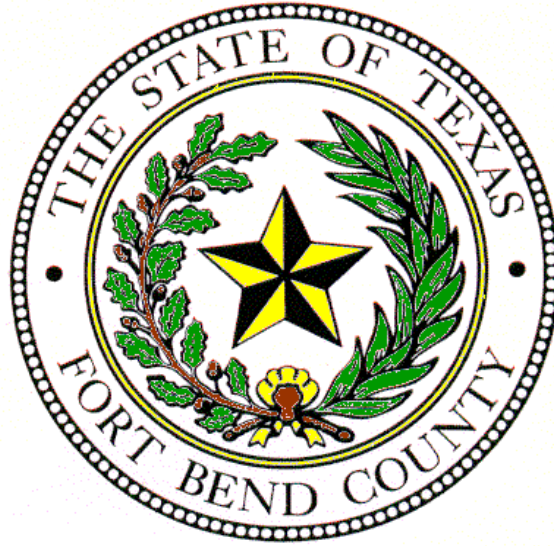


Fort Bend County Emergency Management



Annex I - Emergency Public Information

Approval and Implementation

Added Once Signed By All



County Judge KP George

6/2/2020

KP George
County Judge
Fort Bend County

Date



Mark Flathouse
EMC/Fire Marshal
Fort Bend County

6/1/2020

Date

Record of Changes

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I. Authority

See Authority Section on Page 1 of the Fort Bend County Basic Plan for general authorities.

II. Purpose

The purpose of this annex is to outline the means, organization, and process by which Fort Bend County and local jurisdictions will provide appropriate information and instructions to the public during emergencies. This annex also provides for disaster-related public education to be conducted in advance of emergencies to reduce the likelihood that citizens will place themselves in hazardous situations that may require an emergency response.

III. Explanation of Terms

Acronym	Term
AM	Amplitude Modulation
AM Alert	Fort Bend County AM Alert Radio System
APIO	Assistant Public Information Officer
ARC	American Red Cross
EAP	EOC Action Plan
EAS	Emergency Alert System
EEI	Essential Elements of Information
EM	Emergency Management
EMC	Emergency Management Coordinator
EOC	Emergency Operations or Operating Center
EPI	Emergency Public Information
EPIP	Emergency Public Information Plan
FBC	Fort Bend County
FCC	Federal Communications Commission
FEMA	Federal Emergency Management Agency
FM	Frequency Modulation
IAP	Incident Action Plan
IC	Incident Command/Commander
ICP	Incident Command Post

Acronym	Term
ICS	Incident Command System
ISD	Independent School District
JETTY	Communication Management System
JFO	Joint Field Officer
JIC	Joint Information Center
JIS	Joint Information System
JRJ	Joint Resolution Jurisdictions
LWP	Local Warning Point
MVDR	Mobile Voice and Data Redundancy
NIMS	National Incident Management System
NOAA	National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
PIO	Public Information Officer
SMS	Short Messaging Service (text messaging)
SOP	Standard Operating Procedure
TDEM	Texas Department of Emergency Management
UASI	Urban Area Security Initiative
UHF	Ultra-High Frequency
VHF	Very High Frequency

Definitions

Alert FM- A warning system used throughout the Houston Urban Area Security Initiative region that utilizes all forms of communications from FM radio to handheld mobile devices. Alert FM provides alert messages region-wide or to an area as small as a key map grid.

Emergency Alert System - The Emergency Alert System is a national warning system in the United States put into place in 1997, superseding the Emergency Broadcast System, and is jointly coordinated by the Federal Communications Commission and the National Weather Service. The Whitehouse utilizes the system to allow the

President of the United States to speak to the United States population within 10 minutes of activation and alerts the public of local weather emergencies.

Emergency Alert System messages are transmitted via AM, FM, broadcast television, cable television and Land Mobile Radio Service, as well as VHF, UHF, and FiOS (wireline video providers). Digital television, satellite television, and digital cable providers, along with Sirius XM satellite radio, In-band On-channel, digital audio broadcast, and digital radio broadcasters, are required to participate in the Emergency Alert System. DirecTV, Dish Network, and all other direct-broadcast satellite providers are also required to participate.

Broadcasters and cable companies must carry national security warnings and messages initiated by the President; they may broadcast alerts and messages initiated by state and local governments. The FCC encourages licensees to broadcast local warning and instruction messages, but the final decision on broadcasting such messages rests with the broadcasters. Broadcasters and cable operators expect the system to be used for life-threatening emergencies.

Emergency Public Information - Information provided to citizens in accordance with Texas Government Code, sections 418.175 – 418.183 before, during, and after emergency situations/incidents specifically including instructions on how to protect personal health, safety, and property or how to obtain assistance.

Joint Information Center - A physical or virtual location established to coordinate all incident-related public information activities. It is the central point of contact for all news media at the scene of the incident. Public information officials from all participating agencies should collocate at the Joint Information Center.

Joint Information System - The Joint Information System integrates incident information and public affairs into a cohesive organization designed to provide consistent, coordinated, accurate, accessible, timely, and complete information during crisis or incident operations. The goals are: provide a structure and system for developing and delivering coordinated interagency messages; develop, recommend, and execute public information plans and strategies on behalf of the Incident Commander; highlight public affairs issues that could affect a response

effort; and control rumors and inaccurate information that could undermine public confidence in the emergency response effort.

Local Warning Point - A local facility designated to receive and relay warning information received via the National Warning System and disseminate local warning messages.

JETTY - JETTY integrates Joint Information Center functions, including a hosted and branded web site (www.fbcjic.com). It stores text documents and multimedia files for use in posting and distribution to predefined contacts on the system.

IV. Situation and Assumptions

Situation

Fort Bend County and its Joint Resolution Jurisdictions face a number of hazards. Section IV of the Basic Plan provides a summary of those hazards and their possible impact.

During emergencies, the public needs timely, accurate emergency information and appropriate instructions regarding protective actions to minimize injuries, loss of life, and damage to the environment.

For some slowly developing emergencies (such as river flooding or hurricanes), there may be several days for local government to provide detailed information about the hazard and what citizens should do.

For other emergencies, there may be no warning; leaving the public information system unable to react rapidly enough to properly inform the public about the hazard and what to do about it. It is important for Fort Bend County and its Joint Resolution Jurisdictions to advise the public of likely hazards and protective measures to lessen the effects thereof.

Assumptions

1. An effective program combining both education and emergency information can significantly reduce loss of life and property. However, most people are not concerned with hazards until the time they may be affected and will not participate in or retain pre-emergency education; therefore, special emphasis must be placed on the delivery of emergency information during emergencies and disasters.
2. Local media will cooperate in disseminating warning and emergency public information during emergencies and may participate in pre-disaster awareness programs and other disaster education activities.

3. Some emergencies may generate substantial interest and draw local media, media from outside the local area, and Internet news sources, overwhelming the available emergency public information staff.
4. The public relies on Fort Bend County and its Joint Resolution Jurisdictions to provide audio, video, and textual emergency information directly through a variety of devices rather than waiting for updates from the media.
5. The public needs emergency information to be accessible to the whole community, regardless of their physical or technological abilities. Fort Bend County and its Joint Resolution Jurisdictions must formulate information with accuracy and accessibility as primary objectives. Officials must consider the public's need for diverse methods of emergency information distribution.
6. Each organization participating in the Joint Information Center contributes to the overall unified message through joint new releases and briefings, but organizations do not lose their individual identities or responsibility over their own policies and programs.

V. Concept of Operations

General

Pursuant to the National Incident Management System operating principles and protocols, public information efforts should generally focus on specific event-related information. This information will generally be of an instructional nature focusing on such things as warning, evacuation, and shelter. Appendix 1 describes some basic emergency information needs.

Fort Bend County and its Joint Resolution Jurisdictions must keep the public informed of the general progress of events in accordance with Texas Government Code, sections 418.175 – 418.183. Reporting positive information regarding emergency response will help to reassure the community that the situation is under control. Rumor monitoring and response is a major aspect of the informational program, with traditional information releases, and public feedback is a measure of the program's effectiveness. Regular updates, even if there are no changes to the situation, are critical to keep the public's confidence in the response.

Fort Bend County and its Joint Resolution Jurisdictions must direct education efforts toward increasing public awareness about potential hazards and preparedness. All information and education efforts will rely heavily on the cooperation of every type of media organization and the use of JETTY & Everbridge for direct communications.

The Joint Information Center is organized around three functions:

- Information gathering of facts from Command, WebEOC, and reports from response partners, media, public, and other stakeholders;
- Information production of accurate information approved by Command and disseminated to the media and public using virtual Joint Information Center website, email, and other tools;
- Information communication by conducting briefings and responding to inquiries from the media, public, and other stakeholders received by phone, email, website, or in-person.

