

MANAGEMENT OF SPONTANEOUS VOLUNTEERS IN DISASTERS



**EMERGENCY
MANAGEMENT
INSTITUTE**

Course Objectives

At the completion of this course, participants will be able to:

- Identify issues and challenges in the management of spontaneous volunteers
- Identify the elements of a spontaneous volunteer management plan
- Identify best practices for the management of spontaneous volunteers in disasters
- Develop and implement a spontaneous volunteer management plan
- Explain the role of the Volunteer Reception Center (VRC) and virtual VRC in the transition from response to recovery

Course Schedule

UNIT	TOPICS
Course Introduction	Course Overview Course Administration and Introductions
Unit 1	Introduction to Volunteering
	B R E A K
Unit 2	Building the Network
Unit 3	Elements of a Spontaneous Volunteer Management Plan
Unit 4	Best Practices for Effective Management of Spontaneous Volunteers in Disasters
Unit 5	Brief Introduction of VRC Simulation
	L U N C H
Unit 5 (Continued)	Implementing the Spontaneous Volunteer Management Plan
	B R E A K
Unit 5 (Continued)	VRC Simulation Review
Unit 6	Transition to Recovery
Course Conclusion	Evaluation and Certificates

Course Administration and Introductions

- Name
- Jurisdiction/Agency
- Expectations from the course



INTRODUCTION TO VOLUNTEERING

Unit 1

Objectives

Participants will be able to:

- Identify factors leading people to volunteer
- Define volunteer, voluntary agency, Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (VOAD), National VOAD (NVOAD), and Community Organizations Active in Disaster (COAD)
- Identify the two commonly used categories of disaster volunteers
- Identify the benefits and challenges of using spontaneous volunteers
- Identify the benefits of effective spontaneous volunteer management
- Discuss the principles and values guiding the management of spontaneous volunteers

Volunteering...

- Dates back to the early 17th century
- In 2005, more than 65 million people volunteered in the U.S.
- Trend to volunteer on the rise



Why Do People Volunteer in a Disaster?

- Sincere wish to help
- Religious/faith-based motivation
- Share their experiences as disaster survivors
- Personal benefits
- Court-ordered community service
- Because they are asked



Important Definitions

- Volunteer
- Voluntary Agency
- Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (VOAD)
- Community Organizations Active in Disaster (COAD)
- Faith-based and Community Organizations (FBCO)
- Emergency Management Assistance Compact (EMAC)



Categories of Disaster Volunteers

Affiliated Volunteers



Spontaneous Volunteers



Characteristics of Affiliated Volunteers

- Attached to a recognized voluntary agency
- Specialized skills
- Training and certification
- Management structure
- Covered by agency's insurance



Characteristics of Spontaneous Volunteers

- Timely help
- Not attached to any organization
- Wide range of skills
- May have disaster training
- Individuals or groups
- May be local or out-of-town/State
- May be disaster survivors



Benefits of Using Spontaneous Volunteers

- Force multiplier
- Cost-effectiveness
- Broad range of experience and expertise
- Fresh energy
- May bring additional resources
- Improved response capacity



Challenges of Using Spontaneous Volunteers

- May lack training
- Lack supervision
- Need background checks
- Requires planning and coordination
- Can hinder relief work
- Negative publicity if not well managed



Benefits of Effective Spontaneous Volunteer Management

*Effective management of spontaneous volunteers can prevent a
Disaster within a Disaster*

- Survivors benefit from volunteers' help
- Agencies get help to provide services
- Communities recover more quickly
- First responders are free of managing spontaneous volunteers
- Volunteers may become affiliated

Principles and Values Guiding Management of Spontaneous Volunteers

- Identify and utilize existing resources
- Offer affiliation opportunities
- Engage volunteers in all functions of emergency management
- Include everyone
- Form a VRC Team
- Communicate effectively
- Use consistent terminology





Activity

Work in groups to develop a strategy to deal with a challenge of working with spontaneous volunteers.

- Thousands of spontaneous volunteers show up to help at the disaster site.
- Confusing and conflicting messages are dispatched to people, urging them to volunteer.
- Spontaneous volunteers get injured while operating heavy machinery during disaster response.
- Some spontaneous volunteers are found to have motives other than helping.

