn Johnson, Seattle's Community Preparedness Program Manager, heads the city's highly successful SDART program -- Seattle Disaster Aid and Response Teams.*

"Our mission is to re-institute a sense of neighborhood," Johnson said in explaining the SDART program. SDART is a neighborhood-based program that works to get people involved in personal and neighborhood preparedness. By working together, participants learn how to respond safely as a team, and how to be 72-hour sufficient in case police, fire and emergency services are not available after a disaster.

After three years of operation, 189 Seattle neighborhoods have been organized to respond to disasters. The focus has been on residential neighborhoods with about 30 homes per neighborhood. "Getting lower income neighborhoods involved is very difficult, but we

hope that if more people are able to handle their own problems, they can help the poor in a disaster," Johnson said.

### **Neighborhood Structure**

"Our assumption is that neighborhoods don't need to go outside their group and spend a lot of money. They already have the skills, knowledge and resources, but they need help identifying their resources and getting organized," she said.

Neighbors are organized into one of seven function areas, called disaster response teams:

- ✓ Block coordinators
- ✓ Communications
- ✓ Damage assessment
- ✓ First aid
- ✓ Safety and security
- ✓ Light search and rescue
- ✓ Sheltering.

Each function is broken down into a task description that lists what people need to know and do in a disaster. "People do not panic in disaster, but they do not always do the right thing," Johnson said. "The task descriptions help people to do the right thing. None of the tasks are difficult and none of them require training with the exception of first aid."

### **Getting Started**

To begin, Johnson holds a 90 minute orientation meeting in the neighborhood to talk about the program. Neighbors are encouraged to sign up for one of the teams. Participants are given liability protection by registering as emergency services workers in the state.

"Our goal is a minimum of three people per team, but we're getting six people on a team for a total of 35 people in each neighborhood," Johnson said.

"A key lesson is that everyone must be given something to do -- everyone is important to the group. This sense of belonging helps institute a feeling of neighborhood," Johnson said.

### **Program Maintenance**

Johnson organizes a drill for each neighborhood every six months. The first drill is a "table top" where participants meet in a home and talk about how they would respond to disasters. The second is a "walk about" drill where neighbors walk around the neighborhood as a group and talk about potential emergencies and how they would work

together to address them. Scenarios might include a child home alone, a tree blocking traffic, a neck injury, a garage fire fueled by natural gas, or a person in shock.

"The walk about drill helps draw the neighborhood together in a very meaningful way," Johnson said. "Kids love it. It's not frightening, it's empowering."

A functional drill is also held to train neighbors in their respective response team functions.

SDART is promoted by "block watch" and word of mouth. Johnson said that they don't advertise because they don't want to create a demand that they can't handle. There is about a six week wait to get a program started.

"Once the program is underway maintaining interest in neighborhoods is not a problem," she said. "This is a gradual process that builds on its own. It's a natural draw. The walk about and the functional drill are outside and visible to the others in the neighborhood. We wear hard hats and use fake blood -- we get a lot of attention," Johnson said.

Other SDART activities include an annual drill ("whatever kind the neighbors think would be most useful") and "Disaster Saturday," an event held on the first Saturday in October promoting Project Impact and home retrofitting.

## **Strengthening the Network of Disaster Educators**

*Throughout the country, in all sectors of society, professionals and private citizens are working within their organizations and communities to inform and educate the public about disasters. They represent a range of professions and disciplines, from emergency management to fire and law enforcement, from voluntary organizations to business and academic fields. They are the individuals who comprise an unstructured yet growing network of disaster educators around the country -- the network supported by FEMA's Community & Family Preparedness Program.*

*This section of the report is about the disaster education community. It covers ideas and activities that are meant to strengthen the network. And it raises important questions about what can be done to further enhance the profession of disaster education.*

### ***Inaugural "Disaster Saves" Awards Announced***

Recognizing the true benefits of disaster preparedness and the untiring work of the disaster education community, FEMA and the American Red Cross announced the first winners of the national disaster education award -- Disaster Saves Award. The new award goes to individuals whose educational efforts have made a significant difference in people's lives in a natural disaster.

Kay Goss, Associate Director for Preparedness, Training, and Exercises for FEMA, and John Clizbe, Vice President of Disaster Services for the American Red Cross, shared the honors in announcing the awards at the Community & Family Preparedness Conference (June 1998). The winners participated in the ceremony via conference calls that were broadcast through the loud speaker system for all conference participants to hear.

### ***Disaster Saves Winners***

**Ursula Hyman, Richard Baumer, Linda Williams and Frank Griffith  
Eaton Canyon Recovery Alliance -- Pasadena, California**

In a remarkable multi-year effort following a series of devastating firestorms in Southern California in 1993, an umbrella group of homeowners associations in Pasadena -- the *Eaton Canyon Recovery Alliance* -- worked with public agencies and the American Red Cross to educate residents about wildfire, flooding, mud slides, and debris flow hazards.

The public education team (Ursula Hyman, Richard Baumer, Linda Williams and Frank Griffith) used a variety of means to educate the public: public meetings, door to door visits, partnerships, newsletters, materials distribution, and public signage. Community workshops covered such topics as "fire-wise landscaping," "flood safety," "earthquake safety," and "neighborhood preparedness." Additional hands-on training was provided in

a "community safety training day." Hundreds of properties were protected by temporary and permanent mitigation measures as a result of efforts by the Alliance.