Information Dissemination

Fort Bend County and its Joint Resolution Jurisdictions will employ the three major components of NIMS (In the initial stages of an emergency, the Local Warning Point may have to take action on time-sensitive hazards. Within the limits of the authority delegated to it, the Local Warning Point will determine if a warning needs to be issued, formulate a warning if necessary, and disseminate it. Pre-scripted emergency messages have been prepared for likely hazards and are included in Annex A, Warning; a list of these messages is provided in Appendix 5. These pre-scripted messages may be used as written or tailored as needed for specific circumstances. Warning messages can be broadcasted through JETTY, Everbridge and social media.

Since Emergency Alert System messages are limited to two minutes, warning messages may have to be supplemented with Special News Advisories prepared by the Public Information Officer containing extended emergency information. Special news advisories are disseminated to media outlets by fax and email.

When the Incident Command System is activated in an emergency, the Incident Commander will normally warn the public in and around the incident site. A designated Public Information Officer at the Incident Command Post, assisted by Fort Bend County and its Joint Resolution Jurisdictions' Public Information Officer's staff if necessary, will normally provide information to the media if the Emergency Operations Center has not been activated. All information relayed to the media by the Public Information Officer will be approved by the Incident Commander and the Fort Bend County Judge and/or Mayor of Joint Resolutions Jurisdictions, regardless of the command structure.

Once the Emergency Operations Center has been activated, the Emergency Management Director will normally determine the need for additional warning and instructions. The Public Information Officer staff will formulate additional warning messages and public instructions, using the sample messages contained in Annex A as a basis, where appropriate. The Local Warning Point will normally execute such warnings by activating the warning system, including transmitting Emergency Alert System messages to broadcasters. The Public Information Officer staff will disseminate Special News Advisories and other emergency public information materials to the media directly using its contact list.

In the case of large-scale emergencies or disasters where there are substantial external responders from other jurisdictions and/or state or federal agencies and the response and recovery effort may continue for an extended period, a Joint Information Center may be established.

The following means will be used to provide emergency information and instructions to the public:

- Emergency Alert System broadcasts by radio, television, and cable companies.
- Special news broadcasts by radio, television, and cable companies.
- Email, phone, and Short Messaging Service text messaging through Everbridge.
- Social Media.
- Local newspapers.
- Cable local government access channels.
- Telephone warning/information systems.
- Mobile units with public address systems.
- Recorded information on the Citizen's Information Hotlines.
- The local governments' Internet sites.
- Radio Alert Systems (AM and FM)
- Flyers and leaflets distributed directly or posted centrally

Joint Information Center

Emergency Public Information activities are coordinated through a Joint Information System, which provides the mechanism for integrating public information activities among Joint Information Centers, across jurisdictions, and with private sector and non-governmental organizations.

The Joint Information Center can be virtual or a physical working facility where the emergency public efforts of all participating jurisdictions, agencies, school districts, volunteer organizations, and other responders can be coordinated to ensure consistency and accuracy. In federally declared disasters, a Joint Information Center will typically be set up as part of the Disaster Field Office.

Joint Information Center Policies & Procedures

The Public Information Officer, Assistant Public Information Officers, and Joint Information Center staff members represent the entire Incident/Unified Command organization, not just his or her own individual organization.

Under the National Incident Management System, each person reports to only one supervisor (“Unity of Command”), and each supervisor only manages 3-7 staff (“Span of Control”). Each Assistant Public Information Officer can re-assign or combine their personnel as needed to meet changes in workload, match a staff member’s skills and training to the tasks required, and accomplish the responsibilities assigned to that function.

Pre-written forms and templates can help speed up the documentation and production process, but they are just “starting points.” Forms and templates can be modified to fit the size, scope, and unique characteristics of every incident and issue that may surface.

Staff members are authorized to share any facts or information contained in any statement, news release and other document that has been approved by the Public Information Officer and Command. Response partners can help draft and evaluate documents, but no other approvals are required. Rumors that are not yet confirmed, incident information still being gathered, any information not authorized for sharing under Texas Government Code, sections 418.175 – 418.183, or documents pending approval should not be shared outside the Joint Information Center or Command.

Inquiries about a specific response partner (not addressed in an approved News Release) should be routed to the lead representative for that response partner. The Public Information Officer or Joint Information Center Manager can identify who the lead representative is for each response partner. The lead representative determines which of its own organization’s Joint Information Center staff members are authorized to speak for their organization to the media and other stakeholders.

Each response partner retains its own authority and identity, so any response partner can issue its own news release or statement speaking on its own behalf. Response partners should coordinate with the Public Information Officer or Joint Information Center Manager to make sure the information is accurate and consistent with what the Joint Information Center has released. As a professional courtesy, copies of all individual and joint news releases should be distributed to all response partners.

Staff shall treat everyone fairly, politely, and professionally. Do not play favorites; treat all media outlets and stakeholders equally. Staff should not promise what cannot be delivered or lose composure, even if an aggressive reporter or angry community resident does not back down. Staff should stay calm and focused on what needs to be communicated.

Staff members who are overwhelmed, unsure of procedures, or behind schedule should notify their supervisor.

Providing Emergency Information to the Whole Community

The whole community will be provided information on emergencies and appropriate instructions by the following methods:

- Visually-impaired: Emergency Alert System messages and news advisories on radio, NOAA Weather Radio, by door-to-door notification, and the Fort Bend County Office of Emergency Management Website;
- Hearing-impaired: Captioned Emergency Alert System messages and news advisories on television, print media, the Fort Bend County OEM Website, and social media;
- Non-English Speakers: Interpreters, radio, TV, cable language newscasts, door-to-door, the Fort Bend County OEM Website, and social media.

Resources

The Public Information Officer shall maintain a Media Roster that contains the primary and secondary point-of-contact names, telephone and facsimile numbers, and email addresses of each local media resource.

Phases of Management

Mitigation

- Conduct hazard awareness programs.
- Develop systems to enhance information dissemination during emergencies.

Preparedness

- Develop and distribute educational materials; conduct public education programs.
- In coordination with the Emergency Management Coordinator, prepare pre-scripted warning and public instruction messages for known hazards. See Appendix 5 to this annex for a list of those messages included in Annex A, Warning.
- Brief local media on local warning systems and coordinate procedures for transmitting emergency information to media.

- Train public information staff.
- Brief local officials and emergency responders on working with the media. See Appendix 3
- Maintain this annex.
- Identify suitable facilities for a Joint Information Center.
- Conduct Public Awareness Campaigns through JETTY

Response

- Develop and release emergency public information.
- Conduct media monitoring to determine the need to clarify issues and distribute updated public instructions.
- Manage rumor control.
- Directly reply to citizen and media inquiries through JETTY.
- Conduct news conferences and arrange interviews as needed.

Recovery

- Provide public information relating to recovery process and programs.
- Gather response and communication feedback from citizens via JETTY Surveys and inquiries.
- Compile record of events.
- Assess effectiveness of public information and education program.

VI. Organization and Assignment of Responsibilities

Organization

The overall responsibility for providing emergency information and instructions to the public rests with the County Judge of Fort Bend County and/or the Mayors or City Managers of the Joint resolution Jurisdictions.

The County Judge of Fort Bend County and/or the Mayors or City Managers of the Joint Resolution Jurisdictions shall provide general guidance for Emergency Public Information programs and appoint a Public Information Officer.

The Public Information Officer will manage and coordinate all emergency public information related activities and direct such staff as may be assigned or recruited to assist in those activities.

Trained public information specialists will staff Public Information Officer Positions at the Incident Command Post and in the Emergency Operations Center.

Assignment of Responsibilities

The County Judge of Fort Bend County and/or the Mayors or City Managers of Joint Resolution Jurisdictions will:

- Serve as or appoint a Public Information Officer.
- Ensure that the jurisdiction has implemented and institutionalized processes and procedures to coordinate and integrate public information functions including the development of a public education program for emergencies.
- Authorize release of all IC approved incident information to the media.
- Ensure that a Joint Information Center is activated when warranted by the incident.

The Public Information Officer will:

- Represent and advise the IC on all public information matters relating to the management of the incident.
- Ensure the IC approves the release of all incident-related information.
- Coordinate and integrate public information functions across jurisdictions and functional agencies as required.
- Develop accurate and complete information on the incident for both internal and external consumption.
- Coordinate the overall emergency public information efforts of local government.
- Serve as the official representative or will designate the appropriate person to be representative in the Joint Information Center.
- Conduct public education programs as an ongoing activity.
- Develop and disseminate public information materials and maintain a stock of materials for emergency use based on hazards likely to confront the jurisdiction.

Such materials should include:

- General materials dealing with the nature of hazards and basic protective actions to take in the event of an emergency, including shelter-in-place and evacuation.
- Hazard specific instructions on “where to go and what to do” in an emergency.
- Information on how emergency warnings are disseminated and the meaning of warning signals.
- In coordination with the Fort Bend County Sheriff’s Office, and/or Joint Resolution Jurisdiction Police Chiefs, Fire Chiefs and volunteer Fire Chiefs and the Emergency Management Coordinator develop pre-scripted warning messages for known hazards for use by the local warning point and the Emergency Operations Center.
- Develop methods (i.e., newspaper supplements, prepared TV/radio scripts for broadcast stations) for distribution of EPI materials to the public, to include materials for non-English speaking groups, if appropriate.

