

Emergency Preparedness

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Creating Public Private Partnerships Through Pre-Disaster Recovery Planning

By Amanda Phan

Since he took office in 2009, Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Administrator Craig Fugate has strongly encouraged the emergency management community to develop public and private sector partnerships for emergency planning.

“There’s no way government can solve the challenges of a disaster with a government-centric approach,” said Fugate. “It takes the whole team. And the private sector provides the bulk of the services every day in the community.”

Fairfax County is being recognized by FEMA as a model for public private partnerships for their efforts to involve the community in the Pre-Disaster Recovery Planning initiative.

Northern Virginia Hazard Mitigation Plan

The 2011 Northern Virginia Hazard Mitigation Plan Update is available online for public review and comment. The plan incorporates mitigation projects for Fairfax County and the towns of Vienna, Clifton and Herndon. It is online at www.fairfaxcounty.gov/oem/nova-draft-hazard-mitigation-plan.pdf.

E-mail comments to oem@fairfaxcounty.gov.

www.fema.gov/privatesector/ppp_models.shtml

Since the project started just over a year ago, the Fairfax County Office of Emergency Management (OEM) has made steady progress raising awareness about the complexities of disaster recovery. OEM has assisted county agencies/departments, local businesses and nonprofits recognize their role in developing a streamlined recovery process

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Video: "Preparing for All Hazards: Business Preparedness"

Each year disasters such as floods, hurricanes, tornadoes and wildfires force thousands of businesses to close. But even more common events, such as building fires and power outages produce the same result.

The video "Preparing for All Hazards: Business Preparedness" teaches large and small companies the importance of emergency preparedness and the process of developing a good business contingency plan. It features OEM's Bruce McFarlane and Marcelo Ferreira and Ken Hall, director of Business Continuity Planning with L3 Communications.



Bruce McFarlane. Screen shot from Channel 16



Marcelo Ferreira. Screen shot from Channel 16. www.fairfaxcounty.gov/cable/channel16/asx/preparing_for_all_hazards.asx and on YouTube at www.youtube.com/watch?v=1TvXC6MLDG0.

The Fairfax County Office of Emergency Management is available to deliver emergency preparedness presentations to community organizations and homeowners associations.

If interested, call Marcelo Ferreira at 571-350-1013, TTY 711; e-mail marcelo.ferreira@fairfaxcounty.gov.

Red Cross Month

March is Red Cross Month and the American Red Cross in the National Capital Region is asking people to join in helping those in need by volunteering, taking a class, giving blood or making a donation. Visit www.redcrossnca.org for more information.

For nearly 100 years, U.S. presidents have called on people to support the American Red Cross and its humanitarian mission. President Franklin D. Roosevelt was the first to proclaim March as Red Cross Month in 1943. Since that time, President Obama and every president since have issued proclamations designating March as Red Cross Month.



The Red Cross has been helping people for 130 years, responding to disasters, assisting members of the military, teaching lifesaving skills and serving as one of the largest blood suppliers in the United States.

Your local Red Cross chapter – the American Red Cross in the National Capital Region – has had a strong impact in the community through the various critical services it provides. Last year, 1,096 volunteers responded to 424 local disasters and helped 549 affected families with emergency food, shelter and supplies. Disaster education presentations were provided to 71,088 individuals in the community to educate, equip and empower them to prevent and prepare for disasters or other life-threatening emergencies. The Health and Safety Department enrolled 70,935 people in courses such as first-aid, CPR and AED, swimming and lifeguarding. In addition, 1,000 military families benefited from services provided to the armed forces; 188 families from international tracing services.

To celebrate Red Cross Month, The American Red Cross in the National Capital Region invites you to a number of activities, such as the Partners in Preparedness Symposium on March 10, the Heroes & Villains Ball on March 19 and Save-a-Life Saturday also on March 19, among others.

The Red Cross is not a government agency and therefore relies on donations of time, money and blood to do its work. For more information, visit the website www.redcrossnca.org, the Red Cross Facebook page at www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=41428840830 or Twitter at <http://twitter.com/RedCrossNCR>.

Seasonal Flooding Tips from FEMA

Flooding can happen in every U.S. state and territory. The risk of flooding is higher if you are in a low-lying area, near water or downstream from a dam or where the surrounding geography has been changed by development.