*Disaster Saves Winner*

**Rocky Lopes, Ph.D., Manager, Community Disaster Education  
American Red Cross**

Rocky Lopes is a national leader in the field of community disaster education. He has demonstrated an untiring commitment to training and supporting disaster educators throughout the American Red Cross system, the fire service, and the emergency management community. Rocky manages the American Red Cross' Community Disaster Education program and is a full-time staff member at the national headquarters of that organization. As a researcher, teacher, trainer and conference facilitator since the 1980's, he has assumed a leading role in the creation of a nationally acclaimed bank of disaster preparedness messages and public education techniques. Rocky's 1992 study, "Public Perception of Disaster Preparedness Presentations Using Disaster Damage Images," led to a profession-wide change in the way images are used in public education. He has worked extensively building coalitions with the Federal Emergency Management Agency, the U.S. Fire Administration, the National Weather Service, the U.S. Geological Survey, and a wide range of industry and voluntary associations.

*Disaster Saves Winners – Honorable Mentions*

**Arthur Burtman, American Red Cross, Massachusetts Bay Chapter  
Elaine Mesitti, Boston Fire Department**

Thanks to the work of Elaine Mesitti and Arthur Burtman, senior citizens, elementary school children and many others in the Boston area are given life saving information on fire prevention and disaster preparedness. They work closely together to make sure that their messages are effective and appropriate.

Some time ago, Arthur developed a Disaster Preparedness Coloring Book Program. In March 1998, thanks to Elaine's coordination, Arthur presented this program to the 4<sup>th</sup> grade at the Josiah Quincy School. After the presentation, the students wrote thank you notes and described the things they learned from him. Wrote one student, "If you never warned us to check our smoke detector, my family wouldn't know that our battery was dead." And another, "I checked my smoke detector that day when I went home. I'm glad you mentioned it. We had to change our batteries."

## *Networking on the Emergency Information Infrastructure Partnership*

Presented by:

**Avagene Moore, EIIP Coordinator**

[Amoore@emforum.org](mailto:Amoore@emforum.org)

The Emergency Information Infrastructure Partnership (EIIP) is an Internet-based forum that encourages dialogue among those who share an interest in emergency management. It was founded by FEMA, the Congressional Fire Service Institute, the International Association of Emergency Managers (IAEM), the National Emergency Management Association, the National Volunteer Fire Council, and the State and Local Emergency Management Data User Group.

The EIIP focuses on the second 'I' in EIIP, building the infrastructure, which makes possible the direct exchange of information between people. "Our goal is to get you involved in an exchange of ideas in any way you're comfortable," said Avagene Moore, EIIP coordinator. "It could be participating in a discussion online, networking with your peers via discussion groups or mailing lists, sharing ideas in the electronic library, teaching a class in the virtual forum, or presenting a paper."

### **EIIP's web page** **(<http://www.emforum.org>)**

EIIP's mission is to provide innovative solutions to emergency management challenges by exploiting the information infrastructure. The web site offers these features:

**Virtual Forum** – chat sessions, discussion groups, and program schedules for the feature topic of the month. Each quarter EIIP focuses on one of the four phases of emergency management. Weekly online discussions include:

- ✓ "Round Table" discussion on Tuesdays, 1:00 pm (EST)
- ✓ Weekly presentation with Q&A on Wednesdays, 12:00 noon (EST)
- ✓ "Mutual Aid" help session on Thursdays, 8:00 pm (EST)

**Virtual Library** – on-line information resources, and a User Documents area for sharing papers, plans and public information. Browse CFP's Act Now Preparedness Update.

**The Virtual Classroom** – educational and training program information.

**The Technology Arena** – data sources and information about tools with application in the field of emergency management or disaster response.

Moore challenged disaster educators to think about the Internet as an opportunity for expanding and spreading knowledge. "We need to broaden our thinking," she said. "Talk to people who have new perspectives, create new conversations, engage in 'what if' before you lock into 'how to' -- this approach leads to discovery."

Moore encouraged participants to take advantage of the Internet and to upgrade their computer systems to keep up with improving technology. "Okay, so sometimes technology doesn't work. Try again, you can have a bad Internet day just like you have a bad hair day," she said.

EIIP online discussions have covered such issues as disaster education, emergency public information, meeting the needs of a growing elderly population, floodplain management, Project Impact, partnerships with private industry, continuity of operations, protection of vital records in a disaster, and satellite and Internet-based communications networks.

For more information, email Avagene Moore [amoore@emforum.org](mailto:amoore@emforum.org) or Amy Sebring [asebring@emforum.org](mailto:asebring@emforum.org).

## *Disaster Education Online -- Pros and Cons*

Presented by:

**Heidi Kramer, American Red Cross community disaster education volunteer**  
[disaster.education@juno.com](mailto:disaster.education@juno.com)

Heidi Kramer delivers community disaster education to two small online services. She believes strongly in trying to reach people online, but says there are pros and cons to online education.

### **Advantages to online education**

- ✓ Online services can target audiences through regional or interest based forums, enabling you to capitalize on "teachable moments." For example, information about preparedness, appropriate behaviors, and recovery can be posted and revised as disasters develop.
- ✓ Electronic forums ensure message repetition, which is essential to disaster education. Online information lives on and on. Live discussions become permanent records in a text library and can be viewed by others.
- ✓ Convenience -- people can "drop in" when they have time. Questions can be asked and answered long after the presentation is over.
- ✓ The Internet reaches audiences who may not be affiliated with any groups, as well as people who are unable to attend traditional presentations.

## **Disadvantages to online education**

- ✓ Many people don't have access to a computer or are not online.
- ✓ Audience participation is unpredictable and sometimes low.
- ✓ You can't use visual cues to assess if your message is being clearly communicated to your audience.

