



READY RACINE



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BE PREPARED

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"Be Prepared" should not just be a Boy Scout slogan, but instead, it should be a motto that we all live by. Recent storms which hit Southeast Wisconsin are a good example.

On June 8th, a tornado warning was issued for all of Racine County. Initially a trained spotter reported seeing a tornado near Hwy 20 & 75. The rain was coming down horizontally at that time and a tornado was sighted near Mukwonago.

Later, the National Weather Service determined that the spotter saw a "gustnado". Gustnadoes can have winds of up to 80 miles per hour and grow to up to 500 feet, but they typically last between 30 seconds and one minute.

At approximately 12:58 am on Friday, June 19th, the National Weather Service once again issued a tornado warning for Racine County. NOAA Weather radios went off, outdoor warning sirens sounded in those communities that had them and television meteorologists tracked the storm. Although there were reports of funnel clouds, there were no touchdowns in Racine County.

That evening, tornado warnings were again issued for Kenosha County, and much of Southeast Wisconsin was under flash flood warnings. While Kenosha

County took the brunt of the flooding, nearly 100 Racine County residents reported sewer back-ups in their homes.

Several also complained to the Journal Times that they could not hear the outdoor warning sirens early Friday morning. When told that they should have a NOAA Weather radio, some balked and asked, "Who is going to buy it for me?" There was also an erroneous rumor that the City of Racine had turned down the sirens to save money.

This is a good time to remind ourselves again: it is dangerous to rely on outdoor sirens for tornado warnings. For one thing, sirens are operated by municipalities, not by the county; and not all municipalities now invest in outdoor warning sirens.

But even municipalities that operate outdoor sirens intend them only to be outdoor warning devices. Although some people may hear them indoors, they are not designed to be heard indoors, much less to wake people up. Even outdoors, wind speed and direction may impact how well you hear the sirens.

In the 1950's and 1960's, when homes were smaller, ambient noise levels were lower, and windows open more often in the summer, sirens may have been more audible indoors (although even then they were not reliable for indoor warning—see "Did You Know?" on page 5). But those were also the days before Doppler radar, 24-hour news stations, the Internet, and NOAA weather radios. Times and technology have changed.

If we learned anything from the tornado that hit Barneveld, WI in 1984, it is that tornadoes do hit in the middle of the night and that advance warning is essential. The best tool on the market is a NOAA Weather radio. That device sits quietly until the National Weather Service issues a watch or warning—and then, I can assure you, it will wake you up!

The Journal Times, to its credit, ran an editorial, **We must be prepared for summer weather, too**, that encouraged readers to be aware of changing weather, to get a weather radio and buy flood insurance. The editorial ended: "Thankfully, no reports of deaths came from this spate of severe weather. This serves as a

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practice test, and when the real thing comes everyone ought to be prepared.”

Throughout the year, we encourage citizens to be prepared for all types of hazards; and, earlier this year, we encouraged homeowners to buy flood insurance, even if they were not in a flood plain. Ironically, as I walked one of the neighborhoods impacted by sewer back-up, I was told that this was the second time it happened this year and that it had happened in years past.

Simple steps can mitigate damage to basements. Have a working sump pump with a battery back-up. Purchase a spare pump in the event that your pump goes out. Consider installing a back-flow valve to stop sewage from backing up. Raise your water heater, furnace and appliances off the ground. Instead of carpeting your basement, tile it and don't drywall all the way to the floor. Finally, get a rider on your insurance to cover that type of damage.

As many found out, there is no guarantee that someone else will “bail” you out but you can take steps to “be prepared.”❖

New case workers trained

Nine new volunteers recently received case manager training over a three day period.

The training covered general response to disasters, long term recovery process, emotional response of survivors of a disaster, assessment of physical damages from a disaster, interviewing techniques, understanding the importance of confidentiality & empathy in recovery, utilization of community & VOAD resources and documentation of the case management process.

The goal of this training was to give participants a working knowledge on the impact of disasters on individuals and property, to understand the process involved to obtain the necessary resources for individuals and families and to develop and implement an effective recovery plan.

The workshop included formal presentations, discussion and small group activities. The certified trainer was provided by the United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR) and the training space was donated by the Red Cross and Volunteer Center of Racine County.

If you are interested in becoming a volunteer case manager contact Dave Voss at the Volunteer Center of Racine County at 262-886-9612 or email dvoss@volunteercenterofracine.org. ❖

Citizen Corps update

Cathy LaFaive-Markstrom



Greetings, Citizen Corps volunteers!

In August I was able to attend the National Conference on Community Preparedness presented by Citizen Corps and FEMA. At the conference, I got to hear about how CERTs have been able to assist with hurricane evacuations in Florida and Texas, help run a base camp for firefighters fighting the wildfires in California and with storm cleanup in Hawaii. Did you know there are CERT programs as far away as Guam? FEMA stressed how important it is to be prepared for the severe weather in our area as well as for house fires and evacuations. I also learned some surprising facts.

