
G0358

**Evacuation and Re-entry
Planning Course**

Unit 5

Evacuation Communication



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Washington

7:38 PM ET

ERIN BURNETT
OUTFRONT



ERIN
BURNETT

WHAT IF HAIYAN HIT THE UNITED STATES?
How America would handle a super typhoon

LIVE
CNN

ERRY'S BRIEFING **CNN** DISAPPOINTMENT, FRUSTRATION FELT BY W **7:38 PM ET**



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Visual 5.1



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Unit Objectives



- **Decide what information to convey to the public about evacuation.**
- **Determine how to communicate evacuation information to the public to ensure that instructions will be understood and followed.**



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Unit Objectives, Continued



- **Determine when to release information about evacuation to the public.**
- **Determine who is responsible for evacuation communication in their home jurisdiction.**



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Educating the Community About Evacuation

- **Informing risk-area residents and businesses prior to an emergency will better prepare them to respond to evacuation instructions.**
- **Education before an emergency partially addresses potential concern about reliability and credibility of information.**



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Evacuation Information

- **Nature of the hazard(s)**
- **Methods of warning and who will carry out warning**
- **Evacuation routes**



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Evacuation Information

- Information about emergency shelters
- Information about risks of in-place sheltering if not a viable solution
- Information about care of pets and domestic animals



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Discussion Question



What non-emergency periods are appropriate for presenting this type of information?



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Non-Emergency Periods

- **June 1st events**
- **Outreach events (fair, school visits, etc)**
- **Peak of Season events**
- **Town hall meetings**
- **Chamber of Commerce Meetings**
- **Attention on other impacted areas**



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Methods of Communication

- **Television and/or newspaper**
- **Radio spots**
- **Direct mailing**
- **Display at public buildings and in libraries**
- **Phonebook insert**
- **Utility bill inserts**
- **School handouts to students**
- **Social Media**



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Communicating Evacuation Readiness Information

- **Build credibility**
- **Encourage preparedness**
- **Provide a hot line, e-mail address, or other source of information**



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Discussion Question

Communicating Evacuation Readiness



Keeping in mind the factors that determine whether people will understand and follow evacuation instructions, what kind of evacuation information should be communicated at this time?



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Discussion Question

Communicating Evacuation Readiness



Keeping in mind the factors that determine whether people will understand and follow evacuation instructions, what kind of evacuation information should be communicated at this time?

- Size of impacted population.
- Who needs to go.
- How far they need to go.
- What happens if they stay.



Communicating Evacuation Readiness to Tourists

- **Check with owners of resorts/hotels/motels to ensure they have a method for warning and communicating evacuation information.**



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Communicating Evacuation Readiness to Tourists

- **Tourists and other travelers are not likely to be watching TV news or listening to local radio broadcasts and may have to be notified individually.**
- **Resorts/hotels/motels will lose revenue if guests evacuate, so managers may "downplay" possible risk.**



Communicating the Evacuation Order

- **Communicating the evacuation warning officially begins the movement to a safer area.**
- **Evacuation warning and information from all sources must be consistent.**
- **Multiple consistent messages will get people to take action sooner.**



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Factors Affecting Response to Evacuation Warnings

- **Credibility of the person issuing information**
- **Consistency of messages and information**
- **Warning content - is the risk conveyed?**
- **Adequacy of the information for taking action**
- **Ability to confirm the message**
- **Response to risk**



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Effective Evacuation Warnings

- **Select a credible source to deliver the message.**
 - **Have credible local officials issue the warning message using mass media.**
 - **Have emergency personnel with previous experience and public exposure in an evacuation operation deliver the message.**



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Effective Evacuation Warnings

- **Select a credible source to deliver the message.**
 - **The decision on who to deliver the evacuation message through the media must be made before an event is pending (need regular coordination with the local media).**



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October 28, 2012

New York City Mayor Michael Bloomberg announced evacuations, school closures and a suspension in transit service in advance of Hurricane Sandy's arrival.