You have 10 minutes to complete this activity.



BUILDING THE NETWORK

Unit 2

Objectives

Participants will be able to:

- Develop pre-disaster relationships with voluntary agencies, Faith-based and Community Organizations (FBCOs), Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (VOAD), local business and government
- Identify ways to improve public awareness about disaster volunteering
- Identify steps to mitigate liability and risk management issues

Pre-Disaster Relationships with Voluntary Agencies, FBCOs, and VOAD



Communicate needs

Establish cooperative agreements

Coordinate and collaborate

Establish mutual-aid networks

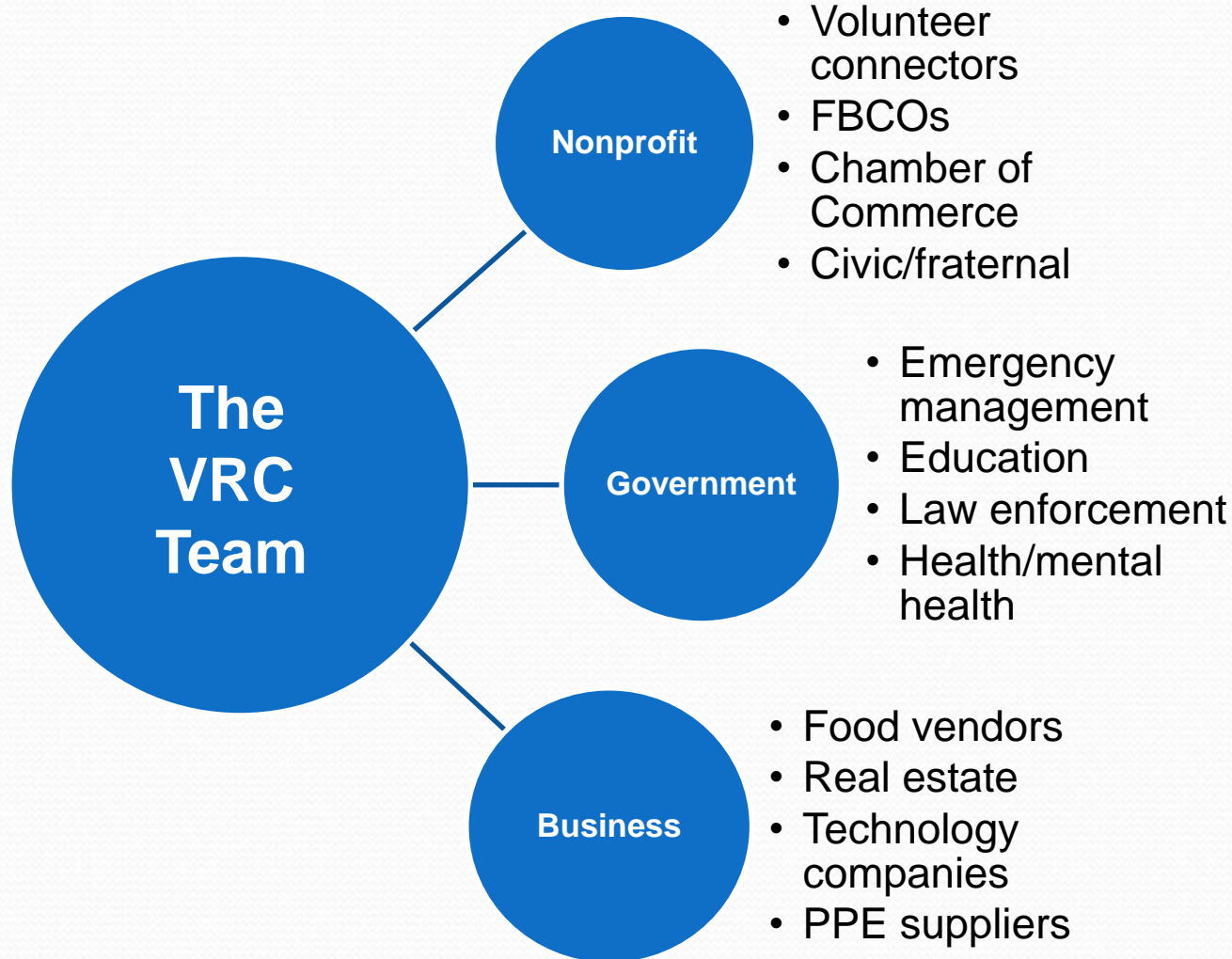


Activity

Work in groups to list “umbrella” organizations or coalitions to help emergency management engage voluntary agencies, FBCOs, and other voluntary services in your community.