Did you know that less than one third of all households stock batteries in their emergency packs? Or that most Americans have thought about preparing a family emergency plan but less than a quarter have done so? That there is an evacuation of at least 1,000 people somewhere in the US every 3 weeks, like the one in Cudahy in July? There was good news too! It seems that 68% of people surveyed would be willing to take a 20 hour class in emergency preparedness. Good thing we have the CERT program here. We have a class scheduled for September 14-16 at the Thelma Orr COP house in Racine!

September is National Preparedness Month and Southeast Wisconsin Citizen Corps is teaming up with the Volunteer Center of Racine County, Inc as well as local fire, police & other agencies to present to you the 7th Annual Safety Fair here at the Volunteer Center.

The Safety Fair runs from 9am to 2pm on Saturday, September 12th. We will be sponsoring a bake sale as well as live fire & police demonstrations, information from local health departments & resources for seniors in the community. Safe-Assure ID will be doing IDs for seniors and kids, and amateur radio operators will be showing off their skills too!

It is designed for all ages from little kids to seniors and will have lots of information on keeping yourself safe as well as fun things to see & do.

I hope to see you there!

For more information, please contact Cathy Markstrom at 262-886-9612 or cmarkstrom@volunteercenterofracine.org ❖

CERT training held at homeless shelter

David L. Maack, CEM, CPM, WCEM

Earlier this year, I participated in a workshop at the National Academies of Sciences and the conversation turned towards reaching underserved populations with a preparedness message. One of those underserved populations is the homeless. As I sat there, I wondered if the Homeless Assistance Leadership Organization (HALO), a year-round shelter for men and women in the City of Racine, would be interested in hosting a CERT class for both residents and staff.

Cheryl Buckley, the executive director of HALO, liked the idea and we were asked to make a presentation to both staff and residents. Because the training was voluntary, requiring staff to attend on their own time, enrollment was lower than normally allowed. However, we approached the Wisconsin Office of Justice Assistance (OJA) and asked permission to hold this class as a "pilot". OJA agreed, and on April 28th, nine participants set out to learn about disaster preparedness and response.



HALO management considered the training an "asset" and would like to see it offered annually. With a staff ratio of 1:60 it is sometimes difficult for staff members to be the first responders. Trained residents can help augment staff during times of emergencies, and they are empowered to help control the situation around them. Once residents leave HALO and embark on their own, CERT training continues to be of benefit, both at home and at work.

This collaboration also encouraged further training. As a result of this joint class, some HALO staff are planning to attend their first CPR, First Aid and AED training class.

Gwen Trussell, Shelter Operations Manager, commented, "I am pleased with the turnout of participants who showed interest in becoming active volunteers in the community in which they live and their willingness to help others."

As for our instructors, teaching CERT at a homeless shelter was an eye opener for them also. Prior to the course they had really never given any thought to the homeless. In fact, they wondered why the homeless would even need the training.

However, as Jim Day, one of our CERT Instructors said, "They showed me that, no matter your situation in life, your willingness is always there to help those that are affected by a disaster."

Whether you have a roof over your head or you're wandering the streets, you can be affected by disasters. Knowing what to do and being prepared can lessen the impact on an individual; and, once an individual's situation is stabilized, he or she can help other people. This is one of the basic premises of CERT training.

"I will from that day I taught the last class at HALO, when a storm comes in, pray that those that do not have a home, make it through the night. They are just like the rest of us," commented Day. ❖



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UNITING COMMUNITIES
PREPARING THE NATION

Security of Mobile Communication Devices



All This Functionality in One Device!

Mobile communication devices (includes Blackberrys, iPhones, smart phones in general) have become indispensable tools for today's highly mobile society. Small and relatively inexpensive, these multifunction devices can be used not only for voice calls but also text messages, email, Internet access along with stand alone applications similar to those performed on a desktop computer. A significant amount of personal, private and/or sensitive information may accumulate or be accessed via these devices. Additionally, some of these devices may allow you to access your home computer or your corporate network.

What Risks Do They Present?

While the devices offer many benefits and conveniences, they also pose risks to you and/or your organization's security. As these devices continue to take on the characteristics of personal computers, they also inherit the same potential risks. Some of the primary risks include the following:

- The portability of the device leads to a higher likelihood of loss of the device. Millions of mobile communication devices are lost each year.
- When Bluetooth and/or wireless (not cellular) communications are enabled, these devices are subject to the risk of eavesdropping and "highjacking."
- "Malware" available, that if installed on your device, can allow a perpetrator remote access to your device to listen and record all of your calls, send text messages to the perpetrator whenever you make or receive a call, read all of your messages, make calls on your behalf from your phone, access all of the information on your phone, trace your location and enable the speaker functionally on the phone to listen in on conversations even when the phone is not in use.
- Sites purporting to offer "free games or ring tones" are major vectors for distributing malware.
- While the reports of worms and viruses impacting these devices are relatively low, this is expected to increase in the future.

