

Community Emergency Planning in NYC

A Toolkit for Community Leaders

Introduction

Emergency response in New York City is often challenged by the complexity of our physical and social environment. Communities are best understood by their own residents — a fact that makes community-based emergency planning and response highly effective.

Each year, New York City experiences emergencies of all shapes and sizes. With aging infrastructure, higher frequency of natural disasters, and threats of terrorism, New York City is increasingly vulnerable. History and research have shown that communities that understand how to leverage internal networks are more successful in using their own resources and ultimately respond more effectively to their communities' needs.

The purpose of this toolkit is to help your community become more resilient through a process of identifying existing networks, building new connections, and increasing your capacity to organize internal and external resources.

Create a plan with your community now so that you are better prepared for the next emergency.

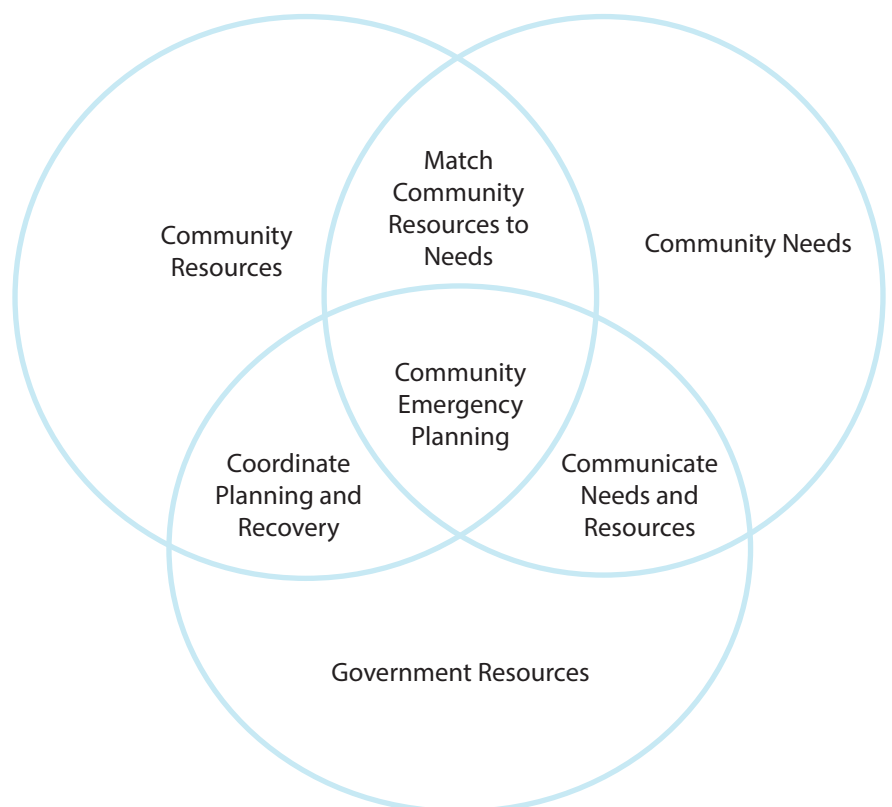
WHAT IS IN THIS TOOLKIT?

- New York City specific guidance for emergency planning.
- A plan template and scenarios for communities to develop their own emergency plan.
- Examples of other community emergency planning efforts.

WHO IS IT FOR?

This toolkit is designed to be a group process. You define your own community — successful planning has been done by housing developments, congregations, neighborhoods, etc. Examples of groups that could use the toolkit include:

- Tenant or civic associations
- Faith-based groups
- Community Emergency Response Teams (CERTs)
- Community-based organizations (CBOs)
- Community boards/coalitions



COMMUNITY EMERGENCY PLANNING

LET’S GET STARTED!

Your first step is to form a “lead team” — a group of interested community members who are willing to commit time and energy to this effort. This team will be responsible for building a network of relationships and making decisions that form the basis of your community emergency plan. The lead team will use the sections in the toolkit as a guide through the process of creating an emergency plan.

GOT YOUR LEAD TEAM TOGETHER? LET’S GO!

This toolkit and the emergency plan you develop will make use of the resources, organizations, and individuals that are already in your community. The process itself — building connections and learning about your community — is JUST AS IMPORTANT as the final plan.

WHAT DOES THIS PROCESS LOOK LIKE?

TOOLKIT PLANNING PROCESS		OUTCOMES
WORKBOOK SECTIONS	EMERGENCY PLAN TEMPLATE	
<u>Emergencies in NYC</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none">How does the City plan for emergencies? How can your community respond in an emergency?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Plan MaintenanceCommunity OverviewResource DirectoryHazard-Specific Response	A community response network made up of local residents and resources.
<u>Planning and Preparedness</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Explore the defining characteristics of your community. Map its resources and identify vulnerabilities. Learn how to build an inclusive network of partners that can execute your plan.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Emergency CommunicationsCommunity Needs AssessmentCommunity Resource AssessmentEmergency StaffingVolunteer OperationsCommunication/Distribution Center	An emergency plan that organizes information about actions to take before, during, and after an emergency.
<u>Emergency Response</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Four simple but powerful roles that a community can play in an emergency: communication, identifying needs, assessing resources, and connecting people to those resources.		A more resilient community!
<u>Practice Your Plan</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Use real-life emergency scenarios to test your plan.		

Emergencies in New York City

Part of being prepared is understanding what could potentially impact your community, what the City will do to respond, and what your community can do locally.

Your plan should take into consideration the resources that may become available as part of the City's response so that your community can leverage and supplement those resources.

IN THIS SECTION:

- Overview of threats and hazards that may occur in New York City.
- Ideas about what actions your community can take.
- Overview of official emergency operations.

THREATS AND HAZARDS IN NEW YORK CITY



BIOLOGICAL EVENTS

Outbreaks may be naturally occurring or a form of terrorism by using certain biological agents. A pandemic is a global disease outbreak, usually caused by a new form of a virus (like the flu).



COASTAL STORMS

Coastal storms include nor'easters, tropical cyclones, and hurricanes. Hurricanes are categorized 1-5, with 5 being the most severe. Coastal storms can cause flooding, structural damage to buildings, transportation service failures, and widespread power outages.



EARTHQUAKES

An earthquake is the sudden, rapid shaking of the ground caused by two blocks of earth slipping past each other beneath the surface. Although New York City does not sit on a major fault line, earthquakes can and have affected the area. A dense population and a high volume of built infrastructure amplify the city's risk.



EXTREME HEAT

Extreme heat is one of the most common hazards facing New York City. It is defined by temperatures that hover 10 degrees or more above the average high, last for prolonged periods of time, and are accompanied by high humidity. People most at risk during heat emergencies are laborers or individuals who spend time outdoors, seniors, children, and people with health issues or without adequate cooling devices in their homes.



FIRE

Fire is the most common emergency in New York City. In 2015, there were more than 45,000 fires (Source: FDNY). Brush fires can also occur when temperatures climb and vegetation dries out, which puts the city's grasslands at risk.



FLOODING

Floods account for more than \$1 billion in property loss in the United States each year. There are many types of flooding: flash flooding caused by intense rain and thunderstorms; inland flooding from heavy rain; and coastal flooding from storm surge. Flooding can cause structural damage to buildings, disrupt transportation services, and lead to power outages.