You have 3 minutes to complete this activity.

Potential Partners



Strategies for Effective Media and Public Awareness Campaign

Effective ways to prevent a disaster within a disaster



Ways to Mitigate Liability and Risk Management Issues

- Identify the State laws
- Clarify liability insurance protection limits
- Identify screening and registration procedures
- Provide orientation and training
- Follow legislation mandates
- Identify clear volunteer roles, job descriptions, and standard operating procedures
- Identify documentation procedures





ELEMENTS OF A SPONTANEOUS VOLUNTEER MANAGEMENT PLAN

Unit 3

Objective

Participants will be able to:

- Identify the elements of a spontaneous volunteer management plan

What is a Spontaneous Volunteer Management Plan?

Document that...

- Explains the strategy
- Establishes roles and expectations
- Prepares community organizations
- Prepares the public to serve
- Is an annex to the volunteer and donations plan



What Should a Jurisdiction's Spontaneous Volunteer Management Plan Include?

Purpose,
Assumptions,
and Policies

Guidance for
Community
Organizations

Pre-Disaster
Public
Education
Strategies

VRC Activation
Procedures

Post-Disaster
Public
Messaging
Strategies

VRC Operations
Plan

Purpose, Assumptions, and Policies to Guide Spontaneous Volunteer Management Planning

- Establish VRC team
- Define criteria for prioritizing needs for volunteers
- Determine criteria for activating toll-free number
- Physical and virtual VRC procedures
- Training and exercises
- Use of in-State mutual aid and EMAC



Virtual VRC

- Web-based platform to manage and communicate with spontaneous volunteers.
- Components of a virtual VRC:
 - Web page banner
 - First message
 - Call center
 - Opportunities
 - Links to social media

Guidance for Community Organizations

- Anticipate community needs
- Identify needs the organization might help meet
- Identify appropriate roles for volunteers
- Write job descriptions
- Consider risks



Pre-Disaster Public Education Strategies

The public should be taught:

- Get trained and affiliated
- Register with a VRC, if unaffiliated
- Cash is the best donation!
- Verify items needed prior to collecting
- Offer large donations through the National Donations Management Network (NDMN)
- Never self-deploy



VRC Activation Procedures

- Who “pulls the trigger”?
- Notifying the VRC Team
- Potential venues
 - Location, location, location
 - Accessibility
 - Safety
- Resources for the VRC
 - Furniture, equipment, communications, “Go Kit”
- Staffing
 - Notification of staff



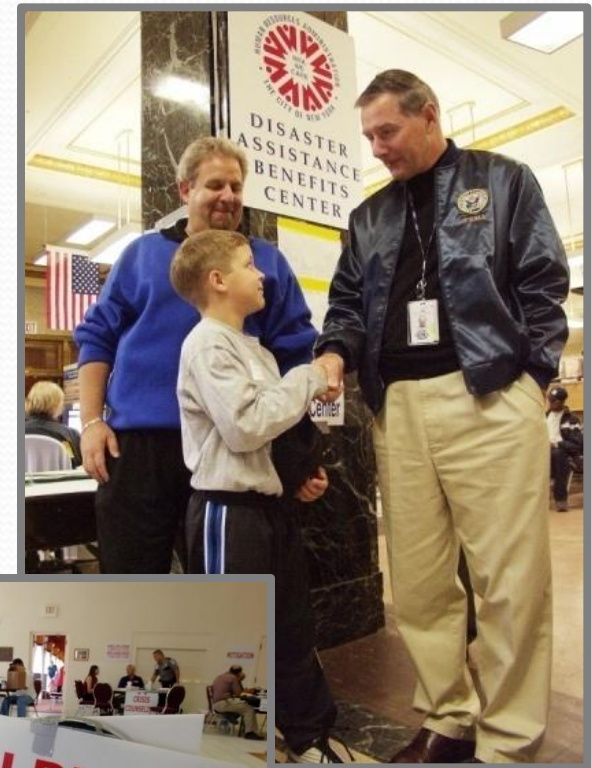
Post-Disaster Public Messaging Strategies

- Donations: Cash/In kind
- VRC location and hours
- Promoting the Virtual VRC
- Recruiting volunteers with special skills
- Providing affiliation information



VRC Operations Plan

- VRC Activation
- Volunteer registration and referral
- Documentation of
 - Volunteer referrals
 - Types of work
 - Number of hours
- Safety and job training
- Volunteer identification



VRC Operations Plan (Contd.)