Despite the risks outlined above, many users do not understand how vulnerable their mobile device is or how to deploy important security settings and controls.

What Can I Do to Secure My Mobile Communication Device?

The following outlines steps you can take to protect your mobile communication device. Some of the steps are dependant upon the functionality of your device.

- Use a password to access your device. If the device is used for work purposes, you should follow the password policy issued by your organization.
- If the Bluetooth functionality is not used, check to be sure this setting is disabled. Some devices have Bluetooth-enabled by default. If the Bluetooth functionality is used, be sure to change the default password for connecting to a Bluetooth enabled device.
- Do not open attachments from untrusted sources. Similar to the risk when using your desktop, you risk being exposed to malware when opening unexpected attachments.
- Do not follow links to untrusted sources, especially from unsolicited email or text messages. Again, as with your desktop, you risk being infected with malware.
- If your device is lost, report it immediately to your carrier or organization. Some devices allow the data to be erased remotely.
- Review the security setting on your device to ensure appropriate protection. Be sure to encrypt data transmissions whenever possible.
- Enable storage encryption. This will help protect the data stored on your device in the event it is lost or stolen, assuming you have it password protected!
- Beware of downloading any software to your device. If the device is used for work, follow your organization's policy on downloading software.
- Before disposing of the device be sure to wipe all data from it and/or or follow your organization's policy for disposing of computer equipment.

For more information on securing mobile communication devices, please visit:

National Cyber Alert System - Cyber Security Tip ST06-007, Defending Cell Phones and PDAs Against Attack: <http://www.uscert.gov/cas/tips/ST06-007.html> ❖

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What is your readiness quotient?

In recent years, the American people have been urged to “get ready” and to prepare for emergencies – from natural disasters to terrorist attacks.

But no one has ever given the public a simple, comprehensive and consistent tool to actually measure how prepared they are.

No one has ever provided individuals, communities, and the nation as a whole with a practical “gauge” to assess their preparedness, recognize their successes and identify gaps where more work needs to be done.

Until now!

The **Readiness Quotient** – or **RQ** – is a first of its kind tool for individuals, families and communities to determine and evaluate their readiness.

See how you stack up against the national average and learn specific steps you can take to better prepare yourself and your family, as well as things you can do to encourage your community, schools and workplace to be better prepared.

Are you ready to get ready?

From power outages to terrorist attacks . . . hurricanes or tornados . . . floods to fires . . . the most important message is simple: Be Prepared. Get Ready. Be Informed.

But how do you know if you are ready enough? How do you know that you've done all the right things to be prepared?

Take the RQ Test and find out.

RQ stands for Readiness Quotient . . .and was developed by a broad coalition of experts. Through rigorous testing and validation, experts agree these ten simple questions are actually the most predictive of an individual's preparedness.

The RQ Test scores you on what you know and have already done to get prepared. It also provides you with the simple steps to take to improve your score and increase your preparedness.

Your first important step is to learn your RQ score. This simple test takes less than one minute to complete. To get started, go to:

<http://www.whatsyourrq.org/test.shtml>

Free Disaster Training



Free!

There are a number of free training resources out there including:

Cultural Competency Curriculum for Disaster Preparedness and Crisis Response

Free online educational program designed for First Responders of disaster preparedness and crisis response including Emergency Medical Technicians, Psychologists, Psychiatrists and Social Workers.

<https://cccdpcr.thinkculturalhealth.org/>

Forensic Epidemiology

West Virginia University announced a new online course, "Forensic Epidemiology: Joint Training for Law Enforcement and Public Health Officials." This course has been developed to foster improved coordination of the investigative goals and methods specific to each discipline and to strengthen interdisciplinary collaborative effectiveness in response to future events involving biological or other agents. To take this free course, please visit:

http://elearn.wvu.edu/Continuing/Emergency_Response/ForensicEpidemiology.html

Crisis and Emergency Risk Communication during a Pandemic Influenza Event

While the current H1N1 outbreak seems to have settled down a bit, this is still a good time to go over the basic role of PIOs in a pandemic situation. I found a free, web-based and excellent tutorial done for North Carolina. It will take about 15 minutes or so, but has all the key elements in there while omitting things that would be local specifics and variables.

http://nccphp.sph.unc.edu/training/HEP_PFRIS/certificate.php

Did you know?

The City of Dallas commissioned a study in the late 1950s on the usefulness of outdoor warning sirens. The study showed the following:

- A strong wind (20 mph or so) decreased the up wind distance a siren could be heard but did not increase the down wind distance.
- Sirens could not be heard in autos.
- People in doors couldn't hear sirens.

In spite of that, why do so many people maintain a dependency on outdoor warning sirens when there are other alternatives including NOAA Weather Radios and various text services available? ❖