HAZMAT

A chemical or hazardous material (hazmat) emergency could be an intentional or accidental release of a toxic gas, liquid, or solid that can poison people or the environment. This could come from anywhere these materials are used, transported, or manufactured.



TORNADOES

Tornadoes account for dozens of fatalities and hundreds of injuries nationwide each year. Tornadoes are typically created by powerful thunderstorms, but sometimes accompany tropical storms and hurricanes as they move onto land. Most tornado-related damage results from wind and wind-blown debris, as well as large hail.



UTILITY DISRUPTION

POWER: Prolonged power outages are potentially life-threatening and can cause major economic losses. Power outages occur most often during the summer months, when there is a high demand on the power grid or as a result of storm damage or system failure.

NATURAL GAS: Natural gas is odorless, but a harmless chemical odor is added so leaks are easy to detect. Gas leaks can be flammable and have caused explosions.

WATER: Water main breaks, drought, and water contamination can affect water quality and use. A 10-degree change in air or water temperature may also cause water main pipes to contract or expand, making them fragile. A break halts water supply and can cause property damage, street and sidewalk closures.



WINTER WEATHER

Winter weather, including snow, ice, and freezing temperatures can cause traffic accidents, disruption of services, fires from improper heater use, overexertion (usually from shoveling snow), hypothermia and frostbite. Nor'easters — coastal storms that combine typical winter storm hazards with high winds and coastal flooding — can knock out power, flood homes and roads, and cause structural damage.



BIOLOGICAL EVENTS



COASTAL STORMS



EARTHQUAKES



EXTREME HEAT



FIRE



FLOODING



HAZMAT



TORNADOES



UTILITY DISRUPTION



WINTER WEATHER

THREATS AND HAZARDS: WHAT CAN YOUR COMMUNITY DO?

All emergencies are different. Some are “notice” events, which are events that you know are coming, like hurricanes and heat waves. “No-notice” events occur without any warning, like fires and utility disruptions. Regardless of having advance warning of an emergency, there are several key response roles that communities can play.



COMMUNICATE EMERGENCY INFORMATION: notify your community about what is going on; spread the word about proper precautions and available resources.



ORGANIZE RESIDENTS: coordinate community members, identify and assign tasks.



ASSESS AND REPORT NEEDS: identify any unmet needs and communicate with the City to try to meet those needs.



CLEAN UP: help clean up the neighborhood and remove debris. (Remember to inform people about taking proper precautions.)



REBUILD: help rebuild destroyed property or repair essential infrastructure. For health and safety reasons, these tasks should be done with proper permits by trained individuals or under their supervision.



CHECK ON NEIGHBORS: have community members check on, help, and report back on individuals in need of assistance.



MANAGE DONATIONS AND VOLUNTEERS: organize volunteers, intake, and distribution centers.

RESPONSE AND RECOVERY OPERATIONS

The City plans for a variety of threats and hazards. When large-scale emergencies require various agencies to respond, NYC Emergency Management opens the City's Emergency Operations Center where agencies can communicate and coordinate tasks. During federally declared disasters, local, state, and federal agencies coordinate efforts through the Emergency Operations Center as well.

Use the next several pages to learn more about specific operations the government coordinates in response to emergencies.



EXAMPLE: HURRICANE SANDY RECOVERY

OCTOBER TO DECEMBER:

- City, state, and federal resources are activated for assistance.
- Nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) and grassroots networks mobilize to assist residents.
- Governor makes a formal request for federal aid.
- The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) initiates Individual Assistance program.

JANUARY TO MARCH:

- Congress passes a disaster relief act, which includes money for NYC resiliency initiatives and a Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) for housing assistance.
- Disaster Case Management Program (DCMP) opens.
- Long-term recovery groups are created throughout New York City to bring together grassroots and voluntary rebuild organizations and to address needs.

APRIL TO JUNE:

- New York Disaster Interfaith Services convenes the Sandy Unmet Needs Roundtable.
- NYC Build It Back begins rebuild program in June 2013, NGOs continue to assist homeowners with rebuilding.

Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster

National Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (NVOAD) is a nonprofit membership-based organization that builds resiliency in communities nationwide. It serves as the forum where organizations share knowledge and resources throughout the disaster cycle — preparation, response, recovery and mitigation — to help disaster survivors and their communities.

New York City Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster is the local affiliate of NVOAD and is represented in the City's Emergency Operations Center.

If you represent an organization that is interested in learning more about New York City Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster, email newyorkcityvoad@gmail.com.



New York City
Voluntary Organizations
Active in Disaster

RESOURCES

Know Your Zone website

([NYC.gov/knowyourzone](https://nyc.gov/knowyourzone)) is your destination for everything you need to know about hurricanes in New York City.

MTA Service Advisory

website (alert.mta.info) will post closures and service modifications.

NYC Severe Weather website

([NYC.gov/severeweather](https://nyc.gov/severeweather)) has information about severe weather emergencies.

Call **311** (Video Relay Service: 212-639-9675, or TTY: 212-504-4115) to report dangerous conditions or inquire about delays or suspensions in City services.

RELATED HAZARDS



EVACUATION + TRANSPORTATION MANAGEMENT

TRIGGER:

- Severe impacts expected from approaching weather.

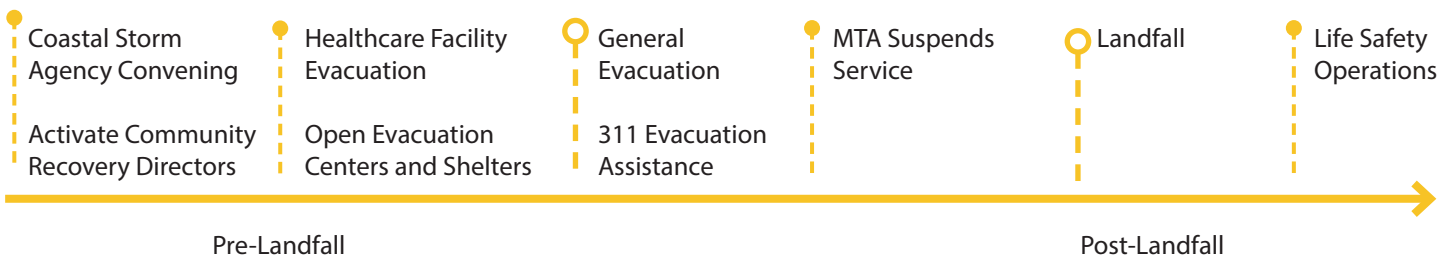
WHAT DOES THE CITY DO?

- When an evacuation order is issued, various agencies work together to coordinate public information, roadway management, and the use of public transportation to support individuals evacuating.
- The City coordinates transportation to evacuation centers for individuals with disabilities or access/functional needs who need assistance evacuating. (Individuals in need should call 311 to request assistance.)
- The State may decide to shut down public transportation 6-8 hours ahead of when sustained winds reach 39 mph or higher and transportation becomes unsafe. The City will support the shut down through messaging and coordinating the flow of traffic.

WHAT CAN YOU DO?