- Transportation to work sites
- Maintenance of database
- Communication with Public Information Officer (PIO)
- Volunteer Recognition
- Demobilization of VRC
- Reimbursement of operating costs





BEST PRACTICES FOR EFFECTIVE MANAGEMENT OF SPONTANEOUS VOLUNTEERS IN DISASTERS

Unit 4

Best Practices for Effective Management of Spontaneous Volunteers in Disasters

#	Topics
1	Developing a County Plan
2	Potential VRC Team Members and Partners
3	Identifying Community Needs for Volunteers
4	VRC Operations and Logistics
5	Coordination of Hotlines and Technology with the VRC
6	VRC Staffing
7	Reimbursement for Expenses Incurred
8	Pre- and Post-disaster Coordination with Local Government Agencies and NGOs
9	Coordination with Local Information and Referral Provider (2-1-1)
10	Roles for Spontaneous Volunteers
11	NGO's with Roles in Spontaneous Volunteer Management



IMPLEMENTING THE SPONTANEOUS VOLUNTEER MANAGEMENT PLAN

Unit 5

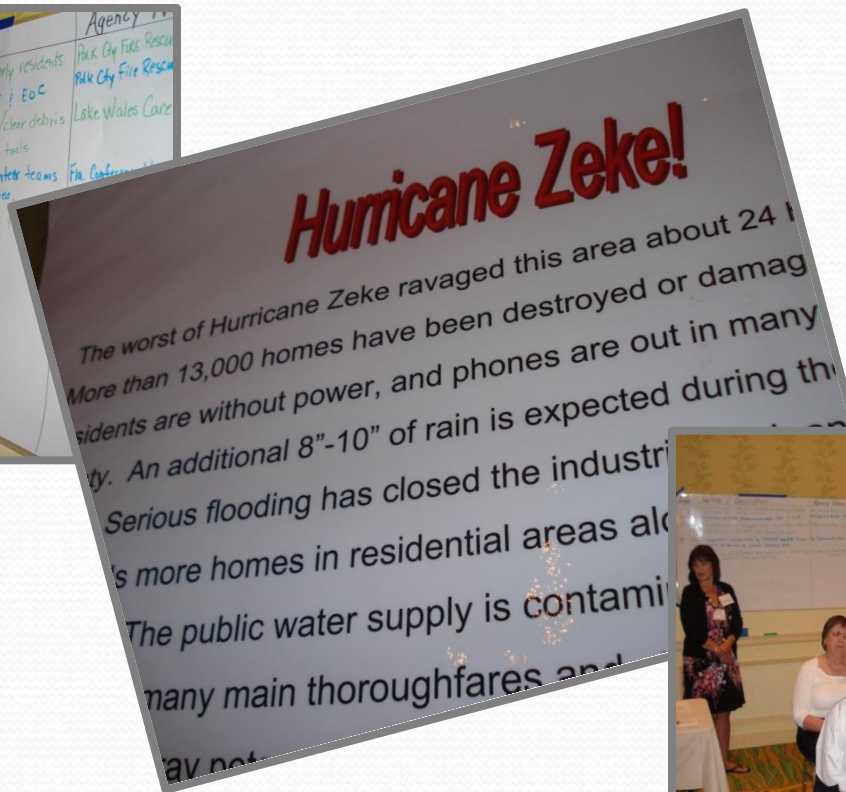
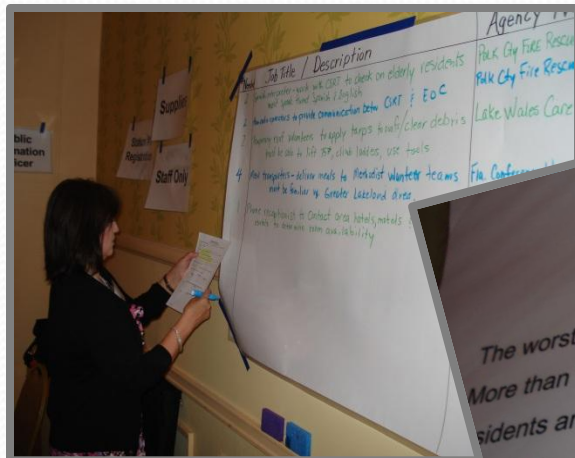
Objectives