- In cooperation with the Emergency Management Coordinator, coordinate with broadcasters (radio and television stations and cable television companies) to develop procedures for local government to disseminate warning messages and emergency information through the broadcast media.
- Authenticate sources of information and verify for accuracy before issuing news releases.
- Publish news releases to the Internet and distribute to the public and media while keeping the Fort Bend County Judge and/or the Joint Resolution Jurisdiction Mayors or City Managers informed of message content.
- Monitor media/social media coverage of emergency operations for accuracy of reports and issue corrections where necessary.
- Take action to control rumors by addressing them directly at their source when possible, and by providing a significant enough quantity of accurate information.
- Brief potential Incident Commanders, department heads and key staff, and the Emergency Operations Center staff on basic public information needs, working with the media, and media access during emergency operations. See Appendices 1, 3 and 4 for further information on these subjects.
 - Maintain a media briefing area near the Emergency Operations Centers, or at a staging area a safe distance from the incident.
- Periodically brief the media and public on local warning systems and procedures.
- Maintain a Media Contact Roster.
- Compile printed and photographic documentation of the emergency/disaster.
- Develop emergency public information checklists for known hazards: See Appendix 6.
- Handle unscheduled inquiries from the media and the public.
- Train a group of government employees and/or volunteers to staff Public Information Officer Positions at the Incident Command Post and in the Emergency Operations Centers.

The Fort Bend County Public Information Officer Network will:

- Attend public information officer position-specific training as well as training in JETTY, Everbridge, social media, WebEOC and other public information systems and tools.
- Participate in Fort Bend County Joint Information Center notification tests and exercises to validate training and evaluate the Fort Bend County Joint Information Center standard operating procedures.

- Respond in a timely fashion to Joint Information Center activation requests, report on availability to participate in a physical or virtual Joint Information Center, provide mutual aid assistance, and provide staffing and resources to other Fort Bend County Public Information Officer Network members.
- Share incident information, media and public inquiries, media and other stakeholder contact data, media monitoring and public rumors, and other information using common platforms such as JETTY and WebEOC.
- Develop, evaluate, and communicate joint news releases, media briefings, and other joint activities produced collaboratively by the Joint Information Center, while retaining authority and independence to speak for one's own organization. The Emergency Management Coordinator will:
 - Advise the Fort Bend County Judge and/or Mayors or City Managers on when to disseminate emergency instructions to the public.
 - Coordinate with the Public Information Officer (or Joint Information Center, if formed) in the development of pre-scripted emergency messages.
 - Work with the Public Information Officer in public education activities relating to emergency management.
 - Identify concerns raised by the public, rumors, and other issues involving citizens to the Public Information Officer (or Joint Information Center, if formed) so they may be addressed in public information activities.

All local government departments and agencies will:

- Refer public and media inquiries during emergencies to the Public Information Officer (or Joint Information Center, if formed).
- Assist the Public Information Officer (or Joint Information Center, if formed) in responding to requests for information from the public or the media.

Media companies are expected to:

- Disseminate warning messages and special news advisories provided by local government to the public as rapidly as possible.
- Participate in periodic tests of the Emergency Alert System and other warning systems.
- Provide coverage of emergency management activities.
- Work with Public Information Officer and Emergency Management Coordinator on public educational programs relating to emergencies.
- Check accuracy of information on emergency operations with the Public Information Officer or Emergency Management Coordinator.
- Link back to official source documents when republishing content from IC.

VII. Direction and Control

General

The Fort Bend County Judge and/or Mayors or City Managers have overall responsibility for the emergency public information program, shall provide general guidance for emergency-related public education and information activities, shall appoint a Public Information Officer, and in conjunction with the IC, approve all information released to the news media.

The Public Information Officer shall direct all emergency public information activities, coordinating as necessary with other individuals, departments, and agencies performing other emergency functions.

To the extent possible, the Public Information Officer shall release, upon approval, all information to the public and the media during emergency operations. During emergency operations, departments and agencies shall refer media and public inquiries to the Public Information Officer.

Line of Succession

The Fort Bend County line of succession for the Public Information Officer is:

1. County Judge
2. Emergency Management Coordinator
3. Executive Assistant to the County Judge

The Joint Resolution Jurisdiction line of succession for the Public Information Officer is designated by the Mayor of each jurisdiction.

VIII. EOC Readiness Levels

Many incidents follow some recognizable build-up period during which actions can be taken to achieve a gradually increasing state of readiness. Fort Bend County uses a four-tier system to determine readiness. Readiness Levels will be determined by the Emergency Management Coordinator, or by the County Judge/Mayor at the recommendation of the Emergency Management Coordinator. General actions to be taken at each readiness level are outlined in the annexes to this plan; more specific actions will be detailed in departmental or agency SOGs and SOPs.

Readiness Levels are used as a means of increasing Fort Bend County's and/or the Joint Resolution Jurisdictions' alert posture.

Emergency management personnel may perform EOC functions regardless of whether the EOC is activated. When activated, additional personnel may be requested to fill EOC positions and functions.

Level IV: Normal Conditions

Small, local, day-to-day incidents occur, and local officials are notified. One or more departments or agencies respond and are able to handle the incident; an Incident Command Post may be established. Limited assistance may be requested from other jurisdictions pursuant to established inter-local agreements.

The normal operations of government are not affected.

Under this readiness level, the EOC is not activated.

Level III: Increased Readiness

Increased Readiness refers to a situation that presents a greater potential threat than “Level IV” but poses no immediate threat to life and/or property. Declaration of “Level III” will generally require the initiation of the “Increased Readiness” activities identified in each annex to this plan.

Under this readiness level, the EOC may be activated.

Increased readiness actions may be appropriate when situations similar to the following occur:

Tropical Weather Threat – A tropical weather system has developed that has the potential to impact the local area with the onset of tropical force winds within 48 hours, or when the National Weather Service locates a tropical storm/hurricane in the Gulf of Mexico. Readiness actions may include regular situation monitoring, a review of plans and resource status, determining staff availability, and placing personnel on-call.

Tornado Watch – Indicates the possibility of tornado development. Readiness actions may include increased situation monitoring and placing selected staff on alert.

Flash Flood Watch – Indicates flash flooding is possible due to heavy rains that are occurring or that are expected to occur. Readiness actions may include increased situation monitoring, reconnaissance of known trouble spots, and deploying warning signs.

Wildfire Threat – During periods of extreme wildfire threat, readiness actions may include deploying additional resources to areas most at risk, arranging for standby commercial water tanker support, conducting daily aerial reconnaissance, and initiating burn bans.

Winter Storm Watch – Indicates freezing precipitation is possible due to freezing temperatures. Readiness actions may include increased situation monitoring, reconnaissance of roadways, bridges, and overpasses, and deploying warning signs.

Terrorism – Warnings for a high terrorist threat will be declared and disseminated by the Department of Homeland Security and the Fusion Center. Readiness actions may include increased situational monitoring and placing select staff on alert.

Mass Gathering – For mass gatherings with a history of problems, readiness actions may include reviewing security, traffic control, fire protection, and first aid planning with organizers and determining additional requirements.

Level II: High Readiness

High Readiness refers to a situation with a significant potential and probability of causing loss of life and/or property. Actions could be triggered by watch/warning information, e.g. warnings issued by the National Weather Service. Declaration of a “Level II” will generally require the initiation of the “High Readiness” activities identified in each annex to this plan.

Under this readiness level, the EOC will be activated.

Appropriate High Readiness actions include:

Tropical Weather Threat – A tropical weather system (tropical storm or hurricane) may impact the local area with the onset of tropical force winds within 48 hours. Readiness actions may include continuous storm monitoring, identifying worst-case decision points, increasing preparedness of personnel and equipment, updating evacuation checklists, verifying evacuation route status, and providing information to the public for techniques to protect homes and businesses, especially along evacuation routes.

Tornado Warning – Issued when a tornado has actually been sighted in the vicinity or indicated by radio and may strike in the local area. Readiness actions may include activating the EOC, continuous situation monitoring, and notifying the public about the warning.

Flash Flood Warning – Issued to alert persons that flash flooding is imminent or occurring on certain creeks, streams, bayous, roads, and/or in particular areas, and immediate action should be taken. Readiness actions may include notifying the public about the warning, evacuating low-lying areas, opening shelters for evacuees, and continuous situation monitoring.

Winter Storm Warning – Issued when heavy snow, sleet, or freezing rain are forecast to occur separately or in a combination. Readiness actions may include preparing for possible power outages, putting road crews on stand-by to clear and/or sand the roads, and continuous situation monitoring.