As warmer weather approaches, there are simple steps you can take to prepare for seasonal winter flooding:

- **Make a plan** – Your family may not be together when a flood hits, so it's important to know how you will contact one another, how you will meet up in a safe place and what you will do in case of an emergency. Not sure where to start? *Ready.gov* has a great checklist for making your family emergency plan.
- **Get a kit** – An emergency kit can be your lifeline after an emergency. It should sustain yourself and your family for up to three days. For flood prone areas, keeping your important documents in a sealed, airtight container will keep them safe from water damage. See other tips on getting your emergency kit in tiptop shape.
- **Know your risk** – One of the most important steps is to find out if your home is at risk for flooding.
- **Protect your property** – A final step to make sure you're prepared for flooding is to purchase flood insurance.* Unfortunately, most homeowners insurance does not cover flood damage. Talk to your insurance provider about your policy and consider flood insurance coverage.

** Flood policies typically take 30 days to become effective, so make sure to purchase flood insurance as a way to prepare before potential flooding.*



Fairfax County, Va., publication.

To request this information in an alternate format, call 571-350-1000, TTY 711.

Marcelo's Minute

How Can Your Organization Help the Residents of Fairfax County During a Disaster?



Marcelo Ferreira

A successful approach to emergency preparedness, response and recovery relies heavily on the ability of emergency management to communicate with the residents of Fairfax County.

Through the Social Needs Registry, Fairfax County seeks to partner with local agencies and organizations to help provide critical information in the event of an emergency or disaster.

The Fairfax County Social Needs Registry is an effective tool to facilitate communication and coordination with non-governmental organizations such as:

- Nonprofits.
- Faith-based organizations.
- Homeowners associations.
- Civic organizations.
- Organizations that serve vulnerable, at-risk or hard-to-reach populations.

The information captured in the Social Needs Registry is designed to help accelerate communication by utilizing methods already in place. It also provides a better understanding of the resources that may be available during an emergency or disaster.

To register your organization for the Fairfax County Social Needs Registry, visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/specialneeds/socialneedsform/. If you or your organization have additional questions regarding the Fairfax County Social Needs Registry, let me know at 571-350-1013, TTY 711, or e-mail marcelo.ferreira@fairfaxcounty.gov.

Marcelo Ferreira, OEM community liaison, holds the Associate Emergency Manager (AEM) credential from the Virginia Emergency Management Association (VEMA).

Medical Needs Registry

The Fairfax County Office of Emergency Management operates a Medical Needs Registry that contains the names and address of individuals with medical needs or health conditions who cannot manage independently in a general shelter or evacuation center. It is an emergency preparedness tool that will be used by Fairfax County to communicate with people with medical needs for emergency planning purposes and during actual emergencies for evacuation and sheltering.

The registry may be used for any emergency requiring evacuation such as floods, hurricanes, hazardous material spills and gas leaks. The registry is voluntary and all information collected is kept confidential and stored on secure Fairfax County servers. The information collected will only be shared with Fairfax County agencies and partner agencies and organizations to improve their ability to serve and will not be available to the public.

Fairfax County defines a person with medical needs as a person who has a high-risk health condition that is either temporary or chronic who cannot manage for themselves in a shelter or evacuation center and will require assistance in performing the activities of daily living and/or will require care for and the monitoring of a health condition. For example: people with mobility impairment; people with a condition that makes them dependent on electricity; people with medical conditions that will require additional support during emergencies.

How Does the Medical Needs Registry Work?

Individuals with medical needs and their caregivers register using the online form or by completing and mailing a Medical Needs Registry form. After registering, the individual or their caregiver will be contacted by a representative of the Office of Emergency Management to verify the information submitted. After the information has been verified and the individual is found to be eligible for the registry, it will be entered into a database. To keep the registry current, each registrant or their caregiver will be contacted annually to determine their interest in remaining on the registry.

The Medical Needs Registry will be used to generate reports that will be used during an emergency by first responders, shelter managers and transportation profes-

sionals to address the needs of people with medical needs. These reports will be used to identify and coordinate medical needs, shelter locations and transportation routes.

Who Is Eligible for a Medical Needs Shelter?

All medical needs registrants, as well as anyone who requires assistance in performing activities of daily living (bathing, dressing, feeding, toileting and/or transferring) and/or care for and monitoring of health conditions, is eligible for a Medical Needs Shelter. Individuals who require access to electricity to maintain or treat a health condition also are eligible. Only individuals with medical needs and their caregivers, dependent children and service animals will be admitted to medical shelters. Minor children will be permitted to stay in a Medical Needs Shelter with their parent(s) or guardian(s) who are residing there. Household pets that are transported with their owners to a medical shelter site will be transported to a pet shelter at an alternate site.