Kramer predicted there will be new opportunities for online education with the expansion of community based networks. She also predicted more involvement with schools that have "global schoolhouse" programs and computer capabilities.

## *National Disaster Education Coalition Activities*

Presented by:

**Roxanne Hawkins-Lamb, U.S. Geological Survey**

The National Disaster Education Coalition is an inter-agency group that provides and supports programs that educate the public about natural hazards, disaster preparedness and mitigation. Charter members are the American Red Cross (<http://www.redcross.org>), the Federal Emergency Management Agency (<http://www.fema.gov>), the National Fire Protection Association (<http://www.nfpa.org>), the National Weather Service (<http://www.nws.noaa.gov>), and the U.S. Geological Survey (<http://www.usgs.gov>). Associate members are the International Association of Emergency Managers, and the National Emergency Manager's Association.

The group is an informal coalition created to:

- Ensure that educational messages regarding natural hazards and disaster preparedness disseminated by participating agencies are consistent, accurate, and appropriate for the audience.
- Keep abreast of research and lessons learned in disasters. Advise coalition members of information that may make changes to educational materials necessary.
- Encourage joint development of educational materials. When possible, ensure that co-sponsored educational materials are made available from each agency whose logo appears on the item.
- Consult with other agencies before updating, revising, modifying, discontinuing, or creating educational materials.
- See that materials remain available to the public at no charge or for cost, as non-revenue generating products.
- Encourage development of multiple-format materials that can be distributed using technology such as Fax-back, Internet, CD-ROM, and satellite broadcast.
- Ensure that products reach target audiences and cover the breadth of natural hazards that can happen in the U.S.

- Disseminate messages of the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction in the United States.

## *Good Ideas on State Coalitions*

Presented by:

**Cathy Henry, Family Preparedness Officer, North Carolina Division of Emergency Management**

chenry@interpath.com

"Go to everyone you can think of because someone will agree to help you," said Cathy Henry, a North Carolina Family Preparedness Officer. Here are important organizations for partnerships:

- The American Red Cross -- organized at the state level and in counties throughout the country. "They're my first and most important partner," Henry said.
- Americorps -- a national program sponsored by The Corporation for National Service that involves men and women of all ages in community service projects. Americorps members in North Carolina (as well as California and elsewhere) conducted home mitigation projects in homes of senior citizens (see page 24 for additional details).
- State agencies -- Henry encouraged conference participants to work with the highest levels of state government possible. For example, Henry is working with the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Resources, Division of the Hard of Hearing on a train-the-trainer program to provide hard of hearing persons with disaster preparedness and recovery information. She is partnering with the state's Department of Aging to reach senior citizens. (Medical equipment sales and leasing companies may also be interested in a partnership for reaching seniors.)
- The American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, the Humane Society, local veterinarians, state veterinary associations, or the local chapter of the Doctors of Veterinary Medicine Association -- These groups may have ideas on pet care issues, which are extremely important to senior citizens and others. Many will not evacuate in a disaster unless they know that their pets are okay. "The message is that you need to save your pet and that your pet might need your in a disaster," Henry said.
- "You just can't say don't bring your pets in an evacuation, we need to say what they can do," added a conference participant.
- Work with TV stations to encourage open captioning for disaster warnings.

## **Strengthening Your Community Disaster Education Program**

*When 80 disaster educators get together you're guaranteed to get lots of ideas on how to make programs work well. This section offers highlights from their discussions and presentations over the four-day period. A theme running through the conference: How do you build comprehensive community-wide disaster education programs?*

### ***Partnering with Americorps***

Presented by:

**Floyd Jones, Program Director, N.C. Americorps Project**

Looking for way to reach students? Senior citizens? Americorps may be an answer, according to Floyd Jones, director of the North Carolina Americorps project.

Americorps is a national initiative targeting senior citizens and youth with programs on education, public safety, environment, and human needs. In North Carolina -- in a partnership with North Carolina Emergency Management, the Division of Aging, and the American Association of Retired People -- 14 Americorps members went to schools to talk about disaster preparedness (Americorps Disaster Preparedness Outreach Program).

"We started with the Board of Education to prepare the way," Floyd said. "We then called the schools, explained the program, and lined up the presentations." Following five days of training, the Americorps members gave 550 school presentations, reaching 20,000 students in three months. Some did six presentations a day.

Americorps members range from teenagers to senior citizens. They receive a living stipend for their service. The Corporation for National Service pays 80 percent of the stipend, the grant recipient covers the remaining 20 percent. 1700 service hours (ten to 12 months) are required for full-time Americorps membership, 900 hours for part-time. "Americorps is funded with taxpayers' money, so strict financial accountability requirements are in place," Floyd said.

Floyd noted that the American Red Cross Chapter in Los Angeles has a large Americorps program that works to deliver disaster presentations and community education.

Floyd encouraged participants to ask their state commission for information about Americorps grants. He suggested disaster educators ask their program partners to help with recruitment.

## Partnering with Explorers

Presented by:

**Emergency Management Exploring Post 493 sponsored by the American Red Cross and the Boulder City/County Office of Emergency Management**

<b>Bob Amick</b> <b>Police Communications Supervisor,</b> <b>University of Colorado at Boulder</b> <a href="mailto:Amick@spot.colorado.edu">Amick@spot.colorado.edu</a>	<b>Sherry Kenyon</b> <b>Fire Safety Coordinator</b> <b>Boulder Fire Department</b>
<b>Eric Hill</b> <b>Explorer Scout</b>	<b>Carrigan Bennett</b> <b>Explorer Scout</b>

"Explorers live up to high expectation," said Bob Amick, advisor to Exploring Post 493 in Boulder, Colorado. "They are full members of the program once they pass through the interview process. Don't baby them. Don't hesitate to have high expectations of them."

