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Unit 4: Pre-Season Readiness

INTRODUCTION

Public-sector agencies and personnel need to begin pre-hurricane season preparedness activities in enough time so that they are ready before the start of the tropical cyclone season. Reviewing plans, checking equipment, establishing contacts for coordination, and conducting a public awareness and education campaign are critical things to do as the hurricane season approaches. The efforts taken in the pre-season set the tone among agencies, personnel, and the community for the hurricane season.

OBJECTIVES

At the conclusion of this unit, participants should be able to:

1. Explain the acronyms, terms, and definitions relevant to this unit;
2. Identify three pre-season preparedness and coordination activities;
3. Discuss the different media that could be utilized to educate and inform the public; and
4. Use the National Hurricane Survival Initiative Poll to describe areas to target with your public education campaign.

METHODOLOGY

Participants will consider how to develop a list of pre-season activities that they can do in preparation for the hurricane season. The instructor will review media that can be used to deliver a public education and awareness program. Additionally, participants will compose a list of those agencies and private organizations that could come together as public education and awareness group.

Participants will complete an activity in which they develop a strategy and plan for implementing a public education and awareness program.
Unit 4: Objectives

At the conclusion of this unit, participants should be able to:

- Explain the acronyms, terms, and definitions relevant to this unit;
- Identify three pre-season preparedness and coordination activities;
- Discuss the different media that could be used to educate and inform the public; and
- Use the National Hurricane Survival Initiative Poll to describe areas to target with your public education campaign.

Visual 4-1

Unit 4: Pre-Season Readiness

- Evaluate plans
- Test/update tools and equipment
- NWS coordination
- Conduct training
- Public awareness
- Activity Pre-Season Actions for Public Education and Awareness
- Lessons Learned

Visual 4-2
Pre-Season Readiness Decision-Making

Effective decision-making greatly depends on pre-season preparedness and coordination.

Visual 4-3

Pre-Season Readiness Decision-Making (cont’d.)

- A well-informed public has a greater chance of survival from tropical cyclones
- A comprehensive public education and awareness program improves the response and survivability of the affected public
- Creativity is needed in developing a public education program and soliciting assistance from other governmental agencies and private organizations

Visual 4-4

Notes:
Evaluate Plans

- Review local hurricane plans and annexes with staff and Emergency Support Function agencies
- Assess jurisdiction's capability and resources
- Conduct exercise/drills

Test/Update Tools and Equipment

- Update decision assistance tools to current application: HURREVAC, SLOSH, or others?
- Emergency Alert Systems
- NOAA Weather Radios
- Generators
- Highway message boards and signage
- Other equipment?

Notes:
**Hurricane Awareness Study**

The study showed that homeowners:
- Perceive a low level of hurricane risk
- Think they are well prepared for hurricanes, but they are not
- For the most part, have taken no action to protect their homes from hurricanes
- Lack a thorough knowledge of hurricanes
- Think it is too expensive to take preventive actions, but lack awareness of how much preventive actions cost

**NWS Coordination**

- Meet with Weather Forecast Office (WFO) staff before hurricane season starts
- Locate contact information for the National Hurricane Center, River Forecast Centers, other NWS resources
- Understand local WFO operations and advisory products
- Access advisory information: Websites, conference calls, etc.
- Other resources to consider?
Conduct Training

- Staff
- Elected officials
- Primary and secondary ESF personnel
  - Mass care
  - Evacuation/transportation officials
  - Law enforcement
  - Local volunteers
  - Others?

Public Education and Awareness

- Use of Media for Communication
  - Devise a strategy that will be effective in your jurisdiction. For example, you will need to consider:
    - Media effectiveness
    - Language and literacy issues
    - Computer literacy and access
    - Special populations

What other considerations would you include?
Published Materials

Published Materials

How published materials can be used for public awareness and education:
- Publish a special section in your local newspaper with emergency information on hurricanes
- Publish a preparedness booklet for public distribution
- Develop a CD-ROM learning program or instructional video targeting schoolchildren or other groups
- Create preparedness displays for area malls or public buildings
- Other ideas for using print materials?

Television, Radio, and the Internet

Television, Radio, and the Internet

How TV, radio, and the Internet can be used for public awareness and education:
- Produce a television special for broadcast on a local cable channel
- Produce a public service announcement for broadcast on a local radio station
- Post an electronic brochure on the Internet, and create links from other Websites to this brochure
- Other ideas for using TV, radio, and the Internet?
### Public Forums

**How public forums can be used for public awareness and education:**
- Give a presentation at a school board or PTA meeting
- Set up a booth at a community safety fair or other public event
- Teach a workshop at a local conference or civic meeting
- **Other ideas for using public forums?**

**Visual 4-13**

### Partner Organizations

**Partner organizations that might assist with public awareness and education:**
- Law enforcement
- Schools and other educational institutions
- Volunteer agencies
- Civic organizations
- **Other ideas for partner organizations in your community?**

**Visual 4-14**
### Activity 4:1—Pre-Season Actions for Public Education and Awareness

- Present a sampling of strategies for public education and awareness

#### Visual 4-15

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## Activity 4:1—Pre-Season Actions for Public Education and Awareness

**Directions:**

1. Discuss ideas for the questions below with your group members.
2. Fill in answers to the questions to serve as a public education and awareness strategy in your region.
3. Identify a group spokesperson who will present your ideas to the large group.

### Pre-Season Actions for Public Education and Awareness

1. The class discussed three media categories for use in educating the public on hurricane preparedness:
   - **Published materials**, such as a special section in your local newspaper with emergency information on hurricanes;
   - **TV, radio, and the Internet**, such as posting an electronic brochure on the Internet; and
   - **Public forums**, such as giving a presentation on hurricane preparedness at a school board or PTA meeting.

Which media and strategies do you think will be most effective in your jurisdiction? Consider the points discussed in class as you write a prioritized list of **at least three strategies** below.

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2. As discussed in class, a successful public education and awareness strategy involves partner organizations. Identify **at least potential six partner organizations** in your community that might work with you to educate the public on hurricane preparedness.

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<th>Organization 1</th>
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3. Which are the primary special needs (e.g., mobility impaired, non-English speakers, etc.) that need to be considered in your jurisdiction when disseminating preparedness information? Consider the points discussed in class as you write a prioritized list of **at least three special needs** below, as well as your strategy for addressing them in your public education and awareness efforts.

________________________________________________________________________
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### Lessons Learned

<table>
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<td>What regional/local media capability and public awareness material does your community have?</td>
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<td>How is this media capability used and when?</td>
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<td>How does pre-season awareness differ from operational public information?</td>
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<td>How effective are your mitigation procedures and processes?</td>
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### Visual 4-16

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### Transition to Unit 5: Hurricane Evacuation Studies

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### Notes:

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