Terrorism – Warnings for a high local terrorist threat will be declared and disseminated by the Department of Homeland Security and the Fusion Center. Readiness actions may include increased situational monitoring, limited activation of the EOC, putting key personnel, law enforcement, hospitals, and fire departments on alert, and maintaining communication with the Fusion Center.

Mass Gathering – Civil disorder with relatively large-scale localized violence is imminent. Readiness actions may include increased law enforcement presence, putting hospitals and fire departments on alert, and continuous situation monitoring.

Level I: Maximum Readiness

Maximum Readiness refers to situation that hazardous conditions are imminent. This condition denotes a greater sense of danger and urgency than associated with a “Level II” incident. Actions can be generated by warning information issued by the National Weather

Service and other entities. Declaration of “Level I” will generally require the initiation of the “Maximum Readiness” activities identified in each annex to this plan.

Under this readiness level, the EOC will be activated.

Maximum Readiness actions are appropriate in the following situations:

Tropical Weather Threat – The evacuation decision period is nearing for an approaching tropical weather system that may impact the local area. Readiness actions may include continuous situation monitoring, activation of the EOC, recommending precautionary actions for facilities with vulnerable populations, staging emergency personnel and equipment for response operations, and preparing public transportation resources for evacuation support.

Tornado Warning – Tornado has been sighted especially close to a populated area or moving towards a populated area. Readiness actions may include taking immediate shelter and putting damage assessment teams on stand-by.

Flash Flood Warning – Flooding is imminent or occurring at specific locations. Readiness actions may include evacuations, rescue teams on alert, sheltering evacuees and/or others displaced by the flooding, and continuous monitoring of the situation.

Terrorism – Warnings for a high local terrorist threat will be declared and disseminated by the Department of Homeland Security and the Fusion Center. Readiness actions may include continuous situational monitoring, full activation of the EOC, placing all EMS units on stand-by, having all law enforcement/fire personnel present for duty, notifying the DDC that assistance may be needed and keeping them apprised of the situation, and maintaining communication with the Fusion Center.

Mass Gathering – Civil disorder is about to erupt into large-scale and widespread violence. Readiness actions may include placing all EMS units on stand-by, having all law enforcement present for duty, notifying the DDC that assistance may be needed and keeping them apprised of the situation, and continuous situation monitoring.

IX. Administration and Support

A. Facilities

Joint Information Center

- The Fort Bend County Joint Information Center is located on the first floor of the Fort Bend County Emergency Operations Center at 307 Fort Street, Richmond, Texas 77469.

B. Media Contact Roster

The Public Information Officer shall maintain a contact roster for the media organizations that are involved in local emergency management programs.

C. Records

The Public Information Officer shall maintain a file of all news advisories and news releases issued during emergency operations.

The Public Information Officer shall also compile and maintain copies of newspaper articles, videotapes of emergency operations and news broadcasts relating to an emergency, and other media materials distributed for use in post-incident analysis and future training activities.

D. Educational Programs

The Public Information Officer and the Emergency Management Coordinator shall conduct disaster educational programs to increase citizen preparedness. Educational programs may include presentations in schools and for community organizations, displays at local public gatherings, community meetings, distribution of educational materials, and other activities. The local media may be willing to assist with such activities and local businesses may be willing to sponsor such events and assist with costs. Educational brochures may also be distributed with regularly scheduled government, utility, or business mailings.

The Public Information Officer is expected to obtain and maintain materials for disaster-related public education. A wide variety of educational materials dealing with emergency management and disaster preparedness are available. Materials include brochures, pamphlets, posters, DVDs, and complete training curricula for schoolchildren. Many publications are available in ready-to-distribute form or as fact sheets whose content can be incorporated into locally developed materials. Materials available include emergency preparedness information of general interest and specialized preparedness publications for schoolchildren, the elderly, and people with functional and access needs. Public education materials relating to emergency management are available in a variety of foreign languages.

The principal providers of disaster-related educational materials are Ready Houston, Ready.gov, the Federal Emergency Management Agency, the American Red Cross (ARC), and the Texas Division of Emergency Management; many agencies and volunteer organizations published specialized disaster-related educational materials. FEMA publishes a catalog of their publications and Ready Houston, Ready.gov, FEMA, and the ARC include educational materials on their websites; see Section XI, References, for their addresses. The Texas Division of Emergency Management also distributes hazard-specific awareness materials periodically throughout the year to local Emergency Management Coordinators as part of state awareness campaigns.

E. Training

Public Information Officers in the Fort Bend County Joint Information Center should take the following training:

Position	Training Class														
	JETTY	WebEOC	IS-100	IS-700	IS-702	IS-200	IS-800	Risk Com	ICS-300	G-290/289/291	ICS-400	IS-250	S-203	E/L-952	S-420
PIO	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	○	●	●	●	○	○	○	○
Joint Information Center Manager APIO	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	○	●	●	●	○	○	○	○
Information Gathering APIO	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	○	○						
Fact Gathering Specialist	●	●	●	●	●	●	●								
Status Board Specialist	●	●	●	●	●	●	●								
Media Monitoring and Analysis Spec.	●	●	●	●	●	●	●								
Rumor Control Specialist	●	●	●	●	●	●	●								
Information Products APIO	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	○	○						
Writing Specialist	●		●	●	●	●	●								
Multimedia Specialist	●		●	●	●	●	●								
Administrative Specialist	●	●	●	●	●	●	●								
Website Specialist	●	●	●	●	●	●	●								
Media Relations APIO	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	○	○						
Media Relations Specialist	●		●	●	●	●	●	○							
Speaker Support Specialist	●		●	●	●	●	●	○							
Community Relations APIO	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	○	○						
Community Relations Specialist	●		●	●	●	●	●	○							
Speaker Support Specialist	●		●	●	●	●	●	○							
AM Alert	●		●	●	●	●	●	○							
Phone Bank	●		○	○	○	○	○		○		○				
Field Specialist	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	○	○						

The Fort Bend County Office of Emergency Management maintains training records in the NIMS Training Matrix. When any of the completed training above is completed, members of the Fort Bend County Public Information Officer Network must email caroline.egan@fortbendcountytexas.gov with their training certificate attached to have their training counted in the training matrix. The training matrix will be the primary source of information for Joint Information Center staffing decisions.

X. Annex Development and Maintenance

The Public Information Officer is responsible for developing and maintaining this annex. This annex will be reviewed annually and updated in accordance with the schedule outlined in Section X of the Basic Plan. The Public Information Officer is responsible for developing and maintaining SOPs covering recurring emergency public information tasks.

XI. References

- Federal Emergency Management Agency Publications Catalog
- Federal Emergency Management Agency, Guide to All-Hazard Emergency Operations Planning (SLG-101)
- Federal Emergency Management Agency website: www.fema.gov
- American Red Cross website: www.redcross.org
- Ready Houston website: www.readyhoustontexas.gov
- Ready.gov website: www.ready.gov
- Department of Homeland Security, National Incident Management System
- Basic Guidance for Public Information Officers (FEMA 517)
- Fort Bend County Joint Information Center Plan
- National Response Team Joint Information Center Model
- Texas Division of Emergency Management Annex I Template
- Fort Bend County Office of Emergency Management Joint Information Center Plan (superseded)
- Houston Urban Area Security Initiative Regional Emergency Public Information Plan
- Humboldt County, California Emergency Operations Plan Joint Information Center Plan

XII. Appendices

- Appendix 1 - Emergency Public Information Needs
- Appendix 2 - Local Warning & Emergency Public Information Messages
- Appendix 3 - Working with the Media
- Appendix 4 - Media Access to Incident Sites & Emergency Facilities
- Appendix 5 - List of Pre-scripted Emergency Messages
- Appendix 6 - Emergency Public Information Checklists

Appendix 1 – Public Information Needs

Background

During emergencies, it is important to provide the public with adequate information on the situation as rapidly as possible to alleviate concerns and reduce the likelihood of panic or inappropriate actions. The news media are the primary means of disseminating such information, by providing up-to-date information quickly to a wide audience. The information they provide reduces the time and labor that local government would have to divert from response and recovery tasks to deal with what could be an overwhelming number of inquiries from the public. Every effort should be made to cooperate with the news media in providing information and in recognition of the rights of the news media to perform their proper function.

Determination of Essential Elements of Information

Essential Elements of Information are foundations for emergency public information, and determine what incident command will communicate with the public during a response. Essential Elements of Information should answer the questions of who, what, when, where, why during a response.

Essential Elements of Information is information that

- Contribute to situational awareness for the public and the Joint Information Center, as in number of injuries or agencies involved.
- Requires actions to be taken, as in the case of a shifting plume.
- May have cascading effects, as in the case of an instable levee.

For the purposes of this plan, Essential Elements of Information focus on the information needs of the public.