Sponsored by the Boy Scouts of America, Exploring is for young men and women (ages 14 to 21) interested in "exploring" an area of interest or professional career. Each Explorer Post is organized around a particular field of activity, such as emergency management, fire fighting, medicine, emergency medical services, high adventure, and science and engineering.

Explorers plan and conduct their own programs with the counsel of adult advisors. Local sponsoring organizations provide training and involve the Explorers in their day-to-day activities, giving the Explorers direct experience in professional work. Special emphasis is placed on citizenship and community service.

"Exploring gives you a chance to cultivate some really outstanding people," Amick said.

Two young men from Emergency Management Exploring Post 493, Carrigan Bennett and Eric Hill, shared their insights with conference participants about involving youth in disaster education and emergency management.

### **Why do you participate in Exploring?**

*"It's important to develop skills and see what the possibilities are. We need to have disaster skills in order to teach disaster preparedness -- we need hands on experience. Through Explorer Post 493's Mock Disaster Program we come to understand what agencies do when they all come together."* (Carrigan Bennett)

*"Explorers supplement other agencies in disasters, so you get real experience. We can be helpful in an Incident Command System. Exploring also expands our scope of knowledge. I'm now in the fire service program, and I would not be here (Community & Family Preparedness Conference) were it not for this program."* (Eric Hill)

### **How do Exploring experiences teach you how to educate others?**

*"Because our Post is sponsored by the American Red Cross, I have an understanding of that organization. The Boy Scouts do the mock disasters and that interest is brought back to their families and Posts. This is how we get community disaster education contacts." (Sherry Kenyon)*

### **Have these experiences affected your career goals?**

*"Before I wanted to get into computer programming, now I'm interested in combining computers and emergency management." (Carrigan Bennett)*

*"I'm studying medicine, and this experience has changed the way I'm getting there. My work for the fire service is teaching me about the humanitarian aspect of the program -- not just the technical information from a book." (Eric Hill)*

### **How can disaster educators get the youth involved?**

*"Kids have a lot of power over adults. They go home and ask questions. 'Mom, do we have an evacuation plan ... and why do we have only one fire exit?' Children are really important. I nagged my parents until we got a fire ladder." (Carrigan Bennett)*

*"Don't not teach us. Let us know what's going on or we end up walking in a cloud. Don't have any concerns about what I'm seeing." (Carrigan Bennett)*

*"There is a lot of energy in high school. Give them a chance and get them involved. We have good core group of high school kids in our program; they just need to know that they can get involved and be a part of the program." (Eric Hill)*

*Emergency Management Program Helps* is available for groups interested in starting an Emergency Management Explorer Post. The guide was produced in a partnership with FEMA and the National Exploring Division of the Boy Scouts of America (BSA). To order copies, contact your local Boy Scouts of America Council office and ask for Bin Item #99-243.

To learn about sponsoring an Explorer Post, look under Boy Scouts of American in the white pages of your telephone book and ask for Explorer Posts. Or see the BSA Website To find local BSA Councils in your area at <http://www.bsa.org>. Also see Emergency Management Explorer Post 493 Website at <http://bcn.boulder.co.us/community/explorer>.

## *Disaster Education Model: CERT*

The Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) concept is a training program that was started by the Los Angeles City Fire Department in 1985 to help people in neighborhoods and places of work organize in teams to protect themselves and each other in disasters. The program recognizes that professional emergency responders cannot be everywhere helping everyone immediately after a disaster, and that people spontaneously try to help each other in disasters without sufficient training to do so safely.

CERT training consists of a series of classes given over several weeks, a disaster exercise at the end of the course, and various refresher classes and activities designed to keep participants involved in disaster preparedness. Course topics include hazard awareness, individual and family disaster preparedness and response, fire suppression, medical response, light search and rescue, and team organization. Participants learn what to do before and after disaster, how to mitigate the effects of disaster, and how to help their neighbors and colleagues in a disaster.

Participants are usually trained in teams where they live or work – in a neighborhood, community group or workplace setting – learning how to complement each other’s skills and respond as a unit in a disaster. In some cases, CERT teams assist professional responders in community-wide disasters.

Over the years, CERT programs have developed in cities throughout the country. With its emphasis on learning-by-doing and collaboration, CERT has proven to be a highly effective approach to disaster education. Participants hear consistent messages over an extended period of time, they practice using the very skills and knowledge they would need to respond safely in a disaster, and their learning is reinforced by the people whom they know and trust -- members of the team.

CERT programs are run by fire service, emergency medical, and emergency management personnel. Communities in California, Washington, Oregon, Utah, Colorado, Missouri, Florida, North Carolina, Iowa, Kansas and Idaho have started CERT programs. FEMA supports the programs by conducting or sponsoring train-the-trainer courses.

To learn more about CERT, contact the training officer for emergency management in your state, or contact:

Sam Isenberger  
Emergency Management Institute  
16825 South Seton Avenue  
Emmitsburg, Maryland 21727  
Phone: 301-447-1071  
E-mail: [sam.isenberger@fema.gov](mailto:sam.isenberger@fema.gov)

## *Training School Administrators and Teachers*

Presented by:

**Virginia Kimball, Instructor, American Red Cross**

[Vskimball@aol.com](mailto:Vskimball@aol.com)

"Increasingly school boards, school administrators, principals and teachers are taking emergency planning and disaster education seriously," said Virginia Kimball, an American Red Cross instructor based in California. Kimball has been actively involved in the evolution of curriculum and training materials on multi-hazard emergency planning for schools.