- Know your zone. Know whether your community is located in a hurricane evacuation zone, and take steps to prepare.
- If the Mayor issues an evacuation order for your zone, help spread the word to your community, and evacuate! People who cannot stay with friends or family can seek shelter at one of the City's evacuation centers.
- Check on your neighbors — people with disabilities or those with access and functional needs who need assistance evacuating should call 311 as soon as possible or 911 if it is an emergency.

COASTAL STORM EVACUATION TIMELINE



SHELTERS + SERVICE CENTERS

TRIGGERS:

- If a coastal storm evacuation order is issued, the City will open up **evacuation centers** and **shelters**.
- The City opens **service centers** following an emergency where impacted residents need multiple services.

WHAT DOES THE CITY DO?

- At evacuation centers, evacuees can access medical screening, animal assistance, and family reunification before being transported to a shelter:
 - Emergency shelters provide basic provisions such as food, water, baby formula, blankets, medical goods, and supplies for people with disabilities or access/functional needs.
 - Special medical needs shelters are established for evacuees who do not require hospital or nursing home care, but need specialized assistance.
- Shelters and service centers provide basic accommodations, such as language interpretation, to make services accessible to all.
- Depending on the emergency, service centers may provide any of the following:
 - Housing assistance
 - Identification replacement
 - Assistance with personal property replacement
 - Immigration assistance
 - Insurance information
 - Legal services and small business assistance
 - Assistance for pets and pet owners
 - Mental health and/or spiritual care

WHAT CAN YOU DO?

- Spread the word: make residents aware of any resources that become available.
- Help officials identify gaps in services.
- Remind people that monetary donations (instead of goods) are more immediately useful in the aftermath of disasters.
- Join your local Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) and get trained to help support shelter and service center operations.

RESOURCE

Providing services in familiar locations enables people to find help fast. Local community facilities can be used as centers or shelters. Visit the **Share Your Space Survey** ([NYC.gov/shareyourspace/survey](https://nyc.gov/shareyourspace/survey)), or call **311** to register your local community space.

RELATED HAZARDS



REMEMBER!

Power outages are a nuisance for everyone, but they can be life-threatening for those who are vulnerable to extreme temperatures, live in high-rises and cannot use the stairs, use oxygen tanks or refrigerated medications.

Power disruption can also affect water supply to residents living above the sixth floor.

Report all power outages:

PSEG Long Island

www.psegliny.com

or call 1-800-490-0075

Con Edison

www.coned.com

or call 1-800-752-6633

National Grid

www.nationalgridus.com

or call 1-800-867-5222

RELATED HAZARDS



POWER DISRUPTION

TRIGGER:

- Power outages that impact thousands of customers for several hours or more.

WHAT DOES THE CITY DO?

- The City monitors the status of its electrical system to assess the risks and extent of widespread disruption and notifies relevant agencies and stakeholders.
- Various agencies and utility companies coordinate efforts to reduce load levels and identify and help affected populations.
- During disruptions impacting more than 5,000 households for more than 48 hours, the City may activate the Post Emergency Canvassing Operation (PECO) to survey affected areas.

DID YOU KNOW?

New York State law requires that all utility companies maintain lists of customers with a serious medical hardship and establish procedures for notifying them within 24 hours of an outage.

WHAT CAN YOU DO?

- Check the NYC Emergency Management website and social media to find resources or call 311.
- Check in on your neighbors. If power will be out for an extended amount of time, offer to help individuals relocate to a shelter, hotel or friend or relative's home that has power. Offer to help pick up groceries or deliver supplies. Only do so when authorities say it is safe to travel.
- Encourage individuals who use life-sustaining equipment to register with their utility provider.

FEEDING + COMMODITY DISTRIBUTION

TRIGGERS:

- Access to usual supply chains for food, water, and medical services and equipment is disrupted.
- Disruption of utilities, such as electricity, cooking gas or water that prevents the public from safely storing and preparing food.

WHAT DOES THE CITY DO?

- Maintains an emergency stockpile designed to support life, safety, and hygiene for 70,000 people for seven days. Examples of standard items include: food, water, cots, blankets, clothing, Diabetes testing strips, mobility aids, and over-the-counter medicine.
- The Food Access Lead Team, made up of nonprofit, public and private organizations, implements the Emergency Feeding Strategy to provide residents with food and water through shelters, fixed meal distribution sites or mobile feeding units.
- The Emergency Feeding Strategy may also include commodity distribution points (CDPs), which are temporary sites set up in affected communities to provide life-sustaining commodities like food, water, ice, and baby formula.

WHAT CAN YOU DO?

- Check Emergency Management's website or social media or 311 to find out what operations are activated.
- Organize your community to check in on your neighbors and work with your elected officials to share information and communicate unmet needs.
- Join your local Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) to be trained on how to support emergency operations like CDPs.



RESOURCE

Check out NYC Emergency Management's YouTube channel to see how NYC Emergency Management and the NYC Department of Parks and Recreation exercise the City's Commodity Distribution Point (CDP) Plan.

RELATED HAZARDS



REMEMBER!

Seniors, children, persons with health issues, and those without adequate heat or air conditioning in their homes are particularly vulnerable to extreme weather.

RESOURCES

Cooling Center Finder (nyc.gov/beattheheat)

provides a list of public air-conditioned spaces that are opened during periods of extreme heat.

PlowNYC

(nyc.gov/severeweather)

allows New Yorkers to track plow and spreader operations.

Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP) (www.ny.gov/services/apply-heap)

Provides low-income people with emergency heating and cooling assistance.

RELATED HAZARDS



EXTREME WEATHER

TRIGGERS:

- A heat index above 100°F for 1+ day, or above 95°F for 2+ days.
- Snow accumulation greater than six inches, high temperatures below 15°F for a 48-hour period or a wind chill below 0° F.
- Nor'easters: coastal storms that combine typical winter storm hazards with high winds and coastal flooding.
- Tornadoes: funnel shaped clouds that form after large thunderstorms.

WHAT DOES THE CITY DO?

- Alerts the public of risks and available resources.
- Monitors and assists homeless individuals.
- Monitors vulnerable infrastructure such as power and water systems.

Extreme Heat:

- Opens cooling centers to help prevent heat-related illness or death. Cooling centers are air conditioned spaces such as senior centers, community centers, public libraries, and other public facilities that typically operate during daytime hours and are free and open to the public.
- Conveys information to service providers through the Advance Warning System (www.advancewarningsystemnyc.org).
- Distributes hydrant spray caps to conserve water. (Opening hydrants without a cap results in a drop in local water pressure and threatens firefighting capabilities.)

Winter Weather:

- Deploys plows and salt spreaders to clear 6,300 miles of streets.
- Dispatches tow trucks and closes roadways and airports as needed.
- Responds when landlords do not provide adequate heat to tenants.

WHAT CAN YOU DO?

- Call 311 to report dangerous conditions, electricity or heat loss, or if you see someone in need of assistance.
- Check on your neighbors.
- Members of the community over 18 years of age can request spray caps from FDNY firehouses.
- Clear snow and dangling ice from roofs, curb cuts, and hydrants.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQs)

COASTAL STORM EVACUATION

HOW DO I KNOW IF I HAVE TO LEAVE MY HOME?

Use the Hurricane Evacuation Zone Finder at [NYC.gov/knowyourzone](https://www.nyc.gov/knowyourzone) or call 311 to find out if you live in a hurricane evacuation zone.