Sources of Essential Elements of Information

Essential Elements of Information can be found in:

- Situation reports (“Sit. Reps.”)
- Emergency Operations Center Action Plans
- Incident Action Plans

- Emergency Declarations
- News Releases

Formulation of Essential Elements of Information

Once a Public Information Officer is designated or a Joint Information Center is established, establishing Essential Elements of Information is a primary task. The table below is a template for an Information Collection Plan. Once an Information Collection Plan is established, it should be approved by the Joint Information Center Manager Assistant Public Information Officer and posted in a highly visible location within the Joint Information Center. If sufficient whiteboard space is available, Essential Elements of Information can be displayed there.

Information Collection Plan Template:

EEI#	EEI	Information Required	Data Collector	Data Sources	Delivery Mechanism	Update Frequency
001	What Happened	Nature of incident or emergency	Assistant PIO for Information Gathering	IAP	Regular Distribution	As necessary
002	What Happened	Location	Assistant PIO for Information Gathering	IAP	Regular Distribution	As necessary
003	What Happened	Time of occurrence	Assistant PIO for Information Gathering	IAP	Regular Distribution	As necessary
004	What Happened	Situation resolved or response on-going	Assistant PIO for Information Gathering	IAP	Regular Distribution	As necessary
005	What Happened	Cause (do not speculate)	Assistant PIO for Information Gathering	IAP	Regular Distribution	As necessary
006	What Happened	Chemical identification	Assistant PIO for Information Gathering	IAP	Regular Distribution	As necessary
007	What Happened	Expected economic impact (if known)	Assistant PIO for Information Gathering	IAP	Regular Distribution	As necessary
008	Current Response Actions	When EOC was activated	Assistant PIO for Information Gathering	EAP	Regular Distribution	As necessary
009	Current Response Actions	When JIC was activated	Assistant PIO for Information Gathering	EAP	Regular Distribution	As necessary
010	Current Response Actions	When mutual aid was activated	Assistant PIO for Information Gathering	EAP	Regular Distribution	As necessary

EEI#	EEI	Information Required	Data Collector	Data Sources	Delivery Mechanism	Update Frequency
011	Current Response Actions	Disaster declaration information	Assistant PIO for Information Gathering	EAP	Regular Distribution	As necessary
012	Current Response Actions	Planned response activities	Assistant PIO for Information Gathering	EAP	Regular Distribution	As necessary
013	Known Damages	Homes	Assistant PIO for Information Gathering	Initial Damage Assessment	213GM/Phone	As necessary
014	Known Damages	Businesses	Assistant PIO for Information Gathering	Initial Damage Assessment	213GM/Phone	As necessary
015	Known Damages	Government buildings	Assistant PIO for Information Gathering	Initial Damage Assessment	213GM/Phone	As necessary
016	Known Damages	Infrastructure	Assistant PIO for Information Gathering	Initial Damage Assessment	213GM/Phone	As necessary
017	Known Damages	Livestock/wildlife issues	Assistant PIO for Information Gathering	Initial Damage Assessment	213GM/Phone	As necessary
018	Causalities	Deceased and cause of death	Assistant PIO for Information Gathering	Health and Human Services	213GM/Phone	As necessary
019	Causalities	Number of injuries	Assistant PIO for Information Gathering	Health and Human Services	213GM/Phone	As necessary
020	Causalities	Severity of injuries	Assistant PIO for Information Gathering	Health and Human Services	213GM/Phone	As necessary

EEI#	EEI	Information Required	Data Collector	Data Sources	Delivery Mechanism	Update Frequency
021	Causalities	Where injured are being treated	Assistant PIO for Information Gathering	Health and Human Services	213GM/Phone	As necessary
022	Causalities	Number of missing	Assistant PIO for Information Gathering	Health and Human Services	213GM/Phone	As necessary
023	Causalities	Circumstance of missing	Assistant PIO for Information Gathering	Health and Human Services	213GM/Phone	As necessary
024	Causalities	Demographics of casualties (Adults, Children, Relationship to response)	Assistant PIO for Information Gathering	Health and Human Services	213GM/Phone	As necessary
025	Causalities	Names (Only following Legal Next-of-Kin and adhering to guidance from medico legal authority)	Assistant PIO for Information Gathering	Health and Human Services	213GM/Phone	As necessary
026	Evacuations	Areas and facilities evacuated	Assistant PIO for Information Gathering	Transportation	213GM/Phone	As necessary
027	Evacuations	Number of evacuees	Assistant PIO for Information Gathering	Transportation	213GM/Phone	As necessary
028	Evacuations	Destination of evacuees	Assistant PIO for Information Gathering	Transportation	213GM/Phone	As necessary
029	Evacuations	Means for contacting	Assistant PIO for Information Gathering	Transportation	213GM/Phone	As necessary

EEI#	EEI	Information Required	Data Collector	Data Sources	Delivery Mechanism	Update Frequency
030	Sheltering and Mass Care	Facility names and locations	Assistant PIO for Information Gathering	Red Cross	213GM/Phone	As necessary
031	Sheltering and Mass Care	Facility status (Open, Closed, Full)	Assistant PIO for Information Gathering	Red Cross	213GM/Phone	As necessary
032	Sheltering and Mass Care	Numbers and demographics of sheltered/cared	Assistant PIO for Information Gathering	Red Cross	213GM/Phone	As necessary
033	Sheltering and Mass Care	Heating/Cooling Centers	Assistant PIO for Information Gathering	Red Cross	213GM/Phone	As necessary
034	Sheltering and Mass Care	Family Reunification Center locations	Assistant PIO for Information Gathering	Red Cross	213GM/Phone	As necessary
035	Infrastructure Status	Electric service	Assistant PIO for Information Gathering	Utilities	213GM/Phone	As necessary
036	Infrastructure Status	Telephone system	Assistant PIO for Information Gathering	Utilities	213GM/Phone	As necessary
037	Infrastructure Status	Internet service	Assistant PIO for Information Gathering	Utilities	213GM/Phone	As necessary
038	Infrastructure Status	Cable service	Assistant PIO for Information Gathering	Utilities	213GM/Phone	As necessary
039	Infrastructure Status	Water system	Assistant PIO for Information Gathering	Utilities	213GM/Phone	As necessary

EEI#	EEI	Information Required	Data Collector	Data Sources	Delivery Mechanism	Update Frequency
040	Infrastructure Status	Sewer system	Assistant PIO for Information Gathering	Utilities	213GM/Phone	As necessary
041	Infrastructure Status	Natural gas distribution	Assistant PIO for Information Gathering	Utilities	213GM/Phone	As necessary
042	Infrastructure Status	Roads	Assistant PIO for Information Gathering	Road and Bridge	213GM/Phone	As necessary
043	Infrastructure Status	Rail lines	Assistant PIO for Information Gathering	Road and Bridge	213GM/Phone	As necessary
044	Infrastructure Status	Airports	Assistant PIO for Information Gathering	Road and Bridge	213GM/Phone	As necessary
045	Infrastructure Status	Dams/Levees	Assistant PIO for Information Gathering	Road and Bridge	213GM/Phone	As necessary
046	Response Information	Local government responding agencies	Assistant PIO for Information Gathering	Operations Section Chief	213GM/Phone	As necessary
047	Response Information	Impacted areas	Assistant PIO for Information Gathering	Operations Section Chief	213GM/Phone	As necessary
048	Response Information	Weather information if applicable	Assistant PIO for Information Gathering	Operations Section Chief	213GM/Phone	As necessary
049	Response Information	Debris removal plans or procedures	Assistant PIO for Information Gathering	Operations Section Chief	213GM/Phone	As necessary

EEI#	EEI	Information Required	Data Collector	Data Sources	Delivery Mechanism	Update Frequency
050	Response Information	State government responding agencies	Assistant PIO for Information Gathering	Operations Section Chief	213GM/Phone	As necessary
051	Response Information	Federal government responding agencies	Assistant PIO for Information Gathering	Operations Section Chief	213GM/Phone	As necessary
052	Response Information	Volunteer groups	Assistant PIO for Information Gathering	Operations Section Chief	213GM/Phone	As necessary
053	Response Information	Private sector partners	Assistant PIO for Information Gathering	Operations Section Chief	213GM/Phone	As necessary
054	Restrictions	Flight	Assistant PIO for Information Gathering	Operations Section Chief	213GM/Phone	As necessary
055	Restrictions	Water/No Wake Zones	Assistant PIO for Information Gathering	Operations Section Chief	213GM/Phone	As necessary
056	Restrictions	Access	Assistant PIO for Information Gathering	Operations Section Chief	213GM/Phone	As necessary
057	Restrictions	Information	Assistant PIO for Information Gathering	Operations Section Chief	213GM/Phone	As necessary
058	Restrictions	Media	Assistant PIO for Information Gathering	Operations Section Chief	213GM/Phone	As necessary
059	Restrictions	Curfew	Assistant PIO for Information Gathering	Operations Section Chief	213GM/Phone	As necessary

EEI#	EEI	Information Required	Data Collector	Data Sources	Delivery Mechanism	Update Frequency
060	Recovery	Disaster assistance programs	Assistant PIO for Information Gathering	Planning	213GM/Phone	As necessary
061	Recovery	Applying for disaster assistance	Assistant PIO for Information Gathering	Planning	213GM/Phone	As necessary

Collection and Dissemination of Information

Information shall be collected and disseminated as soon as possible by the appropriate personnel as follows:

- Where an Incident Command Post has been established and a qualified public information staff member is at the scene, that individual may provide information directly to the media if the Emergency Operations Center is not activated. If no qualified public information staff member is present at the scene, the Incident Commander or a member of his staff should pass situation information to the Public Information Officer for release to the media.
- Where an Incident Command Post has been established and the Emergency Operations Center has been activated, information from the incident scene will normally be passed to the Public Information Officer at the Emergency Operations Center. The Public Information Officer will utilize reports from the scene and other available pertinent information to brief the media and prepare news advisories for release to the media.