"There are several models to consider when approaching your school system," Kimball said. A traditional approach is to give disaster preparedness presentations during the school day -- the American Red Cross, the fire service, and others have been working in the schools for many years with great success. Another approach is to train teachers in the use of disaster preparedness curricula so that they can integrate the information into everyday classroom activities. A third approach is to focus on emergency planning -- to help school administrators and principals prepare and exercise their schools' emergency plan.

### **"My dream is that every school will use the same procedures"**

In a group exercise, participants were given various emergency scenarios and asked to identify problems school administrators would need to address for each. The exercise suggested the commonality of issues in a variety of school emergencies and disasters -- hence, why the Incident Command System is an effective method for dealing with them.

"The Incident Command System works very well in the schools," Kimball said. "It enables school administrators to speak the same language as fire departments and other response agencies who may respond in an emergency."

"With our increasingly mobile population, it's becoming even more important to have a consistency of emergency plans at schools around the country," she added. "My dream is that every school will take emergency planning seriously as part of its commitment to school safety, and that every school will use the same signals and procedures to respond to tornado watches, earthquakes, gunfire, bomb threats and the dozens of other potential incidents which may threaten schools."

Kimball encourages disaster educators to be aware of courses for administrators and educators that are offered at FEMA's Emergency Management Institute in Emmitsburg, Maryland, and in some states. She suggests that schools utilize the School Site Emergency Planning Guidelines which can be downloaded from the Los Angeles County Sheriff's web site (<http://www.eob.org>) in a compressed format (click on "what's new").

Below are summaries of four recommended courses:

### **E362 Multi-Hazard Safety Program for Schools**

This 4 1/2 day train-the-trainer course teaches participants how to conduct two-day emergency planning workshops for their school community. Topics include risk reduction, Incident Command System, drills and exercises, disaster recovery, mitigation, crisis counseling and school violence. The intended audience includes school administrators, principals, school board members, school district facility and risk managers, teachers, PTA members, emergency managers, and other members of emergency services. Applications can be submitted to the state emergency management training office.

### **E434 Earthquake Safety Program for Schools**

This 4 1/2 day train-the-trainer course teaches participants how to conduct workshops on emergency planning for the earthquake hazard. The topics are similar to those listed above, but are specific to earthquakes. Applications can be submitted to the state emergency management training office.

### **E436 Earthquake Tremor Troops: A Teacher's Package for K-6**

This 4 1/2 day workshop is designed to train teachers how to give workshops in their school districts on the delivery of the Tremor Troops earthquake curriculum. The curriculum includes multi-disciplinary hands-on classroom activities developed by the National Science Teachers Association, and a unit on crisis intervention. Lesson plans and activities promote scientific literacy and help prepare children to respond safely and cope with an earthquake. The intended audience is elementary science and curriculum coordinators, kindergarten and elementary teachers, and educators for science and educational resource centers. Applications can be submitted to the state emergency management training office.

### **E439 Seismic Sleuths: A teacher's package on earthquakes for grades 7-12**

This 4 1/2 day course is designed to train master teachers how to give workshops in their school districts on the delivery of the Seismic Sleuths earthquake curriculum. The curriculum includes activities that can be integrated into science, math and social studies curricula, and illustrates how these disciplines can be applied to reduce earthquake hazards. Topics include seismic safety design, construction, land use, and emergency management. Applications can be submitted the state emergency management training office.

For information, contact The National Emergency Training Center, Emergency Management Institute at 301-447-1035 or 800-238-3358, or email the course manager, Dawn Warehime, at [dawn.warehime@fema.gov](mailto:dawn.warehime@fema.gov).

## *Methods for Evaluating Disaster Education Programs*

Presented by:

**Phil Schaenman, President, TriData Corporation**

“You don’t need to be a statistician or have sophisticated evaluation instruments to obtain useful data,” said Phil Schaenman, a specialist in fire safety education and fire research. Schaenman described a hierarchy of evaluation methods in descending order of sophistication.

**End impacts** – “This is the most significant of all the data,” Schaenman said, “but the most difficult to compare because of the tremendous difference in the intensity of disasters.” Examples of end impacts are comparing two similar communities’ losses from similar disasters, and/or measuring a community’s losses over two similar disasters. In the case of fire, examples of end impacts are the number of fires per 1,000 population, fire deaths per 1,000 population, and dollar loss from fire per 1,000 population.

**Change in behavior** – The next best method answers the question: Did the education change the target audience’s behavior? “You don’t need to have very precise data if there is meaningful change in behavior,” Schaenman observed. “Five percent of the population had a working smoke detector in 1975 and 93 percent do today -- even if this data were good only to plus or minus 10 percent, the trend would still be highly significant.”

**Change in knowledge** – Less significant than behavior change but still useful is to measure a change in what people know. For example, you could test an audience’s knowledge before and after a presentation. “The drawback is that people forget, so you need to retest the audience at a later date,” Schaenman said.

**Percentage of target audience reached** – “Outreach doesn’t necessarily mean your audience is acting on your message or is even hearing you, but it’s still useful data, especially when selling a budget,” Schaenman said. “Think also in terms of the percentage of people you’re *not* reaching – to say you’re *not* reaching 96 percent of the community would be more significant than to say you reached 40,000 if the total targeted population were one million people.”

**Anecdotal evidence** – “To garner support among policy people, tell stories about how your program has made a significant difference in people’s lives,” Schaenman said. “But don’t over do it. Even good anecdotal evidence gets old after the fourth example. Also, this approach doesn’t work with the budget people – they require more statistical evidence.”