Stay informed about evacuation orders by listening to the news and registering for Notify NYC, the City of New York's official emergency communications program.

WHAT IS AN EVACUATION CENTER?

An evacuation center is a safe facility for evacuees who have no other place to stay in the event of a coastal storm. Evacuation centers are often co-located with shelters. Once at an evacuation center, evacuees will be transported to the appropriate shelter as needed.

HOW WILL I GET TO AN EVACUATION CENTER?

People should use their normal means of transportation to evacuate while it is still safe to travel. People who live in an evacuation zone and need assistance evacuating to a center may call 311 to request assistance.

SHELTERS + SERVICE CENTERS

DO I NEED TO BE A U.S. CITIZEN TO ENTER A SHELTER OR EVACUATION CENTER?

Evacuation centers and emergency shelters are open to anyone, regardless of immigration status.

CAN I STAY WITH MY FAMILY?

Yes. Families will be able to shelter together. At shelters, households with children will be separated from households without children and single men and women. Staff will work with those staying in the shelter to resolve any issues or concerns.

I DON'T SPEAK ENGLISH. WILL THERE BE TRANSLATORS ON-SITE?

Information will be available in other languages and formats such as American Sign Language. Anyone can request interpretation and translation services as well.

CAN I BRING MY ANIMAL?

Yes. Service animals are always allowed and will not be separated from their owners. Pets are also allowed but will be kept in a separate area at the shelter. Owners should bring any relevant paperwork for their pets.

FEEDING + COMMODITY DISTRIBUTION

WHAT IS AVAILABLE AT A COMMODITY DISTRIBUTION POINT (CDP)?

At a CDP, life-sustaining commodities, like food, water, and baby formula are available.

HOW CAN I GET TO A CDP?

Use your usual means of transportation to get to a CDP. Stay connected to public information channels to know where CDP sites are located.

WHAT IF I CAN'T GET TO A CDP?

Work with your neighbors or friends to help get items from a CDP. People looking to pick up food for others can work with the CDP site manager to assess and potentially fulfill needs for items already being distributed. Call 311 for alternative food access options.

FAQs CONTINUED

POWER DISRUPTION RESPONSE

WHAT SHOULD I DO IF MY POWER GOES OUT?

Report outages to your utility provider(s). Check on neighbors that may need assistance during an outage.

WILL THE CITY CHECK ON RESIDENTS?

The City will survey impacted areas after a prolonged power outage to determine critical needs. However, people should have an emergency plan that includes stockpiling food, water, and supplies for up to seven days.

WHAT CAN I DO IF I DEPEND ON LIFE-SUSTAINING EQUIPMENT?

Make sure you plan for your specific medical needs and have backup power ready. If you are in immediate danger, call 911. As a preparedness step, if you rely on life-sustaining equipment, register with your utility provider(s).

EXTREME HEAT RESPONSE

WHAT IS A COOLING CENTER?

Cooling centers are air-conditioned facilities — such as libraries, community centers, senior centers, and New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA) facilities — that are open to the public during heat emergencies.

WHO CAN ACCESS COOLING CENTERS AND HOW CAN I FIND MY NEAREST COOLING CENTER?

Any New Yorker looking for relief from the heat can use cooling centers. Use the Cooling Center Finder by visiting [NYC.gov/beattheheat](https://nyc.gov/beattheheat) or call 311 (212-639-9675 for Video Relay Service, or TTY: 212-504-4115) to find a cooling center near you. Before going to a cooling center, call the site directly to find out more details about the center's accessibility and hours.

HOW CAN I PREVENT A POWER OUTAGE DURING EXTREME HEAT?

Conserve energy as much as possible to avoid power disruptions:

- Set your air conditioner thermostat no lower than 78 degrees.
- Only use the air conditioner when you are home.
- Turn off nonessential appliances.

WINTER WEATHER RESPONSE

WHAT SHOULD I DO?

- Do not travel on roads except when necessary. Give sanitation and emergency workers space on the road.
- Avoid overexertion when shoveling.
- Assist neighbors with clearing their property.
- Clear hydrants of snow so that they are visible to the fire department.
- Anyone who sees a homeless individual or family out in the cold should call 311 and an outreach team will assist them.

Starting Your Plan with Preparedness

There is plenty to do during non-emergency times to make sure your community is prepared. With this section you will start developing your community's emergency plan. Bring together a group of dedicated stakeholders and begin the planning process.

Use the following modules to learn more about your community, and create an emergency network, a group of partners that can help you develop and carry out your community's emergency plan. Use the plan template that is part of this toolkit to capture important information and decisions to build your plan.

IN THIS CHAPTER:

1. Get Organized
2. Define Your Community
3. Map Your Community
4. Build an Emergency Network
5. Plan Inclusively
6. Educate Your Community



SUCCESS STORY: RED HOOK HUB

The Red Hook Hub uses its website and bulletin board year-round. Because it's used regularly, community leaders and residents know where to find updates and resources during emergencies.

The Hub is a system of physical and digital community bulletin boards that collect and display community information during both crisis and non-crisis conditions. Anyone can post notices in addition to the official content posted by the Hub coordinator partners. For more information, visit www.redhookhub.org.

Sharing community information

RED HOOK

HUB

www.redhookhub.org

GET ORGANIZED

OBJECTIVES:

- Set goals and milestones for your planning process.
- Identify how your lead team and the larger network will organize and communicate during emergency and non-emergency times.

THINGS TO CONSIDER:

Remember — you are starting this process with a few dedicated community members but will look to build a larger network of partners that can play a role during emergencies.

Mission and Goals:

What are your goals? Think about what you would like to see as the end result of this process. Some examples include:

- Educate your community and get residents individually prepared.
- Disseminate information during times of emergency.
- Focus on the most vulnerable individuals in your community.
- Others goals that are specific to your community's needs.

Communications:

There are a variety of tools, platforms, and mechanisms to communicate to groups of people. Take some time exploring the different options to figure out what works for your team and network. Examples include:

Email

Text

Conference calls/phone tree

Communications apps

Twitter

Website

Flying/bulletin boards

Meetings/forums/events

Facebook groups

TO DO:

Take time to develop your mission and strategies for how your lead team will organize and communicate, record your answers in the plan maintenance section of your plan:

- What is the mission of your emergency network? What roles do you need to be able to fulfill your mission?
- What is the structure? Who will have what responsibilities?
- When and how frequently will you meet? Who will set up meetings?
- How will you communicate with each other and your larger community?
- How will you keep your network engaged throughout the year?
- Connect with NYC Emergency Management by listing your network at NYC.gov/communitypreparedness.

DEFINE YOUR COMMUNITY

OBJECTIVES:

- Compile information about your community that will help you develop an emergency plan.
- Record your findings in the community overview section of your emergency plan template.

THINGS TO CONSIDER:

- The term “community” describes a group of people unified by common characteristics, interests, or geography.
- What is the community are you planning for? Is it your housing complex? Congregation? Community district? Your whole neighborhood, or certain blocks within it?
- The factors that make your community unique should be incorporated into your emergency plan.