What Do Medical Shelters Provide?

Medical shelters provide staff, access to electricity, food and cots. During an emergency, resources can be limited; therefore, it is important to think of shelters as a last resort, and you should have contingency plans in place for times of emergency – such as staying with friends or relatives or in a motel.

Am I Eligible for the Medical Needs Registry?

If you are not sure of your eligibility for the Medical Needs Registry, you are encouraged to register. After submission of the application, you will be contacted by the Office of Emergency Management for verification. You will be contacted annually to confirm your need for the program, but you will not need to complete a form each time.

How Do I Register?

- Use the online form found at www.fairfaxcounty.gov/specialneeds. Download, complete and mail the form. If you have questions or need further information, call the Medical Registry at 571-350-1000, TTY 711.

Reprinted from the February issue of the "Golden Gazette," a monthly newspaper for senior adults in the Fairfax area, produced by the Fairfax Area Agency on Aging, Fairfax County Department of Family Services.

Nominate for National Neighborhood Watch Awards of Excellence

The National Sheriffs' Association in partnership with the Bureau of Justice Assistance, Office of Justice Programs, U. S. Department of Justice is accepting nominations for the 8th Annual National Neighborhood Watch Awards of Excellence to be presented during the General Session of the 2011 National Sheriffs' Association Conference in St. Louis, Mo.

All law enforcement agencies, Neighborhood Watch groups, organizations and/or programs that have made an exceptional contribution to the Neighborhood Watch program in their communities are encouraged to submit nominations to the National Sheriffs' Association by March 31.

For complete information on eligibility, criteria and nomination forms visit: www.usaonwatch.org/about/awards.aspx.

Girl Scouts: "Prepared Not Scared"

"Emergency Management" magazine reports that FEMA Administrator Craig Fugate and DHS Secretary Janet Napolitano "are seeking to ingrain disaster preparedness information in increasingly younger audiences" by forming a partnership with the Girl Scouts of America for "further spreading these messages and increasing preparedness."

The stated mission of the partnership is to "motivate young women to become leaders in their communities in emergency management and response; raise public awareness about personal preparedness, training and volunteer service opportunities; and encourage the FEMA Citizen Corps councils and Girl Scouts councils to work together."

Read the story at: www.emergencymgmt.com/training/Girl-Scouts-Prepared-not-Scared.html.

Use IRS disaster preparedness tax tips to prepare your business for all hazards.
www.irs.gov/businesses/small/article/0,,id=180547,00.html

FAIRFAX COUNTY



www.fairfaxcounty.gov/oem/citizencorps

The Fairfax County Citizen Corps harnesses the power of individuals through education, training and volunteer service to make communities safe, stronger and better prepared to respond to the threats of terrorism, crime, public health issues and disasters of all kinds. There are five core programs:

Volunteers in Police Service (VIPS)

Provides support for the police department by incorporating volunteers so that law enforcement professionals have more time for frontline duty. VIPS includes auxiliary police officers, administrative volunteers, and the Citizen's Police Academy.



www.fairfaxcounty.gov/oem/citizencorps/vips.htm

Neighborhood Watch

Brings private citizens and law enforcement together to reduce crime and improve the quality of life in our neighborhoods. It brings to life the simple concept of neighbors watching out for neighbors. Volunteers may join an existing group or establish one in their neighborhood.



www.fairfaxcounty.gov/oem/citizencorps/nw.htm

Medical Reserve Corps (MRC)

Operated by the Health Department, MRC is composed of medical and non-medical volunteers trained to assist the community in dispensing medication during public health emergencies.



www.fairfaxcounty.gov/mrc/

Community Emergency Response Team (CERT)

Trains people in neighborhoods, workplaces, and schools in basic disaster response skills, such as fire suppression and search and rescue, and helps them take a more active role in emergency preparedness.



www.fairfaxcounty.gov/oem/citizencorps/cert.htm

Fire Corps

Volunteers are trained to perform non-operational administrative duties at the Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Department Headquarters and at volunteer fire stations.



www.fairfaxcounty.gov/oem/citizencorps/firecorps.htm

Pre-Disaster Recovery Plan

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should a major disaster occur.

The Office of Emergency Management is committed to ensuring not only that stakeholder interests are considered throughout the Pre-Disaster Recovery Planning process, but also that nonprofit and private sector partners help drive and define the outcomes. Several workshops to raise awareness have been held over the past year with key leaders of local, state and regional government organizations as well as non-governmental organizations (NGOs).