“The most powerful and credible evidence comes from a combination of data, e.g., people responded correctly, we reached our audience, we documented an anecdote, and so on. Links counter the inherent problem of comparing apples to oranges when comparing disasters,” he said.

Schaenman said that a random sample of 100 to 200 people spread out in the community is often sufficient to tell a lot about a program. He added that the sample should be random, and that questions should be tested and refined to clean out biases. “Even noisy data are better than no data at all.”

“There are low cost ways to generate information. Interns and students love to gather data, and volunteer fire fighters are often willing to help,” he said.

### **Factors in Making Programs Work**

Phil Schaenman

**Champions** – You need a spark plug to make things happen, someone who can rally the troops and get people invested in the work.

**Magnanimous chiefs** – The most effective programs have individuals who are willing to dig in and get the work done, people who are not in it for themselves. This allows the champions to fulfill their role.

**Careful targeting** – We all get bombarded with information every day, and get overwhelmed by it. Focus your message on your most important audience.

**Market research** – Research can make or break a program. Learn how people get their information and whom they trust. Learn what your audience thinks it will get out of the program. Ask questions and learn people's perceptions. You can offend people if you don't test your market. Schaenman cited a market test that showed that people in Oregon were most receptive to a door-to-door smoke detector campaign when their neighbors carried the message, while people in Baltimore were more receptive to the door-to-door approach when the message was delivered by the fire department.

**Powerful allies** – Get influential businesses behind your program. Organize a blue ribbon committee to endorse your program and budget. Hold a periodic luncheon to brief committee members on program activities.

**Good materials** – Keep materials current. Messages should be simple and consistent.

**Message repetition** – Hone your message and stick with it. In one example in the U.K., educators tried to achieve 20 to 30 exposures per year in programs targeting the elderly. (A participant noted that research conducted in nine markets by BBDO, a large advertising agency, found that it takes six times for the public to recognize a smoke detector message and 22 times to act upon it.) The environment is important, e.g., people learn more working in groups than from an advertisement.

**Test your program** – It's better to make mistakes with a test program than on a large scale. Learn from your mistakes and expand your program as resources allow.

## *A Community Partnership Reaching Senior Citizens*

Presented by:

<b>Lee Catlin</b> <b>Community Resource Coordinator</b> <b>County of Albemarle, Virginia</b>	<b>Darryl Lang</b> <b>Disaster Services Specialist</b> <b>American Red Cross</b>
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With a sizable senior citizen population and a history of severe weather in the area, a number of organizations in the county of Albermarle, Virginia got together to organize "Senior Weatherbusters." Through seniors' presentations, local retail store promotions, and media outreach, the partnership seeks to help seniors prepare for winter storms, flooding and other disasters.

Partners include the local seniors advisory council, the community resources and emergency services offices, the police department, the American Red Cross, the county's electric utility, local grocery stores and retail stores, and the Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Animals.

### **Lessons learned in reaching senior citizens**

- *Targeting seniors? Talk to them first.* Albermarle's seniors program was largely initiated and shaped by senior citizens themselves, according to Lee Catlin, Community Resources Coordinator for the county. Members of the local senior advisory council had expressed their concern about seniors' well being following a series of blizzards and floods in the area. The council became an active participant in developing the messages for the program.
- *Address seniors' psychological needs.* Identify ways to reassure seniors that you will communicate with them in a disaster. Seniors often live alone and can feel vulnerable and isolated. They need to know that someone will be there to help them. Understand that some seniors are very reluctant to ask for help.
- *Address pet care issues in presentations and materials.* People have refused to evacuate their homes when they're not allowed to take their pets with them. Consider a partnership with your local Humane Society or veterinarian, or the local chapter of the Doctors of Veterinary Medicine Association or the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals. They may have a plan for handling pets in a disaster or ideas for your program.
- *Keep presentation simple and short.* Keep seniors involved in your talk and leave lots of time for questions.

- *Recommend disaster supplies that are inexpensive, easy to open, lightweight and simple to operate.* Disaster supplies kits should reflect seniors' physical limitations. Remember oxygen, medications, hearing aid batteries, and other special equipment and supplies. Include lists of prescriptions and information about medications and dosage, and telephone numbers of friends, doctors and pharmacists. "For packaged foods, remember protein and carbohydrates," said Darryl Lang, a Disaster Services Specialist for the American Red Cross. "And if you include Clorox in your kit, remember to change the bottle every six months."

## *Good Ideas on Selling Mitigation*

How do you motivate people to spend money on mitigation measures that reduce the physical effects of disaster? That was a question disaster educators wrestled with during FEMA's Community & Family Preparedness Conference in an exercise called, "The Conference Challenge." Participants' advice -- which was documented by conference facilitators -- is loosely categorized under six headings: programs, partners, financial incentives, planning considerations, approaches, and materials.

### **Programs**

- Create a "remembrance" event surrounding the anniversary of the last major disaster. For example, say a community hasn't had a large tornado in 25 years. During the two weeks (or so) surrounding the anniversary, have local hardware or home supply stores offer free workshops for homeowners on how to mitigate for tornadoes. Or perhaps they could sell discounted "mitigation kits." Work with the media. Reproduce photos of the community when it was hit by the disaster and of people repairing the damage; put testimonials in the newspaper and on radio; have the local emergency manager explain how these mitigation efforts can save their homes. Perhaps American Red Cross or other volunteers could help the elderly and other high-risk groups retrofit their properties.
- Organize neighborhood disaster programs. Work with neighborhood groups. Recognize success. Have the neighborhood association with the highest number of homes retrofitted recognized by the mayor or city council.
- Hold community mock disaster days, complete with testimonials and lots of information on disaster preparedness and mitigation.
- Have a "fair" or "all hazards week" that includes as many agencies as possible to talk to visitors and give out literature. Find matching funds, grants and donations from corporations.