TO DO:

1. Print out a map of the area that you are considering. Does the community you are planning for have boundaries or are you planning for multiple geographic areas?
2. Use available resources to fill out the community overview section of your emergency plan template. Discuss other factors or defining characteristics that are relevant to your specific community’s planning process and add them to your plan.
 - Population
 - Elected Representation
 - Social
 - Economy
 - Business/Industry
 - Environment/Geography
 - History
 - Culture

RESOURCES

Check out the **U.S. Census Bureau’s American FactFinder** (<https://factfinder.census.gov>), a website where you can quickly find information about your community related to various demographics (i.e., age, housing, income, language, etc.)

Visit the **Who Represents Me?** website (www.mygovnyc.org) or a list of elected officials and their local contact information.

MAPPING AND DATA RESOURCES

NYC Community Preparedness

[NYC.gov/
communitypreparedness](https://nyc.gov/communitypreparedness)

Pratt Center for Community Development Neighborhood Data Portal

[https://prattcenter.net/
neighborhood-data-portal](https://prattcenter.net/neighborhood-data-portal)

NYC Open Accessible Space Information System (OASIS)

(pictured below)
www.oasisnyc.net

Know Your Zone

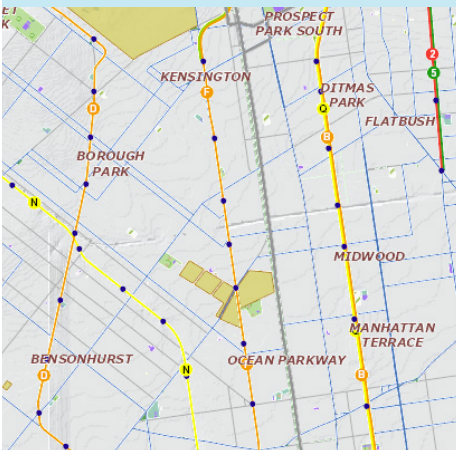
[NYC.gov/knowyourzone](https://nyc.gov/knowyourzone)

TAKE ACTION

Share Your Space Survey

Add your community space to the City's list of potential service centers.

[NYC.gov/shareyourspaceurvey](https://nyc.gov/shareyourspaceurvey)



MAP YOUR COMMUNITY

OBJECTIVES:

- Identify resources in your community that may be of use during emergencies and record them in your emergency plan.
- Identify the various types of vulnerabilities that are present and explore how they affect your emergency planning.
- Include a map of community assets and vulnerabilities in your emergency plan so that you can refer to it during emergencies.

THINGS TO CONSIDER:

RESOURCES:

A resource is something that helps people understand, prepare for, and recover from the impacts of a disaster. The following are examples of people and places that may serve as resources during an emergency:

- Social service organizations, faith-based organizations
- Active coalitions, civic or tenant associations
- Public spaces like libraries and parks

TO DO: Use the community resource directory in your plan template as a guide to identifying available resources in your community. Discuss with your group the different types of resources that are available and what gaps may exist. Record this information in the directory so you can reference it during an emergency.

VULNERABILITIES:

A vulnerability is the reduced capacity of a person or group to understand, prepare for and/or recover from the impacts of a disaster. Vulnerability may stem from physical, social, economic, and environmental factors. Examples include:

- Limited family income
- Language barriers
- Age
- Disabilities or access and functional needs
- Physical exposure to a risk, like living on a coastline

TO DO: Identify potential vulnerabilities in our community and the people who are most impacted by them. What are their needs? Are there resources that can help address them? If so, add these to your community resource directory.

BUILD AN EMERGENCY NETWORK

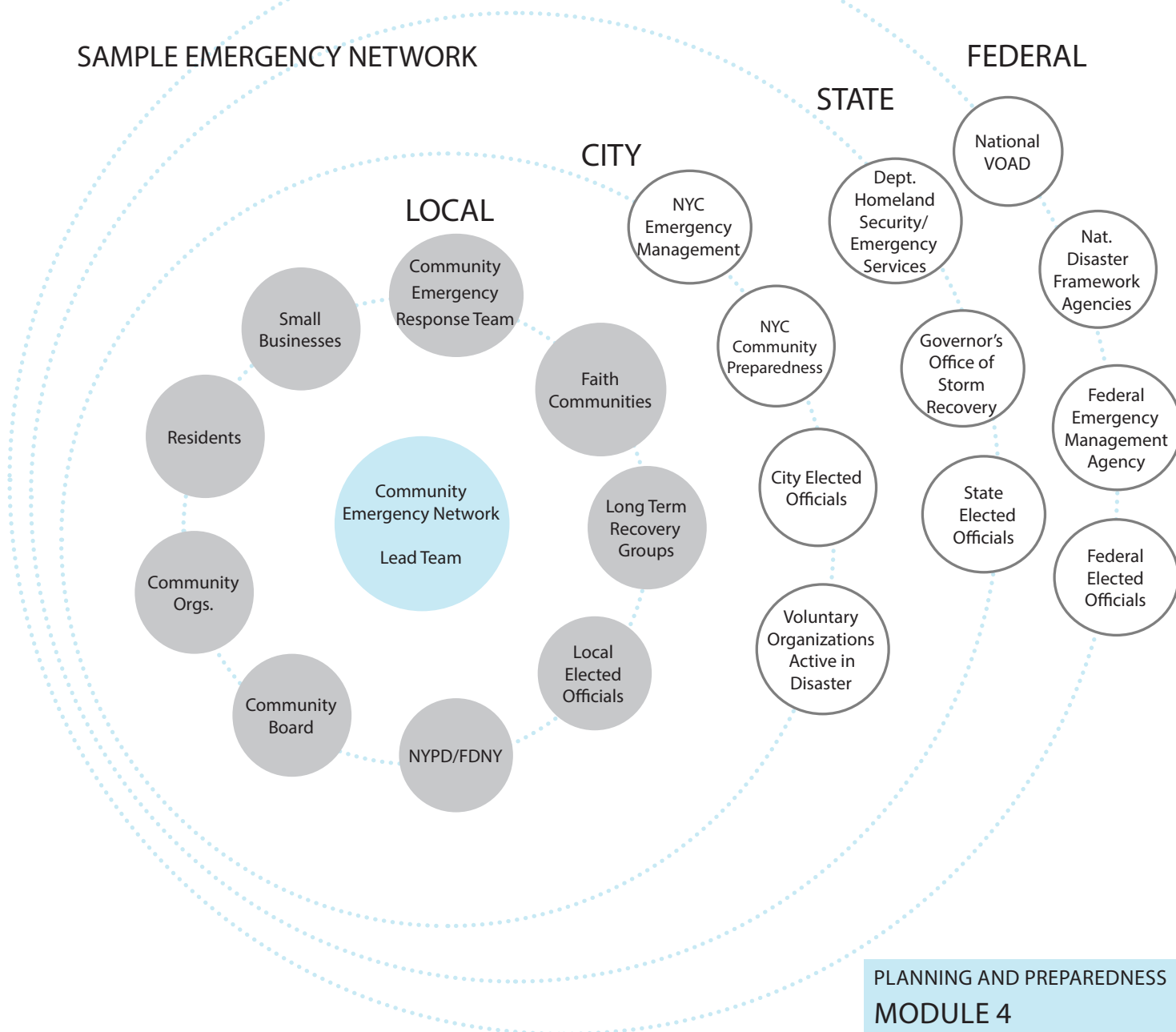
OBJECTIVE:

- Use your community resource directory to build a network of contacts and key partners who may play a valuable role in an emergency response.