Participants will be able to:

- Describe the setup of a Volunteer Reception Center
- Describe the tasks performed at each station of a Volunteer Reception Center
- Implement the spontaneous volunteer management plan

Simulation Introduction and Instructions

Volunteer Reception Center Simulation



Hurricane Zeke

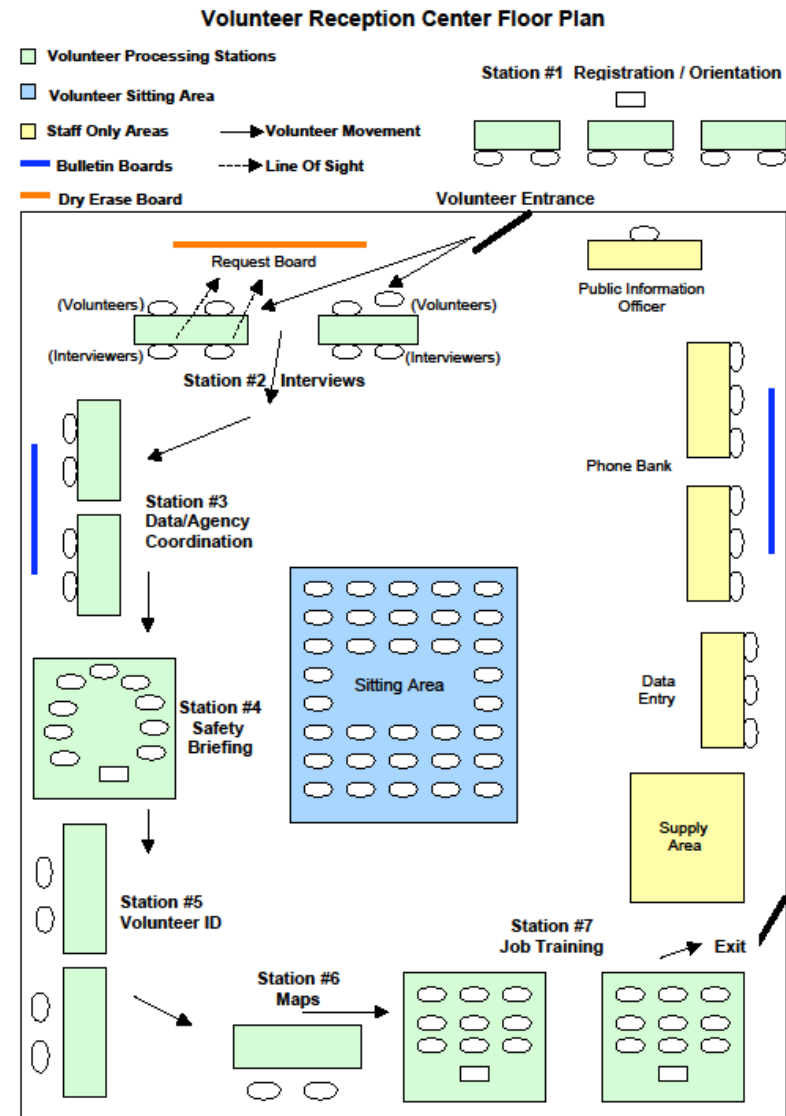
Hurricane Zeke's tropical storm force winds cleared this area about 2 hours ago. More than 13,000 homes were destroyed or sustained major damage. 85,000 residents are without power, and phones are out in many areas. An

additional 8-10" of rain is expected. Serious flooding has closed the industrial park and will reach thousands more homes in residential areas along the river in the next few days. The public water supply is contaminated. Trees and debris are blocking many roads and street signs are down. Hundreds of stray pets and livestock are causing serious safety issues. Due to looting downtown, the National Guard has been activated.