Currently, a series of topic-based focus group sessions are taking place to identify potential gaps that could be addressed to lay the groundwork for smoother disaster recovery. Participants represent faith-based communities, special needs advocates, local utility companies, area businesses/chambers of commerce, etc.

Additionally, OEM has formed a steering committee that meets monthly to address gaps and develop a draft plan to be reviewed by all stakeholders.

A public workshop was held Wednesday, Feb. 9, from 3:30-5:30 p.m. Participants were updated on current progress, identify issues or gaps and had an opportunity to provide feedback on the plan.

The PDRP project is scheduled to be completed this fall. Visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/oem/pdrp or call Amanda Phan at 571-350-1000, TTY 711 with questions.

Amanda Phan is an emergency management specialist with the Fairfax County Office of Emergency Management.

March Special Events

American Red Cross Month
 March 13 – Daylight Saving Time begins
 March 14-18 – Flood Safety Awareness Week (NOAA)
 March 15 – Statewide Tornado Drill
 March 20-26 – National Poison Prevention Week
 March/April – Tsunami Awareness (NOAA)

Community Level Critical Power Failure Tabletop Exercise Now Available

FEMA's Private Sector Division recently posted online a new community level Tabletop Exercise, the third in its series of free tools for continuity planning, preparedness and resiliency.

The first two exercises offered tips on employee preparedness and emergency planning at the organizational level. This new one builds on that design, with a broader communitywide scope. As an added bonus, this new community level exercise includes Twitter feeds and text alerts, in addition to the Virtual News Network (VNN) videos.

The exercise is in a simple to use and scalable format and incorporates real-world examples. It is available at www.fema.gov/privatesector/exercises.shtm.

NIMS Nugget

Did you know that non-governmental organizations may be eligible for federal grant funding to support and promote their abilities to respond to and support natural and man-made disaster management and mitigation?

Here is the catch: your volunteer organization must be NIMS (National Incident Management System) compliant and have the necessary documentation to support that claim.

Want to know more about NIMS compliance and ICS (Incident Command System) training for your operational personnel, or get involved in a functional exercise? Contact Joel Hendelman, NIMS compliance program manager with the Fairfax County Office of Emergency Management, at 571-350-1021, TTY 711.



Join OEM for an Ask Fairfax! online chat about tornado preparedness on Tuesday, March 15, at 1 p.m.
www.fairfaxcounty.gov/news/askfairfax/

Next Generation 9-1-1, Moving Accessibility Forward

By Bruce A. McFarlane Sr.

On Friday, Feb. 11, I attended the second session of the Federal Communications Commission's (FCC) Emergency Access Advisory Committee (EAAC) in Washington, D.C. The EAAC is an advisory committee charged with developing a national survey on the next generation 9-1-1 and how it will look and be used by people with access and functional needs.

The main topic of discussion centered on the survey questions developed by the Survey Subcommittee. Additionally, the Target Populations Subcommittee gave a report on the outreach efforts to reach disability and senior populations.

The EAAC wants to ensure that not only will the survey be accessible, but also that people and organizations that represent people with disabilities and seniors know where to find the survey.

The survey questions have been divided into four basic sections: background information; technology currently being used; current experiences in contacting 9-1-1 centers; and contacting 9-1-1 centers in the future.

Survey participants will be asked to identify their age and their disability only for the purpose of matching communication preferences with disability type. No names or other identification information will be collected.

On March 21-22, the All Hazards Consortium (AHC) states and urban areas from around the Mid-Atlantic and Northeast regions will hold the 2011 Regional Urban Area Security Initiatives & Planning Workshop. The focus is coordinated planning and projects between government and private sector owner/operators within several industry sectors.

This workshop is the first workshop conducted under the AHC's new strategy designed to integrate the private sector owner/operators into the planning and project development efforts.

For details, visit www.ahcusa.org/uasiworkshop.htm.



Bruce McFarlane (second from left) at the EAAC. Submitted photo.

The survey will be ready for distribution in early March, with a closing date set for early April. If you want to be included in the survey, contact me directly and I'll be happy to send you the link once it is approved.

I encourage you to partake in the survey and have a say in how the next generation of 9-1-1 call centers will be accessible to all Fairfax County residents. If you have any questions or concerns or would like to be on the survey distribution list, call 571-350-1000, TTY 711; e-mail bruce.mcfarlane@fairfaxcounty.gov.