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Effective Evacuation Warnings

- **Write and present a clear message.**
 - **People looking for reasons not to leave will find them in ambiguous messages.**
 - **Be specific about areas that will be affected as well as the risks that are posed.**



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Effective Evacuation Warnings

- **Write and present a clear message.**
 - **Describe possible hazard impacts including any plans by utility authorities to turn off electricity, water, and/or gas in the evacuation area.**
 - **Describe evacuation routes and any traffic pattern changes.**



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Effective Evacuation Warnings

- **Write and present a clear message.**
 - **Tell where people can go and how to get there if they don't have private transportation.**
 - **Provide lists of personal belongings to take in the evacuation**
 - **Describe arrangements for reuniting family members that become separated during the evacuation.**



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Effective Evacuation Warnings

- **Keep the message consistent.**
 - **Local media should repeat the same evacuation message and information.**
 - **Inconsistent messages neutralize the public's perception of threat.**



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Effective Evacuation Warnings

- **Present a precise message.**
 - **Confusing statements about the location, timing and/or magnitude of the event will decrease the perception of the threat.**



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- **URGENT – WEATHER MESSAGE**
NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE NEW ORLEANS LA
1011 AM CDT SUN AUG 28 2005

- ...DEVASTATING DAMAGE EXPECTED...

- .HURRICANE KATRINA...A MOST POWERFUL HURRICANE WITH UNPRECEDENTED STRENGTH...RIVALING THE INTENSITY OF HURRICANE CAMILLE OF 1969.

- MOST OF THE AREA WILL BE UNINHABITABLE FOR WEEKS...PERHAPS LONGER. AT LEAST ONE HALF OF WELL CONSTRUCTED HOMES WILL HAVE ROOF AND WALL FAILURE. ALL GABLED ROOFS WILL FAIL...LEAVING THOSE HOMES SEVERELY DAMAGED OR DESTROYED.

- THE MAJORITY OF INDUSTRIAL BUILDINGS WILL BECOME NON FUNCTIONAL. PARTIAL TO COMPLETE WALL AND ROOF FAILURE IS EXPECTED.



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- ALL WOOD FRAMED LOW RISING APARTMENT BUILDINGS WILL BE DESTROYED. CONCRETE BLOCK LOW RISE APARTMENTS WILL SUSTAIN MAJOR DAMAGE...INCLUDING SOME WALL AND ROOF FAILURE.
 - HIGH RISE OFFICE AND APARTMENT BUILDINGS WILL SWAY DANGEROUSLY...A FEW TO THE POINT OF TOTAL COLLAPSE. ALL WINDOWS WILL BLOW OUT.
 - AIRBORNE DEBRIS WILL BE WIDESPREAD...AND MAY INCLUDE HEAVY ITEMS SUCH AS HOUSEHOLD APPLIANCES AND EVEN LIGHT VEHICLES. SPORT UTILITY VEHICLES AND LIGHT TRUCKS WILL BE MOVED. THE BLOWN DEBRIS WILL CREATE ADDITIONAL DESTRUCTION. PERSONS...PETS...AND LIVESTOCK EXPOSED TO THE WINDS WILL FACE CERTAIN DEATH IF STRUCK.



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- POWER OUTAGES WILL LAST FOR WEEKS...AS MOST POWER POLES WILL BE DOWN AND TRANSFORMERS DESTROYED. WATER SHORTAGES WILL MAKE HUMAN SUFFERING INCREDIBLE BY MODERN STANDARDS.
 - THE VAST MAJORITY OF NATIVE TREES WILL BE SNAPPED OR UPROOTED. ONLY THE HEARTIEST WILL REMAIN STANDING...BUT BE TOTALLY DEFOLIATED. FEW CROPS WILL REMAIN. LIVESTOCK LEFT EXPOSED TO THE WINDS WILL BE KILLED.
 - AN INLAND HURRICANE WIND WARNING IS ISSUED WHEN SUSTAINED WINDS NEAR HURRICANE FORCE...OR FREQUENT GUSTS AT OR ABOVE HURRICANE FORCE...ARE CERTAIN WITHIN THE NEXT 12 TO 24 HOURS.
 - ONCE TROPICAL STORM AND HURRICANE FORCE WINDS ONSET...DO NOT VENTURE OUTSIDE!