THINGS TO CONSIDER:

Building relationships in your community is one of the most powerful things you can do to prepare for an emergency. Communities with strong social ties are able to communicate, identify needs, and coordinate resources more effectively. Developing an emergency network during non-emergency times will help your community be much more prepared to respond to and recover from emergencies of all shapes and sizes.

SAMPLE EMERGENCY NETWORK





SUCCESS STORY: READY RED HOOK

The community of Red Hook, Brooklyn developed Ready Red Hook: a Community Disaster Readiness Plan. The purpose of the plan is to provide residents a local guide in preparation for and immediate recovery from future emergencies. See the plan: www.readyredhook.org.



THINGS TO CONSIDER:

You have defined your community, explored its key demographics, identified and mapped resources, and understand its vulnerabilities. It is time to put all of these pieces together to create a robust network that can be leveraged in the event of an emergency. This network will be your community's primary tool for communicating, identifying needs, and connecting people to resources.

Use the questions below and the tools you have already developed, like the community overview, resource directory, and maps to compile a list of potential members. Focus on individuals/organizations that have a capacity to communicate, reach vulnerable individuals, and have resources that may be helpful.

1. Are there long-time residents who have an exceptional knowledge of the community?
2. How can the most vulnerable individuals in your community be represented?
3. Are there organizations or businesses that conduct regular local outreach or serve as natural gathering spaces in your community?
4. Are there organizations in your community who are already doing emergency planning? Some examples:
 - Long-term Recovery Groups (LTRG)
 - Community Organizations Active in Disaster (COAD)
 - Community Emergency Response Teams (CERT)
 - NY Rising Communities (visit the Governor's Office of Storm Recovery at www.stormrecovery.ny.gov)
 - Community boards and local elected officials — check to see if they are working on emergency preparedness initiatives in your community.

TO DO:

Contact potential members to determine whether they are willing to help with your network. Record confirmed members in the community resource directory in your emergency plan.

PLAN INCLUSIVELY

OBJECTIVES:

- Consider everyone in your planning. Be familiar with the services required for people with disabilities, access, or functional needs.
- Identify partners in your community who can help your plan address various needs.

THINGS TO CONSIDER:

People who have disabilities, access or functional needs may require communication, transportation, health or other kinds of assistance during emergencies. For example, how can you connect with community partners who support seniors, people with limited English proficiency, people who are homebound and/or live in high-rise buildings? Are these community organizations part of your network?

TO DO:

What are possible needs in your community and how can your emergency plan address them? Consider the following chart to identify more contacts and resources to add to your resource directory.



LES READY! is a coalition of community groups and institutions that work together to coordinate local emergency response, resources, and preparedness planning. LES Ready reaches its whole community by holding events in multiple locations and posting information in the three most commonly used languages in their neighborhood — English, Spanish, and Chinese.

These workshops build upon the planning undertaken as part of HUD's Rebuild by Design competition. Spanish, Mandarin, and Cantonese interpreters will be present at all workshops. A Fujianese interpreter will be present on July 30th. For special needs assistance, please call (917) 339-0488 by Wednesday, July 22, 2015. Dinner will be provided.

社區設計討論會， 討論繼颶風桑迪後的 東河 (EAST RIVER) 海濱重新設計

2015年7月28日 (週二)
晚上 5:30-7:30
Stein Senior Center
204 E 23rd Street

重點討論 E. 14th Street 和
E. 23rd Street 之間的海濱

2015年7月29日 (週三)
晚上 6:30-8:30
Church of St. Brigid
119 Avenue B

重點討論 Houston Street 和
E. 14th Street 之間的海濱

2015年7月30日 (週四)
晚上 6:30-8:30
Manny Cantor Center
197 E. Broadway

重點討論 Montgomery
Street 和 Houston Street
之間的海濱

Need	Potential Planning Tools
Communication	American Sign Language and audio resources; escorts, guides, translators/ interpreters, large print outreach materials, and offline outreach to complement social media
Maintaining Health and Independence	Outreach to medication-dependent residents; partnerships with homeless shelters and programs; donations of certain medical/assistive equipment
Transport and Access	MTA Access-a-Ride; other special needs transit options; private car services
Support and Assistance	Volunteer training for caregiving; partnerships with supportive care organizations



SUCCESS STORY: EAST HARLEM FORUM

The East Harlem Emergency Preparedness Collaborative (EHEPC) brought together community members and community based organizations to discuss emergency preparedness in East Harlem. The forum included a series of presentations on the efforts related to emergency preparedness and recovery, break-out sessions, and a presentation by the Columbia Regional Learning Center.

EDUCATE YOUR COMMUNITY

OBJECTIVES:

- Include community outreach/education as part of your planning.
- Identify resources and develop strategies you can use to educate your community about being prepared for emergencies.

THINGS TO CONSIDER:

Education about individual preparedness benefits community preparedness. Educating community members will also raise the visibility of your network and planning and allow you to build partnerships. Reach out to “force multipliers” — the organizations, businesses, and faith-based groups who can amplify your outreach efforts and reach the largest audience.

There are different ways to be prepared — think about the different audiences that you may encounter and the tailored resources that exist for them:

- Continuity of operations planning for business and organizations
- Preparedness planning for service providers/organizations that serve a specific population
- Planning for people that use life-sustaining equipment



Who are you trying to inform? Where can you reach them? Some examples:
Schools

- Houses of worship
- Businesses
- Senior centers
- Residents in hazard-prone areas

TO DO:

How will your lead team and/or network members conduct outreach? Include these strategies in the plan maintenance section of your plan. Some examples include:

- Work with elected officials.
- Present at community meetings and events.
- Distribute flyers and outreach materials.
- Work with other organizations that serve residents.
- Promote or host a Ready New York emergency preparedness event.

NYC EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT'S PREPAREDNESS RESOURCES

FOR MORE INFORMATION, VISIT THE [NYC.GOV/EMERGENCYMANAGEMENT](https://www.nyc.gov/emergencymanagement) OR CALL 311.

KNOW YOUR ZONE is your destination for everything you need to know about hurricanes in New York City. You'll find information about the city's hurricane evacuation zones, the hazards you may face from a hurricane, and what to do to prepare.

[NYC.gov/knowyourzone](https://www.nyc.gov/knowyourzone)

NOTIFY NYC: Official source of information about emergencies and services
[NYC.gov/notifynyc](https://www.nyc.gov/notifynyc)

Organizations that serve people with disabilities or functional needs can register for the **ADVANCE WARNING SYSTEM** for hazard and emergency information.

www.advancewarningsystemnyc.org

NYC COMMUNITY PREPAREDNESS helps local organizations build capacity within their community to prepare for, respond to, and recover from an emergency.

[NYC.gov/communitypreparedness](https://www.nyc.gov/communitypreparedness)

COMMUNITY EMERGENCY RESPONSE TEAM (CERT) members are trained in basic skills needed for fire safety, light search and rescue, disaster medical operations, and traffic control. CERT members are trained to support first responders and help prepare their communities.

[NYC.gov/cert](https://www.nyc.gov/cert)

PARTNERS IN PREPAREDNESS is a program that helps organizations prepare their employees, services, and facilities for emergencies. Once registered, partners gain access to events and webinars and receive other preparedness resources.