The Shelter and Mass Care Officer is responsible for collecting information on shelter and mass care activities and providing that information to the Public Information Officer.

The Energy and Utilities representative in the Emergency Operations Center is responsible for obtaining information on the status of utilities and providing it to the Public Information Officer.

Law Enforcement and Public Works/Engineering are responsible for obtaining information on road closures and facility closures and providing it to the Public Information Officer.

The Public Information Officer is responsible for collecting information from the Incident Commander, the Emergency Operations Center staff, and other sources and agencies. The Public Information Officer staff is responsible for preparation of news releases, for the dissemination of information directly to the news media, and, where appropriate, for arranging for announcements directly to the public via radio and/or television hookups.

Hospitals are responsible for disseminating information concerning casualties and deaths. They generally have policies restricting the release of detailed information without permission of patients or their families. The information that they choose to release will normally be disseminated directly to the news media. The Public Information Officer should request that the Emergency Operations Center be provided copies of any information released to the media.

Appendix 2 - Local Warning & Emergency Public Info Messages

This appendix provided two types of warning messages for a number of emergencies.

Warning Messages - These messages alert the public to emergencies and provide directions on what they should do and not do to protect them. As the time limit for warning messages transmitted via the Emergency Alert System is approximately two minutes, and the capability of television warning displays is limited, warning messages are generally short and concise. Warning messages are generally disseminated through warning systems and broadcast every 15 minutes until they are canceled or replaced by an updated message.

Special New Advisories - Special news advisories amplify information contained in the warning messages, provide further information regarding an emergency, and may be used to provide information on impending threats that do not yet warrant public warning. Special News Advisories are generally sent to the media through normal communications channels for further dissemination to the public.

Warning messages and special news advisories have been pre-scripted to expedite timely dissemination; however, it may be necessary to modify the pre-scripted text and/or add additional information.

Copies of the messages in this appendix are maintained on computers in the emergency Operations center.

General guidance for warning & public information messages

Protective Action Areas

Areas in which protective actions, such as evacuation or shelter-in-place, are being implemented should be described with reference to obvious geographic features, such as roads and rivers, rather than with abstract descriptions such as a one-mile radius of some intersection. The preferred method of describing the area should use compass directions and neighborhood and landmark names where appropriate.

Example:

The area to be evacuated is north of Green Street, east of Olive St, south of James Road, and west of Rainy Road. This area includes the Green Tree and Hidden Hollow subdivisions and the Big Bargains Shopping Center.

Evacuation Routes

The description of evacuation routes should make it clear which direction(s) evacuees should go and which travel directions they should avoid.

Example:

People who are west of Meridian Avenue should go west on Kingman Road or Exeter Drive. People who are east of Meridian Avenue should go east on 10th, 11th, or 12th Streets or Easy Street. Do not leave the evacuation area by going north.

Road Closures

Road Closures in the County will be described by specific road, area, and instructions on avoiding the area affected.

Appendix 3 – Working with the Media

What to do when working with the media:

1. Identify your spokesperson beforehand.
2. Have a number the media knows to call when they need information.
 - a. Make certain the person answering the phones knows to whom to direct media calls.
3. Get all the information you can from those in charge before you talk with the media.
4. Write out the answers to these questions for your use:
 - a. What happened?
 - b. When did it happen?
 - c. Where did it happen?
 - d. Why did this happen?
 - e. Who is responsible, involved, injured?
 - f. How many were hurt or killed? What are their names/ages/addresses?
 - g. Can I shoot video/take photos? How close can I get?
 - h. Whom can I talk to?
 - i. What is your agency doing about it?

When you talk with the media:

1. Tell the truth.
2. Be courteous and do not play favorites.
3. Avoid "off the record" remarks.
4. Never say anything you would not want to see printed or broadcast.
5. Stay on top of the interview by listening to the reporter's questions.
6. Do not accept the reporter's definitions of what happened.
7. Pause, think; ask for more time if you need it.
8. Respond only to the question you have been asked. Do not speculate.
9. Stick to the core message.

Appendix 4 – Media Access to Incident Sites & Emergency Facilities

Media Access

In recognition of the public's right to know as much information as possible about a disaster, local response agencies will cooperate with legitimate news media representatives and provide equal access to information and, within the limits of safety and other response needs, access to incident scene to various news organizations. News media representatives are required to cooperate with response personnel as directed for safety and efficient operation.

The Incident Commander or his designated representative will allow media such access to the incident scene as is consistent with safety and does not disrupt critical operations.

The Emergency Management Coordinator, in coordination with the Public Information Officer, shall establish rules for media access to the Emergency Operations Center. When the Emergency Operations Center is activated, representatives of news media may be provided access to those areas of the Emergency Operations Center designated by the Emergency Management Coordinator. Generally, news briefings will not be conducted in the Emergency Operations Center because they can disrupt on-going Emergency Operations Center operations; briefings will normally be conducted in the media area of the Emergency Operations Center. Photo shoots and interviews may be conducted in the Emergency Operations Center, but these should be scheduled to minimize disruption.

Hospitals establish their own rules of access for news media representatives and these may vary for individual circumstances. For emergencies where there have been substantial casualties, it may be desirable for hospitals to provide a media room or other designated area with access to telephones for the use of news media representatives.

When incident scenes are on private property, the property owner may establish and enforce policies with regard to access by the media and other persons who are not emergency responders.

Media Identification

Representatives of news media will be considered to have satisfactory identification if they have:

- A photo identification card that identifies them as a media representative
- Texas Department of Public Safety Media Identification Card
- A media identification card issued by the Fort Bend County and/or Joint Resolution Jurisdictions' Public Information Office

Appendix 5 – List of Pre-scripted Emergency Messages

Warning Message – General Incident

Warning Message – Road/Facility Closure

Warning Message – Shelter-in-Place

Special News Advisory – Pre-Evacuation Information

Warning Message – Urgent Evacuation

Warning Message – Mandatory Evacuation

Special News Advisory – Supplemental Evacuation Information

Special News Advisory – Schools & Public Facilities

Warning – General Incident

1. The [*authorizing agency*] has issued the following warning for those who live, work, or are visiting in [jurisdiction].
2. An emergency situation involving [*jurisdiction*] is currently in progress at: [Describe location by reference to facility name (if known), street and cross street, other geographic features (rivers, rail lines, etc.), and neighborhood name where appropriate]
3. Emergency personnel are currently responding to this incident and local officials are monitoring the situation. To keep yourself safe and avoid impeding the emergency response, please avoid this area until further notice.
4. To repeat, an emergency involving [jurisdiction] is currently in progress at: (Repeat location in two above). Please avoid this area.
5. Do not call 911 for information about the emergency. Instead, stay tuned to this station for additional official information.

Warning – Road/Facility Closure

1. The *[authorizing agency]* has issued the following warning for those who live, work, or are visiting in *[jurisdiction]*:
2. It has been necessary to close certain local streets and highways due to:
 - a. Flooding
 - b. Heavy accumulations of snow and ice
 - c. Fire / Explosion
 - d. Incident involving hazardous materials
 - e. Other:
3. As of *[time]* today, the following roads have been closed by law enforcement officials:
 - a. Street or Route: _____
 - b. At or Between: _____Please avoid these routes.
4. If you must travel, use alternate routes, such as:
5. We recommend that you refrain from driving and remain at home due to the extremely bad travel conditions.
6. In addition, the following facilities have been closed due to the emergency situation:
7. Again, the roads and streets that have been closed are: *(Repeat list in 3 above)*
8. Please stay tuned to this station for additional information on the current emergency situation

Warning – Shelter in place

1. The *[authorizing agency]* has issued the following warning for those who live, work, or are visiting in *[jurisdiction]*.
2. There has been an accidental release of hazardous material that is affecting a portion of the local area. People in the following area must take protective measures:
[Describe area boundaries]
3. If you are located in this area, do the following immediately in order to protect yourself:
 - a. Go inside your home, workplace, or the nearest building that appears to be reasonably airtight and stay there. Take your pets with you.
 - b. Close all doors, windows, and any fireplace dampers.
 - c. Turn off any heating or cooling system that draws in air from the outside.
 - d. Keep your radio on and tuned to receive emergency announcements and instructions.
 - e. Gather items that you may need to take with you if you are advised to evacuate.
4. People traveling in vehicles should seek shelter in the nearest airtight structure. If a suitable structure is not immediately available, travelers should roll up car

windows, close air vents, and turn off the heater or air conditioner until they reach a suitable building.