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Effective Evacuation Warnings

- **Repeat the message.**
 - **If the media repeats the same message multiple times, people will be stirred to action.**



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Effective Evacuation Warnings

- **Provide sources for confirming the evacuation warning.**
 - **People will try to obtain confirmation of warnings from different sources before evacuating.**
 - **A hot line or other point of contact will be useful, but may become overwhelmed if unprepared for heavy call volume.**



NYC: Hurricane Sandy AAR

- In addition to information flowing from City officials to the public, communication from the public to the City via 311 also increased in volume, with a daily average four times greater than the 2012 daily average and peaking as high as 274,000 calls in a single day.
- Although average wait times to speak with a 311 call taker increased during Sandy, the automated Interactive Voice Response system, or IVR, resolved 74% of all inquiries within two minutes. 311 Online visits were also seven times higher than the 2012 daily average.



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State Assistance Information Line

- The [State Assistance Information Line](#) (SAIL) is a toll-free hotline activated at the time of an emergency to provide an additional resource for those in Florida to receive accurate and up-to-date information regarding an emergency or disaster situation impacting the State of Florida.
- **The SAIL hotline is: 1-800-342-3557.**



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Delivering the Message Factors

- **Type of hazard**
- **Amount of warning time**
- **Size and demographics of the at-risk population**
- **Capabilities of the local, tribal or territorial authorities**



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Delivering the Message

- **Evacuation warnings should not depend on any one method of communication.**
- **Neither cable nor broadcast television may be a reliable mode of communication.**
- **Broadcast TV and cable stations in the impact areas may be out of service hours before the eye of the storm arrives.**



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Delivering the Message: Hurricane Hugo 1989

- VHF and cable stations in the impact areas were out of service hours before the eye of the storm arrived.
- By that time, most residents were without power to operate televisions anyway.
- Only one AM station in the storm path was able to maintain service.
- Most of the radio and television stations in the Emergency Alert System were damaged or lost power and could not transmit for several days.



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Delivering the Message

- **Other methods for delivery of the warning message include:**
 - **Door-to-door notification by emergency responders**
 - **Travel through neighborhoods using public address systems**



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Delivering the Message

It is important that all methods for delivering the evacuation warning message converge at approximately the same time, providing the same clear, consistent message.



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Communicating with Divergent Populations

Communicating with populations in institutions such as hospitals, nursing homes, prisons, jails and group homes is not likely to be a problem unless phone service and power are lost.



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Discussion Question

Divergent Populations



What populations may require special communication efforts during the evacuation warning?



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Communicating with Divergent Populations

- **What types of special communication activity may be needed?**
 - **Door-to-door notification**
 - **Depending upon the warning time available, written communications to hotel or resort guests**



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Communicating with Divergent Populations

- **What types of special communication activity may be needed?**
 - **Instructing hotel, motel and resort operators to conduct door-to-door or other notification of guests**
 - **Use of emergency vehicles to make public address announcements to homeless and other transient populations that do not have access to media**



Communicating with Divergent Populations

- **What types of special communication activity may be needed?**
 - **Announcements in several different languages, as appropriate to the community**
 - **If the community is multi-lingual, determine the languages in which emergency information will be issued**



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Social Media : NYC Hurricane Sandy AAR

- Between October 26 and November 9, NYC.gov received 4 million unique visitors and 16 million page views.
- Mayor Bloomberg's YouTube channel had nearly 1 million views between October 26 and November 9.
- OEM sent Notify NYC alerts via landline, mobile, text, email, and Twitter to more than 165,000 residents.
- The City sent more than 2,000 tweets and gained more than 175,000 social media followers during the storm, including a 71% increase in followers of the NYC Mayor's Office Twitter feed.



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Unit Summary

- **Work closely with Warning and Public Information staff on the development of the evacuation annex or plan.**
- **Evacuation warning messages must be credible, consistent, and frequent to be effective in moving people to action.**



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Unit Summary

Include in Warning Messages

- **Clear description of the area likely to be evacuated**
- **Certainty of the hazard**
- **Severity of the hazard**
- **Visual evidence of the hazard when media allows**



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Unit Summary

Include in Warning Messages

- **Information on safe havens and routes**
- **Lists of personal belongings to take in the evacuation**
- **Assurance of family unity or reunification**



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Unit Summary

Warning Messages

- Repeat the message often.
- Isolate the message from routine information.



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