[NYC.gov/partnersinpreparedness](https://www.nyc.gov/partnersinpreparedness)

The **READY NEW YORK** campaign encourages New Yorkers to be ready for all types of emergencies. Anyone can complete a readiness workbook, request an event or guide (in 13 languages and audio guides) to educate their community about preparedness.

[NYC.gov/readyny](https://www.nyc.gov/readyny)



Notify **NYC**

NYC Emergency Management
ADVANCE WARNING SYSTEM

NYC Emergency Management **COMMUNITY PREPAREDNESS**



**READY
NEW YORK**

Community Emergency Response

Now that you have an understanding of how hazards may impact the city and have built a strong network of partners, focus on developing the strategies that your community can use in a response. Your emergency plan will be all-hazards, meaning that it will focus on managing the impacts of events and can be implemented for all different types of emergencies.

Remember, the goals of your response should be to effectively **communicate**, **identify needs**, and **connect people to resources**.

IN THIS SECTION:

7. Emergency Communications
8. Needs and Resource Assessments
9. Connecting People to Resources: Working with Volunteers and Creating a Space

EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS

OBJECTIVE:

- Identify strategies for effective communication during emergencies, including which sources of information you will use to communicate.

THINGS TO CONSIDER:

Provide accurate information by using official sources. During emergencies, false information spreads for several reasons:

- Unconfirmed information gets passed by word-of-mouth.
- Unclear information gets miscommunicated.
- The situation changes so frequently that information quickly becomes outdated.

TO DO:

- Use the following questions to get a sense of what your potential strategies would be during a emergency:
 - What are the best ways to reach residents in your community?
 - Which languages would you need to provide information in?
 - Which network members are regularly in contact with community members (e.g., congregations, daycare centers, tenant associations)?
 - Which members have the skills and staff to run a communications operation or information hub?
 - How will you communicate if there is no power or if phone lines are down?
- Review the communications chart in your plan. Fill in potential strategies and point people to carry out emergency communications during an emergency.

DID YOU KNOW?

Notify NYC is the City's official source for information about emergency events and services. New York City Emergency Management's Watch Command team monitors emergency activity throughout the city 24/7 through 911 dispatches, information feeds from regional emergency operations centers, the FAA, MTA, the Port Authority and many other local, state, and federal agencies. When an emergency has the potential to affect a significant number of New Yorkers, Watch Command uses Notify NYC to inform the public.

OFFICIAL SOURCES OF INFORMATION

311

Call 311 (212-639-9675 for Video Relay Service, or TTY: 212-504-4115)
[NYC.gov/311](https://www.nyc.gov/311)

NYC Emergency Management

[NYC.gov/emergencymanagement](https://www.nyc.gov/emergencymanagement)

Notify NYC

[NYC.gov/notifynyc](https://www.nyc.gov/notifynyc)
 @NotifyNYC

NYC Emergency Management on Facebook and Twitter

www.facebook.com/nycemergencymanagement
 @nycemergencygmt

Advance Warning System

for organizations that serve people with disabilities or others with access and functional needs

www.advancewarningsystemnyc.org

Community Preparedness newsletter

for nonprofits and community-based organizations

[NYC.gov/communitypreparedness](https://www.nyc.gov/communitypreparedness)

Notify NYC



SUCCESS STORY: LTRO

The Staten Island Interfaith and Community Long Term Recovery Organization (LTRO) is a coalition of community, faith-based, and national organizations dedicated to disaster recovery and preparedness on Staten Island. The LTRO hosts a monthly meeting open to the community that features speakers and relevant service updates.

Ahead of Hurricane Joaquin in 2015, the LTRO reached out to residents to help them prepare and organize volunteers who would pump out homes and conduct needs assessments if required.

Visit www.sisandyhelp.org to learn more.

NEEDS + RESOURCES ASSESSMENT

OBJECTIVE:

- Identify strategies for assessing needs and identifying locally available resources before, during, and after an emergency.

THINGS TO CONSIDER:

Depending on the type and severity of the emergency, needs may vary throughout your community. For example, a hurricane may lead to the need for clean up or rebuild operations, but a blizzard may lead to the need for a volunteers to shovel sidewalks and hydrants.

After an emergency there may be resources coming from various levels of government, relief organizations, as well as community partners. Your network can play an important role in collecting and organizing information about what resources are available.

Sample Needs:

Food/water
Clothing/blankets
Clean up materials
Construction materials

Sample Resources:

Commodity Distribution Points
Red Cross
Volunteers (Example: New York Cares)
Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (VOAD)

One of the key roles your network can play is to identify unmet needs and communicate them to people and organizations that may be able to help, such as City agencies, local elected representatives, and relief organizations.

How can your network effectively conduct assessments? Think about tools like the resource directory and the communications strategies you have already developed and how they can be helpful.

TO DO:

- Review the needs and resource assessment charts in the plan template. What strategies would you use to conduct a needs assessment? What about a resource assessment?
- Record any strategies or point people you may refer to to carry out these assessments.

CONNECT PEOPLE TO RESOURCES

1. WORKING WITH VOLUNTEERS

OBJECTIVES:

- Identify functions before, during, and after an emergency that could be performed by volunteers.
- Identify volunteer groups in your community or citywide that you may be able to connect with.

THINGS TO CONSIDER:

Many people want to help after an emergency and volunteers can be a great way to connect people to goods and services (think: distributing food/water, canvassing/flyering, clean up, etc.).

Some response operations require technical expertise and are only suitable for trained volunteers. Be familiar with the type of volunteers you're working with as well as common requirements needed for different types of operations.

Follow these best practices for organizing volunteers:

- Assign team leaders who have experience managing volunteers.
- Have defined tasks.
- Make volunteer groups that are manageable in size.
- Match projects with volunteer group strengths (e.g., language expertise).
- Use t-shirts, vests or some kind of marker to identify groups or tasks.
- Provide leaders and their groups with appropriate materials for their task.

TO DO:

1. Identify local volunteer resources and add them to your resource directory.
2. Find and connect with your local CERT. Email cert@oem.nyc.gov to contact your CERT's team chief.

RESOURCES

New York City Community Emergency Response Teams (NYC CERT) are groups of dedicated volunteers who help prepare their neighbors and communities for different types of emergencies. Volunteers go through a ten week training and are assigned to a team in their community district. For more information visit NYC.gov/cert or call 311.

DID YOU KNOW?

CERTs are deployed by NYC Emergency Management and are in constant communication with the City's Emergency Operation Center when activated. Building a relationship with your local CERT offers access to the most up-to-date information about what is happening in the city.

ALSO...

During large-scale emergencies, the City will activate a volunteer task force that collects and coordinates information about volunteer activities. All volunteer efforts are encouraged to participate in this effort. For more information contact communityprep@oem.nyc.gov or call 311.

RESOURCES

NY Rising Community Center Program

Funded by New York State, this program identified community centers that demonstrated capacity to support local recovery efforts. Check to see if there is a NY Rising Community Center in your area by visiting www.stormrecovery.ny.gov.

Check out the **ADA Checklist for Existing Facilities** (www.adachecklist.org), which offers guidance on how to evaluate the accessibility of structures/spaces that you may want to use during an emergency response.

