

CITY OF BEAUMONT

ANNEX I

PUBLIC INFORMATION

July 16, 2014



APPROVAL & IMPLEMENTATION

Annex I

PUBLIC INFORMATION

B. Pennington
Signature

PIO

7/15/14
Date

Carol Riley
Signature

PIO Assistant

7-8-14
Date

[Signature]
Signature

EMC

7-16-14
Date

NOTE: The signature(s) will be based upon local administrative practices. Typically, the individual having primary responsibility for this emergency function signs the first signature block and the second signature block is used by the Emergency Management Coordinator, Mayor, or County Judge. Alternatively, each department head assigned tasks within the annex may sign the annex.

ANNEX I

PUBLIC INFORMATION

I. AUTHORITY

- A. See Section I of the Basic Plan for general authorities.
- B. Texas Local Government Code, Chapter 203 (Management and Preservation of Records).
- C. City of Beaumont General Ordinances, Article 1.06, Division 2. (Records Management Program)

II. PURPOSE

The purpose of this annex is to outline the means, organization, and process by which we will provide appropriate information and instructions to the public during emergency situations and major events. This annex also provides for public education to be conducted in advance of emergency situations to reduce the likelihood that citizens will place themselves in hazardous situations that may require an emergency response.

III. EXPLANATION OF TERMS

A. Acronyms

EAS	Emergency Alert System
EMC	Emergency Management Coordinator
EOC	Emergency Operations Center
IC	Incident Command/Commander
ICP	Incident Command Post
JFO	Joint Field Office
JIC	Joint Information Center
JIS	Joint Information System
LWP	Local Warning Point
PIO	Public Information Officer
TV	Television

B. Definitions

Public Information: Information provided to citizens before, during, and after emergency situations/incidents and major events specifically including instructions on how to protect personal health, safety, and property or how to obtain assistance as well as awareness of the event or incident.

IV. SITUATION & ASSUMPTIONS

A. Situation

1. The City of Beaumont faces a number of hazards which may cause emergency situations; see Section IV of the Basic Plan for a summary of those hazards and their possible impact.
2. During emergencies, the public needs timely, accurate information on the emergency situation and appropriate instructions regarding protective actions that should be taken to minimize injuries, loss of life and damage to property.
3. During major events, the public needs timely notice of accurate information regarding the event and/or measures which are in place to facilitate the event in order to increase the public's situational awareness of potential diversions that may be in place to improve safety and maximize participation.
4. For some slowly developing emergency situations (such as river flooding or hurricanes), there may be several days for local government and the media to provide detailed information about the hazard and what citizens should do.
5. For major events, there may be several days for local government and the media to provide detailed information about the event and/or measures which are in place to facilitate the event, and what citizens should do to maximize safety and participation.
6. For some emergency situations, 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. For this reason, it is important that the public be advised of likely hazards and what protective measures should be taken to lessen the impact of an emergency and/or disaster.

B. Assumptions

1. An effective program combining both education and emergency information can significantly reduce loss of life and property. However, many people are unconcerned about hazards until 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 emergency situations and may participate in pre-disaster awareness programs and other disaster education activities. They are commonly supportive of special event notices.
3. Some emergency situations and/or major events may generate substantial media interest and draw both local media and media from outside the local area, overwhelming the available emergency public information staff.

4. While a primary PIO is formally designated for citywide incident and event management, smaller incidents and events may elicit an appointment either temporarily or for the whole response by the IC.

V. CONCEPT OF OPERATIONS

A. General

1. Pursuant to the National Incident Management System (NIMS) operating principles and protocols, public information efforts should generally focus on specific incident/event-related information. This information will generally be of an instructional nature focusing on such things as warning, evacuation, and shelter. Appendix 2 describes some basic emergency information needs.
2. A special effort should be made to keep the public informed of the general progress of events. Reporting positive information regarding emergency response will help to reassure the community that the situation is under control. Rumor control must be a major aspect of the informational program. Public feedback should be used as a measure of the program's effectiveness.
3. Education efforts are to be directed toward increasing public awareness about potential hazards and how people should prepare for them. All information and education efforts will rely heavily on the cooperation of every type of media organization.

B. Information Dissemination

1. In the initial stages of an emergency situation, the Local Warning Point, otherwise known as the 911/311 Operations Center, located at 700 Orleans, may have to take action on time-sensitive hazards. Within the limits of the authority delegated to it, the Local Warning Point (LWP) will, formulate a warning if necessary, and disseminate it. The Alternate Warning Point (Fire Dispatch), EMC, PIO or other designee may also 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 may be tailored as needed for specific circumstances.
2. As Emergency Alert System (EAS) messages are limited to two minutes, EAS warning messages may have to be supplemented with Special News Advisories prepared by the PIO staff that contains amplifying emergency information. Special News Advisories are generally disseminated to media outlets by email and/or fax. Copies of the pre-scripted messages, which include warning messages and Special News Advisories, are maintained electronically by the PIO, EMC, in the EOC, and on the citywide share drive so that they can be modified quickly.
 - a. 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 Federal Communications Commission

encourages licensees to broadcast local warning and instruction messages, but the final decision on broadcasting such messages rests with the broadcasters.