Two area hospitals are on emergency power and one is without phone service. Nursing homes and the psychiatric hospital are short staffed due to blocked roads. Two schools were destroyed by a tornado, and all other schools remain closed. American Red Cross shelters are overcrowded and short staffed. Attempts are being made to open additional shelters. Salvation Army and American Red Cross mobile feeding units will provide meals as soon as they can enter the impacted areas. County emergency management expects thousands of disaster volunteers from neighboring counties to arrive tomorrow, and has requested that a Volunteer Reception Center be set up to manage these spontaneous volunteers.

Sample Volunteer Reception Center Floor Plan

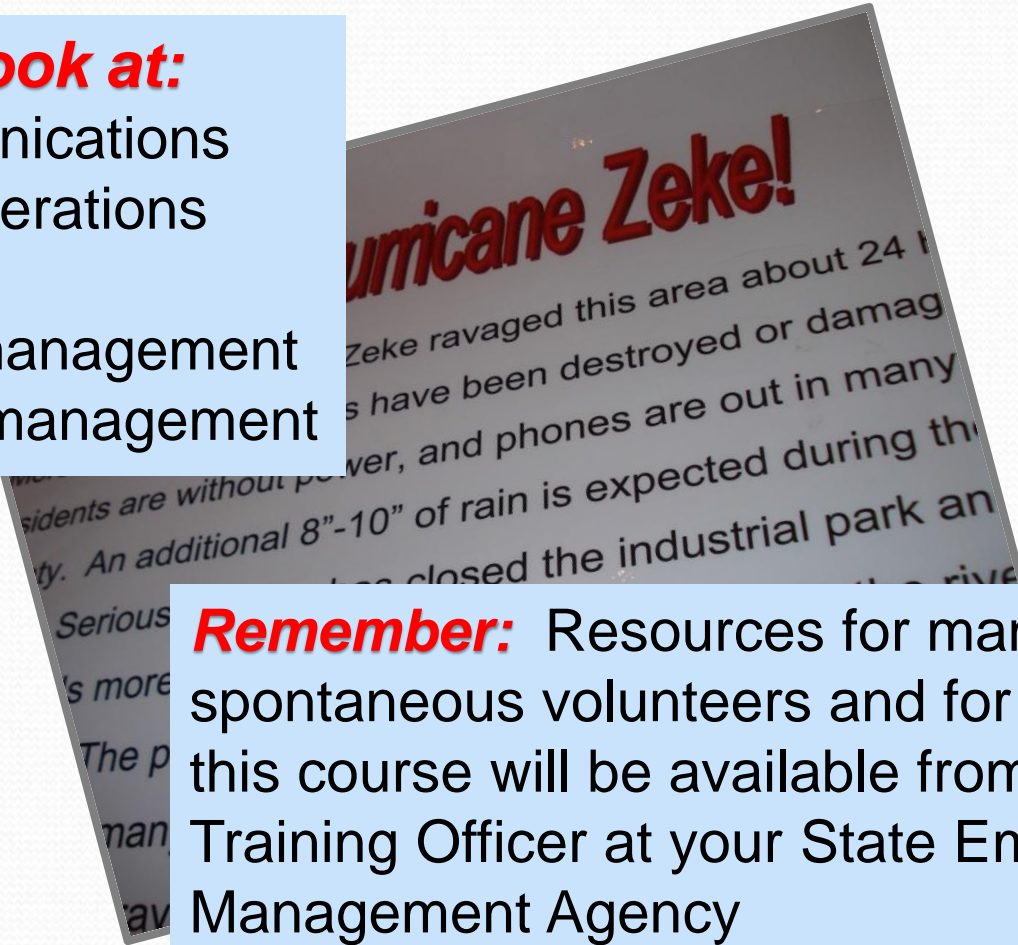
- Other models work equally well
- Some include stations for community agency representatives
- Some do job training on site, some do not
- Some use multiple rooms within one facility
- Other models?