Many community spaces may be used before, during, and after an emergency. NYC Emergency Management asks communities to identify spaces and submit them through the online **Share Your Space Survey** (NYC.gov/shareyourspaceurvey). Not only will you help pre-identify spaces for NYC Emergency Management to host operations in your community, you can also identify meeting/training space(s) and information hubs for your community plan.

CONNECT PEOPLE TO RESOURCES

2. CREATING A SPACE

OBJECTIVES:

- Identify operations in your plan that may need a physical space.
- Identify spaces in your community that may be used before, during, and after an emergency.
- Learn what to look for when considering including a physical space in your plan.

THINGS TO CONSIDER:

What are some ways your community may use a space before, during, and after an emergency?

Before (preparedness):

- Host preparedness events
- Conduct outreach
- Build visibility
- Create hub for posting resources and information

After (response):

- Information hub
- Point for collecting/distributing goods
- Volunteer reception site

TO DO:

Refer to the maps that you have included in your plan. Maps can be very helpful in identifying spaces that are spread out throughout your community. Look for spaces that are out of potentially dangerous areas (such as evacuation zones) and that are central to the population you serve.

Using your plan and maps think about what operations you may want to activate during a response and identify spaces that would work. Add them to your resource directory.

Consider the following questions:

- Is the space ADA-accessible?
- Is it a familiar space to people in your community?
- How many people can it hold?
- Who owns it? Would the owner be open to joining your emergency network?

Practice Your Plan

To be prepared you need to test your plan. Now that you've created your network, learned about official emergency operations, and discussed how you'll activate your response, use the real-life scenarios in this section to practice.

Involve as many network members in these exercises as you can. Note gaps in your network or resource directory as you go, and add any additional strategies/action steps to your plan as needed.

For each scenario print copies of your plan and fill out the related staffing charts and assessment tools as you run through the exercise.

IN THIS SECTION:

Sample emergency scenarios:

- Power outage
- Extreme heat
- Blizzard

PRACTICE YOUR PLAN

SAMPLE SCENARIO: POWER OUTAGE

(This scenario is based on real conditions during the 2003 NYC blackout.)

Print copies of your plan and fill out the related staffing charts and assessment tools as you run through the exercise. Take notes on lessons learned, decisions made, and gaps that exist in your planning.

DAY 1:

A power surge causes millions of people to lose electricity. The city is gridlocked, cell service is disrupted, but landlines are working.

1. Who do you first communicate within your network? How do you communicate with the rest of the network members?
2. How do you reach your community members and what is your message to them?
3. What are the impacts of the outage and needs of your community? Fill in the needs assessment chart in your plan template.
4. What actions do you take to support people most vulnerable to power outages? Fill in tasks and leads in your staffing chart.
5. Identify community resources that can help meet your community's needs and plan how you will connect people to them. Fill in your resource assessment and staffing chart.

DAY 2:

In one day there have been 60 working fires, caused mostly by candles. The FDNY answered over 7,500 calls which resulted in the transmission of over 4,000 alarms. Most high-rise buildings do not have access to water with the power disruption.

1. How can your network notify your community of the dangers of candles? (Also think about how you can you incorporate this message into year-round preparedness education.)
2. What impact will the power outage have on services in your community? How can your network share resources to keep certain activities going?
3. Spontaneous volunteers contact you to help. Who organizes them?
4. Continue to record tasks, leads and community resource assignments on your staffing chart.

DAY 3:

Power is restored to NYC. Most of the deaths in NYC are attributed to carbon monoxide poisoning.

1. How can you communicate proper precautions for generator use in your year-round preparedness education?
2. Who in your network will update your needs assessment chart and how will they make their new assessment?
3. What resources are still available and can be used for recovery? Update your resource assessment chart and reevaluate your staffing chart for recovery efforts.

PRACTICE YOUR PLAN

SAMPLE SCENARIO: EXTREME HEAT

(This scenario is based on real conditions during the 1995 Chicago heat wave.)

Print copies of your plan, and fill out the related staffing charts and assessment tools as you run through the exercise. Take notes on lessons learned, decisions made, and gaps that exist in your planning.

DAY 1:

The heat index has exceeded 100 degrees for the third day in a row. Meteorologists predict these conditions to continue for the next four days. The City, in partnership with public facilities, has opened cooling centers across the city.

1. What are your first steps? Who do you first communicate with?
2. What are the impacts of the heat emergency and needs of your community? Fill in the needs assessment chart in your plan template.
3. Which lead team and/or network members will help the community prepare for worsening conditions? Fill in tasks and leads in your staffing chart.
4. Which community resources can help with these tasks? Fill in your resource assessment and staffing chart.

DAY 2:

The temperature hits 106 degrees, and the heat index soars to 126 degrees. As you learn that there have been 144 fatalities directly related to the heat wave, the power in your neighborhood goes out.

1. What effect does the power outage have on members in your network? How will your communication change?
2. What will service facilities, such as daycare centers and soup kitchens, need during a power outage? How are members of your community affected?
3. Your lead team determines that checking on seniors and people with disabilities is your current priority. Which network members do you contact, and how do you organize them?

DAY 5:

Power outages now grip the entire city. The death toll has climbed above 700. The MTA announces the closure of all subway terminals due to dozens of heat-related deaths in the tunnels. Due to the increased demand for services and gridlocked traffic, ambulance responses are delayed up to two hours.

1. What other services can your network provide to assist community members? Who will update your needs and resource assessments and how?
2. How can your network provide services? How are you coordinating efforts?
3. Continue to update your staffing chart. Have roles changed? Have you recorded new tasks, their assigned leader, resources and contact information?

PRACTICE YOUR PLAN

SAMPLE SCENARIO: BLIZZARD

(This scenario is based on real conditions during the January 2016 NYC blizzard.)

Print copies of your plan and fill out the related staffing charts and assessment tools as you run through the exercise. Take notes on lessons learned, decisions made, and gaps that exist in your planning.

DAY -4 (PRIOR TO EVENT):

A winter storm, potentially a blizzard, is expected to impact the Northeast Friday through Saturday.

1. What is your message to your community? What strategies do you use to reach everyone? Fill in your communications chart.
2. Which network members do you contact? Who can help prepare your community?
3. What do you do to help prepare elderly residents and individuals with access and functional needs? Who in your network can help?

DAY -2 (PRIOR TO EVENT):

The forecast is 10 inches of snow — officially a blizzard. It will arrive Friday threatening the power grid, slowing traffic, and hindering emergency responders.

1. How does your messaging change to your community? How will you prepare for a power outage?
2. What impact will the storm have on services and activities?

DAY 1 (AFTER EVENT):

The Mayor bans non-emergency travel. MTA services stop. Total snowfall is over 26 inches.

1. What are your community's needs? Who will conduct a needs assessment and what strategies of communication will they use?
2. Identify community resources that can address those needs. Record tasks, leads and community resource assignments on your staffing chart.
3. Who is checking on homebound, elderly and other vulnerable neighbors? What network members or community resources can help with this?

DAY 2 (AFTER EVENT):

The City reminds residents never to use gas, kerosene, propane space heaters, charcoal, or grills to heat their properties. Media sources announce that multiple people have died from shoveling snow.

1. How will you get these warnings to your community members?
2. What resources can you provide for residents to help them stay safe?