5. If shelter is not immediately available, keep a handkerchief, towel, or damp cloth snugly over your nose and mouth until you get indoors.
6. If school is in session:
 - a. Students at the following school(s) are taking shelter at their schools:
**Parents should not attempt to pick up students at school until the hazardous situation is resolved and they are advised it is safe to do so. **
 - b. Students at the following school(s) *[have been/are being]* evacuated to other facilities:
**Parents should not attempt to pick up students from schools that have been evacuated. Local officials will provide information on where to pick up schoolchildren as soon as it is available. **
7. If you know of any neighbors or co-workers with hearing or language problems or special needs, please advise them of this message.
8. Please do not call 911 or local emergency officials for information. Stay tuned to this station for additional information.

Special news advisory – Pre-evacuation

1. The *[authorizing agency]* has issued the following advisory for those who live, work, or are visiting in *[jurisdiction]*.
2. Due to the threat of *(the hazard)*, it may be necessary for people who live, work or are visiting in the certain local areas to evacuate in the near future. This area(s) that may be at risk include:
[Describe area boundaries]
3. Evacuation is NOT being recommended at this time. Local officials will advise you if evacuation is necessary. However, you should be prepared to evacuate if needed. To prepare, you should:
 - a. Assemble the following emergency supplies:
 - Clothing for your family for several days
 - Bedding, pillows, and towels
 - Prescription medicines & spare eyeglasses
 - Soap and toiletries
 - Baby food and diapers
 - Your address book or list of important telephone numbers
 - Your checkbook, credit cards, and cash
 - Your driver's license and identification cards
 - A portable radio and flashlight.
 - b. You should also:
 - Gather suitcases, boxes, or bags to hold your emergency supplies.

- Be prepared to secure your home or office and your property before you depart.
 - Ensure your car is in good shape and you have adequate fuel.
 - Decide where you will go if you have to evacuate. Arrange with relatives or friends or consider making hotel or motel reservations.
4. Potential evacuation routes from the area(s) at risk include:
 5. Potential evacuation routes from the area(s) at risk are described in:
 6. If you know of any neighbors or co-workers with hearing or language problems or special needs, please advise them of this message. In addition, if you have neighbors or co-workers who do not have transportation, offer to assist them if you can.
 7. We want to emphasize that this is a PRECAUTIONARY message about possible evacuation. Evacuation is NOT being recommended at this time.

Keep your radio or TV on and listen for further information about this situation. Please do not call 911 or local emergency officials for information as these ties up telephone lines needed for emergency operations.

Warning – Urgent Evacuation

1. The *[authorizing agency]* has issued the following warning for those who live, work, or is visiting in *[jurisdiction]*.
2. Due to *[hazard]* that threatens/is affecting a portion of the local area, the *[Fort Bend County Judge and / or the Joint Resolution Jurisdictions Mayor]* recommends that people in the following area evacuate immediately to protect their health and safety:
3. Recommended evacuation routes from the area(s) at risk include:
4. Be sure to take essential items such as:
 - Prescription medicines
 - Eyeglasses
 - Identification cards
 - Checkbook
 - Credit cards
 - Valuable papers
5. Do not delay your departure to collect other belongings.
6. Take your pets with you, but make sure you bring a leash, crate, or cage for them. Some shelters will not accept pets.
7. If you have no means of transportation or if you are physically unable to evacuate on your own, ask a neighbor to assist you.
8. If you know of any neighbors or co-workers with hearing or language problems or special needs, please advise them of this message. In addition, if you have neighbors or co-workers who need help or do not have transportation, offer to assist them if you can.
9. Repeating, local officials recommend the people in the following area(s) evacuate now: *(Repeat the area description in paragraph 2 above.)*
10. Please do not use your telephone except to report a true emergency. Stay tuned to this station for more information and instructions from local officials.

Warning – Mandatory Evacuation

1. The *[authorizing agency]* has issued the following warning for those who live, work, or is visiting *in [jurisdiction]*.
2. Due to *[hazard]*, the *[Fort Bend County Judge and / or the Joint Resolution Jurisdiction Mayors]*, under Texas law, has ordered that people in the following area evacuate immediately the area to protect their health and safety and the health and safety of possible rescuers:
3. Recommended evacuation routes from the area(s) at risk include:
4. Be sure to take essential items such as:
 - Prescription medicines
 - Eyeglasses
 - Baby supplies
 - Personal care items
 - Identification cards
 - Checkbook and credit cards
 - Valuable papers
5. Listen to this station for more information on what you need to take with you. Secure your home before you depart.
6. Take your pets with you, but make sure you bring a leash, crate, or cage for them. Remember some shelters will not accept pets
7. Decide where you will stay until the emergency is resolved. Staying with relatives or friends or in a hotel or motel is a good choice.
8. If you cannot stay with friends or relatives or find a motel room, listen to this station for more information on the locations of public shelters.
9. If you have no means of transportation or if you are physically unable to evacuate on your own, ask a neighbor to assist you.
10. If you know of any neighbors or co-workers with hearing or language problems or special needs, please advise them of this message. In addition, if you have neighbors or co-workers who need help or do not have transportation, offer to assist them if you can.
11. Repeating, local officials, under Texas law, are ordering the people in the following area(s) evacuate immediately: *(Repeat the area description in paragraph 2 above.)*
12. Please do not use your telephone except to report a true emergency. Stay tuned to this station for more information and instructions from local officials.

Special news advisory – Supplemental Evacuation Information

1. The *[authorizing agency]* has issued the following advisory for those who live, work, or are visiting in *[jurisdiction]*:
2. Due to the threat of *[hazard]*, local officials have recommended that people who live, work or are visiting in the following areas evacuate to protect their health and safety:
[Describe area boundaries.]
3. Use the following evacuation routes:
4. You should take the following emergency supplies with you:
 - Clothing for your family for several days
 - Bedding, pillows, and towels for each family member
 - Prescription medicines & spare eyeglasses
 - Soap and toiletries
 - Baby food and diapers
 - Address book or list of important telephone numbers
 - Checkbook, credit cards, and cash
 - Driver's license and identification cards
 - Portable radio and flashlight, with extra batteries
5. Plan where you will stay until the emergency is resolved. Staying with relatives or friends or in a hotel or motel is a good choice.
6. If you cannot find another place to stay, temporary public shelters will be/have been opened at:
7. Secure your property before you depart. Shut off all appliances, except refrigerators and freezers.
8. Expect travel delays on evacuation routes. If you have a substantial distance to drive, you may want to take drinks and ready-to-eat food in your car in case you are delayed.
9. If you have no means of transportation or if you are physically unable to evacuate on your own, ask a neighbor to help you.
10. If you have neighbors or co-workers, who need help or do not have transportation, offer to assist them if you can.
11. If you know of any neighbors or co-workers with hearing or language problems or special needs, please advise them of this message.
12. Please do not use your telephone except to report a true emergency. Stay tuned to this station for more information and instructions from local officials. If you missed some of the information in this advisory, it will be broadcast again soon.

Special news advisory – School & public facilities

1. The *[authorizing agency]* has issued the following advisory for those who live, work, or are visiting in *[jurisdiction]*.
2. The current emergency involving *[the hazard]*, have affected the operation of the number of local facilities. This advisory is intended to provide you an update on the status of schools, hospitals, nursing homes, and other key facilities.
3. All local public schools have been closed.
4. The following schools have been closed and students *[are being / have been]* returned to their homes:
5. The following schools have been evacuated and their students relocated to other facilities:
School: _____
Students relocated to: _____
**Parents should pick up their children at these host facilities. **
6. The following hospitals and nursing homes have been evacuated and their patients relocated to other facilities:
Facility: _____
Patients relocated to: _____
7. The following government offices, parks, recreation areas, and other public facilities have been closed:
8. Please stay tuned to this station for more information and instructions from local officials.
**Please refrain from using the telephone unless you have a true emergency. **

Appendix 6 – Emergency Public Information Checklists

This appendix includes the following Emergency Public Information Checklists:

- Public Information Checklist for Flooding
- Public Information Checklist for Hazardous Material Incidents
- Public Information Checklist for Hurricanes

Public Information Checklist for Flooding

Pre-Emergency Phase

	Conduct public education and distribute preparedness materials highlighting local flood risk areas, precautionary actions, and protective actions.
	In coordination with the Emergency Management Coordinator, maintain a set of pre-scripted warning and public instructions messages ready for use. See Annex A to the Basic Plan.
	Coordinate with school authorities/Public Information Officers on policies/procedures for announcing school closures.
	Review local Hazard Analysis and Annex E to Emergency Operations Plan to identify potential flood risk areas and evacuation routes.
	Coordinate with Animal Control, Animal Shelter, and other organizations to determine availability of facilities for evacuated pets and large animals.
	Coordinate with Public Information Officers from local response agencies and volunteer groups and develop an effective Public Information Officer-to-Public Information Officer communication system.