Volunteer Reception Center Simulation

Take a last look at:

- VRC communications
- Activation/operations
- Mutual aid
- Safety/risk management
- Information management



Remember: Resources for managing spontaneous volunteers and for teaching this course will be available from your State Training Officer at your State Emergency Management Agency

Communication

- Coordination with the PIO
- Pre-developed public messages
- Use of Volunteer ID
- Ongoing public education and information
- Toll-free numbers
- Utilization of all available technologies



VRC Activation and Operations

- The decision to activate
- Notification of the VRC team
- Procedures for:
 - Identifying community needs for volunteers
 - Registering/referring volunteers
 - Promoting volunteer safety
 - Documenting the work/hours/expenses
- Disaster stress management
- Demobilization

Mutual Aid

- State and regional agreements
- Emergency Management Assistance Compact (EMAC)



Safety and Risk Management

- Safety and job training for volunteers
- Appropriate security procedures
- Documentation of referrals and training



Information Management

- Database of volunteers and skills
- Phone bank and Web portal
- Coordination between VRC Team and long-term recovery groups





TRANSITION TO RECOVERY

Unit 6

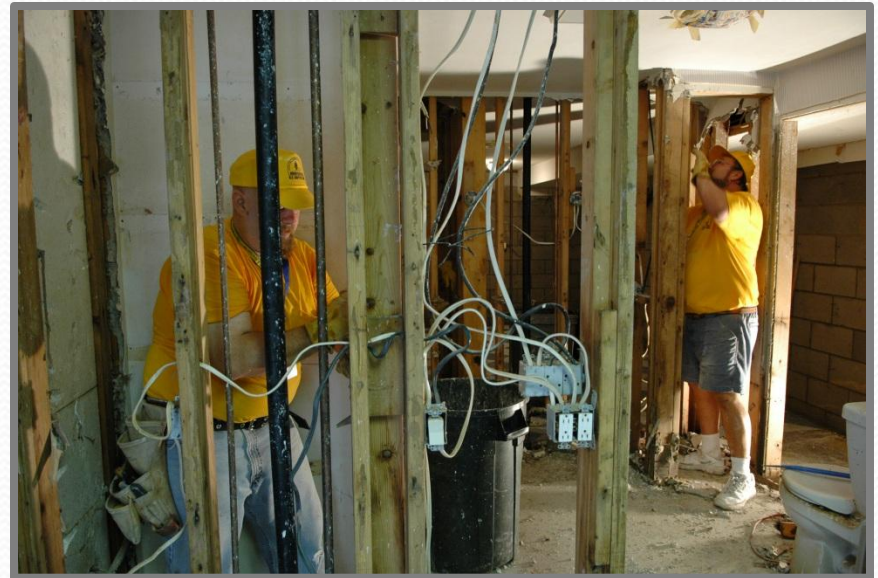
Objectives

Participants will be able to:

- Explain how actions taken at the VRC during the response phase can ensure a smooth transition to recovery and facilitate a continued source of volunteers
- Explain the importance of documentation and recognition of volunteers' experiences
- Explain risk and risk management during recovery operations
- List criteria for determining when to demobilize the VRC and the steps to be taken to ensure proper disposition of all property and documentation
- Identify ways to keep spontaneous volunteers engaged in the long-term recovery efforts

VRC as the Springboard to Recovery

- Encourage volunteers to affiliate
- Unused Volunteer Teams
- Volunteer opportunities
- Virtual system



Documentation and Recognition

- Help retain volunteers
- Encourage affiliation
- Federal reimbursement
- Determine the value of volunteer's time
- Support grant proposals
- Increase the perceived value of an organization



Risk and Risk Management in Recovery

- Resolution of the most dangerous situations
- Reduced risk of referring volunteers
- Completion of higher-risk work
- VRC no longer needed for volunteer opportunities



Demobilizing the VRC

- Criteria for demobilizing
- Documentation
- Return of borrowed property
- Cleaning and restoration
- Disaster stress management
- Hot Wash/evaluation
- Plan revisions
- VRC Go-Kit maintenance



Engagement of Spontaneous Volunteers in Long-Term Recovery Efforts

- Maintain the database of individuals and groups
- Recognize volunteers regularly
- Encourage affiliation with local organizations
- Offer stress management assistance
- Share volunteers with nearby communities
- Encourage repeat/annual service episodes

Course Wrap-Up

- Final questions
- Course Evaluations
- Thank you!