- Develop a comprehensive public awareness campaign outlining the advantages to mitigation efforts versus costs incurred in disaster when no mitigation efforts are in place. Emphasize the benefits to homeowners and businesses. Involve competitive businesses that have lots of energy and reach into the community. Prepare a before and after scenario -- this will help illustrate the cost-effectiveness of mitigation.
- We need to educate children in the schools over and over again. A fact filled, fun community disaster education program in the schools, pre-schools and day care centers can and will motivate people to spend money on mitigation measures.

## **Partners**

- Emergency management and disaster preparedness organizations should partner with businesses that contribute to the overall safety and economic vitality of the community. This is a winning combination. When businesses associate themselves with organizations that mitigate disasters and prepare communities for disaster, they're able to set themselves apart, enhance their reputations and position themselves as concerned citizens in the community.
- Build partnerships with the media, home do-it-yourself stores, building industry associations, neighborhood associations, schools, children' educational museums, and government organizations. Conduct workshops on the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP). Give demonstrations on home mitigation.
- Use a well-connected politician or local celebrity to champion mitigation. Ask for help in a dramatic pitch to insurance companies and other businesses that provide products or services connected with mitigation or disaster.
- Get construction companies and associated professionals to retrofit for the disasters that specifically affect your area. Ask fire inspectors to look for non-structural hazards in schools and businesses. Require mitigation.
- Conduct a public awareness campaign that explains some simple and inexpensive mitigation measures. Work in coalitions with local homeowner associations, insurance companies and businesses that can teach the public do-it-yourself projects.
- Ask people who experienced past disasters to present education to targeted populations – to convey a "it can happen to you, it happened to me" message.
- Involve technical "experts" and credible members of the group you are trying to reach to raise awareness of the issues.

## **Financial incentives**

- Provide low interest loans, subsidies or matching grants. Offer property tax incentives. Exempt homeowners who retrofit their homes from transfer taxes on the sale of their retrofitted home. Take advantage of Community Block Grant Development Funds. Encourage insurance rebates for structural mitigation.
- Make low-interest loans available to landlords who complete mitigation, similar to loans offered to landlords and developers for building or providing Section 8 housing. Ask business partners to provide discounts on materials and service.
- Eliminate local, state and federal disaster assistance grants to people living in high hazard areas (CBRA zones) who fail to take personal mitigation measures. Reduce "red-tape" for mitigation grants.

## **Planning considerations**

- Find out what's important to the homeowner or business. Appeal to them with what you can do to improve their existence for the long and short term. First identify what they see as their needs, then adapt your messages accordingly.
- Examine your expectations of the behavior you desire, i.e., to spend money on mitigation measures. Then look at the target population and establish a trusting relationship with those identified people. Listen to how they talk about themselves and the stories they tell -- stories that convey who they are and what their values are. This will help you understand the reasons for the behavior you seek to change.
- People who have to choose between need and mitigation will always spend on need. This is why there are so many people without insurance. To have any chance of increasing involvement in mitigation you have to have a program that affects more than just a few homeowners so that people have a real option and can make a choice. If you offered to match any savings in reduction of insurance premiums from any mitigation, people will opt for the insurance and have to participate in the mitigation program.
- Given that many people will not spend money on mitigation, we need to think about what other alternatives we have.

## **Approaches**

- We need to show people that spending money on mitigation is cost effective and can make a real difference in a disaster. Provide materials or technical assistance to teach people what to do and why.

- Timing is important. A good time to motivate people is after a disaster occurs in your area or elsewhere in the country. Educate people about what they can expect to lose if they don't mitigate. Many people have unrealistic expectations about disaster assistance, i.e., they think they will be adequately compensated.
- For parents, appeal to their sense of safety for their children (school or home mitigation). For businesses, show that mitigation increases chances for business recovery.
- The key to motivating people is "enlightened self-interest." Show businesses and corporations how much money they will save and they will respond. Another key is employee preparedness. The quicker employees get back to work, the quicker the business will be back in line generating revenue.
- "Perception Management." Perhaps people don't believe that disaster could happen to them, but what if they felt their "stuff" was threatened? If we could convince people that their property is in danger, they would more readily spend money to protect it.
- Create excitement around the program to a point where people want to get involved and feel left out if they don't join in. Good incentives are when many people in a neighborhood are doing the same thing, or when children are excited about a program and the parents feel some responsibility to get involved. Peer pressure works -- if one property owner reduces the risk, others are more likely to do the same and reduce the collective risk.
- Community disaster education is one way to show people the power of disasters and the sensibility of mitigation. We need to convince people that the occurrence of disasters is a matter of "when" and not "if." Mitigation will save money when disaster occurs. For example, it costs much less to move the oil heater and other valuables above the basement than it does to replace them after a flood.
- Start with the mitigation measures that can be completed with little cost involved.
- When you're giving a presentation to a group, suggest that they spend money on mitigation one step at a time.
- Use strong powerful motivating words in presentations. Concentrate on property and not individual safety, i.e., "Take mitigation measures so your property will be there after disaster occurs."
- You've got to "walk to talk." When community leaders and government agencies put money toward mitigation, the community will follow.