Readiness Phase

	Ensure Public Information Officer receives current information on flood watches and warnings.
	Coordinate with the Shelter and Mass Care Officer to determine likely shelter sites.
	Coordinate with Law Enforcement to determine planned/likely evacuation routes.
	In coordination with the Emergency Management Coordinator, update precautionary action and evacuation message(s). See Annex A of Emergency Operations Plan.

	Develop maps of likely evacuation areas and evacuation routes that can be provided to the media.
	Disseminate property protection and evacuation preparedness information to public through media.

Emergency Response Phase

	Provide evacuation area and evacuation route maps to media.
	Release evacuation recommendation through warning system.
	Release information on how transportation will be provided for those who lack it.
	Release public instructions on securing property, evacuation routes, and what to take with you.
	Release information to media on shelter and mass care facilities available.
	Release information to media on where persons needing assistance should call.
	Release special instructions for those evacuating pets.
	Release information on curfews and travel restrictions in effect within evacuation areas.
	Release information on disaster welfare inquiry procedures.
	Advise the public not to return to the evacuation area until told to do so.
	Inform media of emergency response actions and organizations participating.

Post-Emergency Phase

	Coordinate with Law Enforcement to obtain information on routes for return of evacuees and areas where reentry is restricted due to damage.
	Coordinate with Emergency Management Coordinator to obtain and release damage assessments to media, updating as additional information becomes available.
	Release information to media on return of evacuees and preferred reentry routes, if any.
	Release information to media on access controls for damaged areas, if any.

	Provide public information on safety precautions for entering damaged buildings and the need to document damage and contact insurance companies.
	Release information on disaster relief/recovery programs and facilities.
	Release information to media on termination of shelter operations
	Release information on debris removal activities.
	Release information on volunteer assistance for home cleanup and repair.

****Note:** This public information checklist is designed for slowly developing floods. For a fast-breaking flood situation, it may not be feasible to conduct some of the readiness activities listed. ******

Public Information Checklist for Hazardous Material Incidents

Pre-Emergency Phase

	Review local Hazard Analysis and Annex E, to obtain information on potential Hazardous Material risk areas and evacuation routes.
	Conduct public education and distribute preparedness materials highlighting local Hazardous Material risk areas, precautionary actions, and protective actions.
	In coordination with the Emergency Management Coordinator, maintain a set of pre-scripted warning and public instructions messages ready for use. See Annex A.
	Coordinate with school authorities, other Public Information Officers, and local media on policies/procedures for announcing school closures or evacuations.
	Coordinate with special facilities or special needs populations and local media on policies/ procedures for announcing closures or evacuations.
	Coordinate with Public Information Officers from local response agencies and volunteer groups and develop an effective Public Information Officer-to-Public Information Officer communication system.
	Coordinate with local media to insure thorough understanding of Hazardous Material response operations and protective actions such as shelter-in-place and evacuation.
	Disseminate evacuation preparedness information to the public.

Readiness Phase

	Insure Public Information Officer receives current information on potential Hazardous Material incidents.
	Coordinate with the Shelter and Mass Care Officer to determine likely shelter sites.
	Coordinate with Law Enforcement to determine planned/likely evacuation routes.
	In coordination with the Emergency Management Coordinator, update precautionary action and evacuation message(s). See Annex A to the Basic Plan.
	Develop maps of likely evacuation areas and evacuation routes that can be provided to the media.

Emergency Response Phase

	Provide information to the media and public about the incident to include information on the nature of the incident, the expected duration of the incident, instructions to the community on evacuation or shelter in place procedures, symptoms of contamination, and potential health-risks.
	Disseminate property protection and evacuation preparedness information to public through the media.
Shelter in Place Actions	
	Release shelter in place recommendation through the media.
	Provide shelter in place instructions to the media.
	Provide maps of geographic area that will shelter in place.
Evacuation Actions	
	Release evacuation recommendation through media.
	Provide evacuation area and evacuation route maps to media.
	Release information on how transportation will be provided for those who lack it.
	Release public instructions on securing property, property protection, and what to take with you.
	Release information to media on shelter and mass care facilities available.

	Release special instructions for those evacuating pets, and insure that you have the information on which shelters will accept pets or available sheltering facilities for animals.
General Actions	
	Release information to media on where persons needing assistance should call.
	Release information on curfews and travel restrictions in effect within evacuation areas.
	Release information on disaster welfare inquiry procedures
	Advise the public not to return to the evacuation/shelter in place area until told to do so by the proper authorities.
	Inform media of emergency response actions and organizations participating.

Post-Emergency Phase

	Coordinate with law enforcement to obtain information on routes for return of evacuees and areas where reentry is restricted due to damage.
	Coordinate with Emergency Management Coordinator to obtain and release damage/contamination assessments to media, and update them as additional information becomes available.
	Release information to media on return of evacuees and preferred reentry routes, if any
	Release information to media on access controls for damaged areas, if any.
	Provide public information on safety precautions for entering damaged areas and the need to document damage and contact insurance companies.
	Release information on disaster relief/recovery programs and facilities.
	Release information on termination of shelter operations.
	Release information on decontamination activities.
	Release information on volunteer assistance.
	Release information on clean-up/decontamination activities, if needed.
	Keep public and media informed of long-term clean-up activities, potential long-term health effects, liability information, and future mitigation efforts.

****Note:** As most Hazardous Material incidents occur without significant warning, it may be infeasible to conduct some of the activities listed in the Readiness Phase. ******

Public Information Checklist for Hazardous Material Incidents

Pre-Emergency Phase

	Conduct public education and distribute preparedness materials highlighting local hurricane risk areas, precautionary actions, and protective actions.
	In coordination with the Emergency Management Coordinator, maintain a set of pre-scripted warning and public instructions messages ready for use. See Annex A to the Basic Plan.
	Coordinate with school authorities/Public Information Officers on policies/procedures for announcing school closures.
	Review local Hazard Analysis and Annex E to Emergency Operations Plan, to identify potential hurricane risk areas and evacuation routes.
	Disseminate information on the availability of facilities for evacuated pets and large animals.
	Coordinate with Public Information Officers from local response agencies and volunteer groups and develop an effective Public Information Officer-to-Public Information Officer communication system.
	Disseminate information emphasizing the need for ride sharing during an evacuation.

Readiness Phase

	Ensure Public Information Officer receives current information on hurricane watches and warning.
	Coordinate with the Shelter and Mass Care Officer to determine likely shelter sites that could be used during the recovery phase.
	Coordinate with Law Enforcement to determine planned/likely evacuation routes.
	In coordination with the Emergency Management Coordinator, update precautionary action and evacuation message(s). See Annex A to the Basic Plan.
	Develop maps of likely evacuation areas and evacuation routes that can be provided to the media.

	Disseminate property protection and evacuation preparedness information to public through media.
	Disseminate information to special need facilities and those in mobile home/trailer parks recommending an early precautionary evacuation.

Emergency Response Phase

	Provide evacuation area and evacuation route maps to media.
	Release evacuation recommendation through warning system.
	Release information on how transportation will be provided for those who lack it.
	Release public instructions on securing property, evacuation routes, and what to take with you.
	Release information to media on shelter and mass care facilities available.
	Release information to media on where persons needing assistance should call.
	Release special instructions for those evacuating pets.
	Release information on curfews and travel restrictions in effect within evacuation areas.
	Release information on disaster welfare inquiry procedures.
	Advise the public not to return to the evacuation area until told to do so.
	Inform media of emergency response actions and organizations participating.
	Release information on the availability of food service, gas stations, and medical facilities.

Post-Emergency Phase

	Coordinate with Law Enforcement to obtain information on routes for return of evacuees and areas where reentry is restricted due to damage.
	Coordinate with Emergency Management Coordinator to obtain and release damage assessments to media, updating as additional information becomes available.
	Release information to media on return of evacuees and preferred reentry routes, if any.

	Release information to media on access controls for damaged areas, if any.
	Provide public information on safety precautions for entering damaged buildings and the need to document damage and contact insurance companies.
	Release information on disaster relief/recovery programs and facilities.
	Release information to media on termination of shelter operations
	Release information on debris removal activities.
	Release information on where to obtain disaster mental health/crisis counseling services.
	Release information on volunteer assistance for home cleanup and repair.