Bruce McFarlane Sr., inclusive emergency planner for the Office of Emergency Management, holds the Certified Emergency Management Assistant (CEMA) credential from the Virginia Emergency Management Association (VEMA).

3 Keys to Being Prepared

The Fairfax County Office of Emergency Management suggests three steps that each individual and family should take to prepare for an emergency:

1. Make a plan.
2. Assemble a kit.
3. Stay informed.

More information is online at www.ReadyVirginia.gov and www.fairfaxcounty.gov/emergency.

Governor Proclaims March 15 as Tornado Preparedness Day

No part of Virginia is immune from tornadoes. They can hit at any time of the year and at any time of the day. To emphasize the necessity of preparing and practicing for tornadoes, Governor Bob McDonnell has proclaimed **March 15 as Tornado Preparedness Day**.

On that date, all Virginians can practice taking cover from tornadoes by participating in the annual Statewide Tornado Drill, set for 9:45 a.m. The drill is sponsored by the Virginia Department of Emergency Management and the National Weather Service (NWS).

To start the drill, the NWS will send a test tornado warning that will trigger a tone alert and broadcast message on NOAA Weather Radio, simulating what listeners will hear during an actual tornado warning. This will prompt radio and television stations to broadcast a tone and message.

When the test tornado warning is sounded, people should move as quickly as possible to a previously designated tornado safe area in their building. Safe areas are basements, interior rooms, bathrooms, closets or hallways on the lowest level of a building. In choosing a safe area, stay away from windows. Once in the safe area, crouch down or sit on the floor, facing down and cover heads with hands.

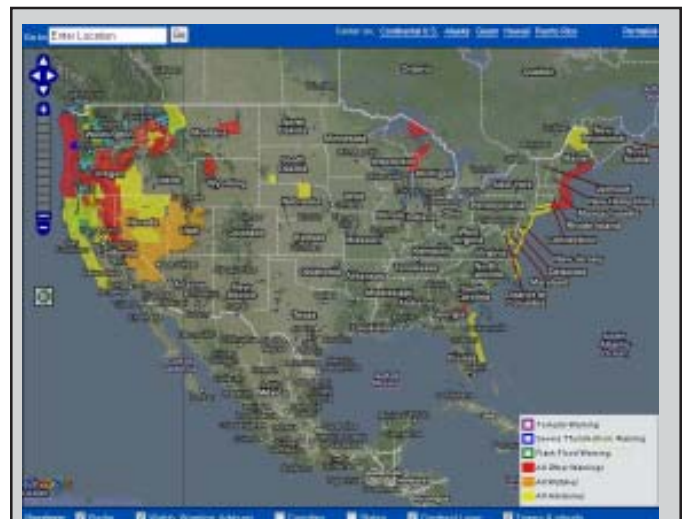
To get complete instructions for conducting a tornado drill and to register, go to www.vaemergency.com.

“Everyone needs to know what to do if a tornado warning is issued for their area,” said Michael Cline, state coordinator for the Virginia Department of Emergency Management. “Every family, business and school should hold a tornado drill at least once a year. The more we practice, the better we can respond during an emergency. And everyone needs access to NOAA Weather Radio.”

NOAA Weather Radios with SAME alerts are available at electronics and sporting goods stores, discount and department stores, and online. Some have strobe lights for the hearing impaired. They come in battery-powered models, and many also have AM/FM bands.

“NOAA Weather Radio is the fastest way to get a tornado warning,” said Bill Sammler, NWS warning coordination meteorologist. “This network of radio stations broadcasts weather data from the nearest National Weather Service office. When a tornado warning is issued, the weather radio sounds an alarm followed by information on where the storm is, which way it’s moving, and telling people in its path to take cover. This radio could be a lifesaver.”

During the past three years, 62 tornadoes struck Virginia, injuring more than 220 residents and causing nearly \$48 million damage to homes, businesses and other property.



The National Weather Service has announced an experimental, non-operational test of a Web map that provides users with access to NWS hazardous weather information, along with routine forecasts and products via an interactive Web-based map (as seen above).

The draft map displays NWS watches, warnings and advisories as three colors: orange, red and yellow. Tornado Warnings, Severe Thunderstorm Warnings and Flash Flood Warnings are displayed as purple, blue and green polygons.

For more information, www.weather.gov/survey/nws-survey.php?code=newmap.