## Materials

- Have a mitigation promotional package ready to go immediately after a disaster. Have a presentation re-enacting a disaster to remind people what it's like. Follow with mitigation information.
- Create a graphic (for a newspaper article, brochure or other material) comparing "mitigation costs" with "damage costs" (a mitigated house next to a non-mitigated house for comparison purposes) and perhaps a "total amount saved" bottom line with just the words, "Penny wise" below the graphic. Provide this information to your target audience.
- Motivate people by providing actual case studies that have relevance to the audience you're trying to reach. Case studies should include the value or benefit to the audience, i.e., "What's in it for me?"

## *Good Ideas on Selling Disaster Education*

In another Conference Challenge, participants were asked, "How do you motivate your own agency to be more proactive and supportive of disaster education?" Here's what they said:

- Organize fun and interesting small projects that can be completed with little effort but show good results.
- Demonstrate the potential impact disaster education will have on the community. Be realistic about budget needs.
- Demonstrate the financial advantage of mitigation. Put weather alert radios in schools.
- Involving other agencies and coalitions creates a certain expectation that something will be done now. FEMA and the American Red Cross are trained to react when disasters happen. Involving leaders from outside the response agency circle, agencies that have proactive postures, may help.
- We need to demonstrate the benefits of being proactive. Our agency has been highly successful in a mitigation buy-out and relocation project. It has taken five years and has been difficult to stay focused, but our agency can now see how being proactive will benefit everyone. I will use this as an example to others: Being proactive works.
- Talk with your agency board or management about the positive rewards for being seen daily in the community and working with other agencies. As in the case of the American Red Cross, this builds your organization's reputation for being concerned

about helping people before disaster. It also generates volunteers and it can create a new youth corps. You can also mention the financial benefits of preparedness.

- Propose interesting, high energy projects that are fun and enjoyable for all participants. Presenting information is important, but the way you go about it is what interests people.
- Keep the interest up by appealing to your agency's interests. Organize fun activities that get people actively involved. Make sure activities, drills and exercises relate to your agency's needs.
- My agency is not in the disaster business, so we have to educate our managers about the need for disaster education. Once management is on board, getting other staff members to be proactive is easy.
- Support neighborhood advocates who continually support disaster education and mitigation programs among elected officials. Establish performance measurements, monitor and evaluate your program, and then give elected officials a report on your progress. Show results to justify expanded outreach and funding.
- The main motivational tool might be the availability of funds. More funds are becoming available for disaster education and mitigation.
- Be sure to recognize and reward all volunteers who contribute to your program. Enlist volunteers from coalitions and seek alternate funding sources to expand your ability to reach more people.
- We hold annual "status of emergency management" briefings for elected officials, highlighting program advancements and new initiatives. We conduct employee disaster awareness training, a 90-minute session that features speakers, a video and a question and answer period. Each employee receives the most recent edition of our all-hazards handbook. In addition, a refresher summit is held for each Emergency Support Function (ESF's 1-17) prior to the start of hurricane season.
- Offer incentives to companies that are proactive. Offer training and safety courses to proactive businesses. Get businesses involved in disaster education. Make them active participants. Point out the benefits of being a community leader -- which will improve their sales and service.
- Plead your case one more time. Go into the meeting armed with the right supporting materials and facts. Subtly find someone who can convince your CEO or supervisor to be your advocate. Sell your cause to them. It must be someone you trust and who can "see" the benefits of saving lives through mitigation and education. If your organization is the American Red Cross, state that for the organization to achieve the "standards of excellence" in community disaster education for re-chartering, you need to educate the identified high risk group in your community. If this doesn't work, maybe a "work-around" is needed. For the American Red Cross, mitigation is a "must service."

- Disaster response is not reaction -- it should be the combination of mitigation and preparedness actions, the largest elements in the disaster cycle.
- Test your organization's own preparedness with exercises related to business interruption and resumption.
- In a bureaucratic environment, you need to have the ability to show a good cost/benefit ratio (a lot of bang for the buck). The academic field can help those of us doing disaster education by doing empirical studies about human behavior and preparedness, e.g., how much money, time and effort was saved in a disaster because of disaster education.
- Conduct workshops for various segments of the community, schedule meetings to follow-up with the organizations and to assist with their plans. Assist in exercise development and evaluations. We have a fire/chemical safety house that we use in the schools. These activities keep staff motivated and challenged.
- I think the leadership of the organization has to demonstrate support for proactive practices. If there is not support from an organization's leadership, it's much harder to develop and sustain proactive practices.
- The best motivation for my agency, which is political, is to demonstrate how disaster education can be used to that (political) advantage. I also want to show my "community," which is law enforcement, that the best way to do our job is to ensure that the larger community is prepared. This makes our job easier and ensures that our families are prepared -- we may need to be away from them for some time during an event.
- Fortunately, my American Red Cross chapter is already motivated and supportive of disaster education. However, I would like to see "unseen disaster education." This is a very opportune teachable moment. Also, when we respond, we provide clients with shelter, clothing, and in some cases extended care, but we can't require them to participate in training, skills development or preparedness activities. People are much more likely to make life changes after they have been impacted by a disaster. Likewise, that is one of the most effective times to produce educational intervention.
- Educate the agency on the fact that a dollar spent on mitigation will save two dollars on recovery and rebuilding. It's easier and less costly to mitigate than to rebuild.
- Educate the people who hold the purse strings. Train them in emergency management and disaster education. Relate disaster education as a competitive advantage for the organization's positioning in the community. Include disaster education in the organization's strategic plan and annual operating plans. Do small projects that are successful, demonstrate results, and prove that disaster education is a valuable activity for the organization.