- b. Broadcasters and cable operators will expect EAS to be used for life-threatening emergencies.
3. When the Incident Command System is activated for an emergency situation or major event, the Incident Commander may warn the public in and around the incident site as applicable. The PIO or assistant PIO at the Incident Command Post (ICP) will normally provide information on the emergency situation to the media. The IC/UC, EOC Manager, the EMC or the Mayor will approve all information relayed to the media by the PIO.
4. Once the EOC has been activated for an emergency situation, the EMC or designee will normally determine the need for additional warning and instructions. The PIO staff will formulate, and normally execute, additional warning messages and public instructions, using the sample messages contained in Annex A as a basis, where appropriate. The 911/311 Operations Center may assist in executing such warnings by activating the warning system, including transmitting EAS messages to broadcasters. The PIO staff will disseminate Special News Advisories and other emergency public information materials to the media directly using its contact list.
5. In the case of large-scale emergencies, disasters, or special events where there are substantial external responders from other jurisdictions and/or state or federal agencies and the management, response and recovery effort may continue for an extended period, a Joint Information Center (JIC) may be established. The JIC, an element of the Joint Information System (JIS) developed to provide information to the public during an emergency, is a working facility where the emergency public information efforts of all participating jurisdictions, agencies, volunteer organizations, and other responders can be coordinated to ensure consistency and accuracy. In federally declared incidents, a JIC will typically be set up as part of the Joint Field Office (JFO).
6. The following means will be used to provide emergency information and instructions to the public:
 - a. EAS broadcasts by radio, television, and cable companies
 - b. Special news broadcasts by radio, television, and cable companies
 - c. Local newspapers
 - d. Time Warner Cable local government access channel
 - e. Mobile units with public address systems
 - f. Contracted Emergency Notification warning/information system
 - g. The local government Internet communication websites
 - h. 2-1-1 information network

- i. 3-1-1 local government information network
- j. Social Media

C. Providing Emergency Information to Functional Needs Population

Functional Needs populations will be provided information on emergency situations and appropriate instructions by the following methods:

- 1. Visually-impaired: EAS messages and news advisories on radio, NOAA Weather Radio, or by door-to-door notification
- 2. Hearing-impaired: Captioned EAS messages and news advisories on television, print media, local government internet communication websites
- 3. Non-English Speakers: Interpreters/radio, appropriate print media, TV, or cable language newscasts, contracted emergency notification warning/information system in appropriate languages for the target area, door-to-door, or other means

D. Resources

The PIO shall maintain a Media Roster that contains the names, telephone and facsimile numbers, and E-mail addresses of each of the media resources listed below. See Appendix 1 for a complete roster.

- 1. Radio
 - a. Clear Channel Communications
 - b. Cumulus Broadcasting
 - c. KSHN
- 2. Broadcast Television
 - a. KBMT CHANNEL 12
 - b. KFDM CHANNEL 6
 - c. KBTW CHANNEL 4
- 3. Cable Television
 - a. Time Warner
- 4. Newspapers
 - a. Beaumont Enterprise
 - b. Examiner
 - c. Port Arthur News
 - d. La Voz

5. Other

- a. Emergency Management link on the City of Beaumont website
- b. Emergency Management preparedness information, plans, resources and materials are available upon request from local media outlets and the Office of Emergency management for the City of Beaumont. Applicable phone numbers are posted in the local and city phone books.
- c. Public Safety Departments link on the City of Beaumont website
- d. Local Government Channel Station on Cable Television-Channel 4 Time Warner

E. Phases of Management

1. Mitigation

- a. Conduct hazard awareness programs.
- b. Develop systems to enhance information dissemination during emergency situations.

2. Preparedness

- a. Develop and distribute educational materials; conduct public education programs.
- b. In coordination with the EMC, 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.
- c. Brief media on local warning systems and coordinate procedures for transmitting emergency information to media.
- d. Conduct public education on warning systems and the actions that should be taken for various types of warnings.
- e. Train public information staff.
- f. Maintain this annex.
- g. Identify and prepare suitable facilities for a Joint Information Center.
- h. Brief local officials and emergency responders on working with the media. See Appendix 3.

3. Response

- a. Develop, obtain authorization, and release public information on the emergency situation or major event.
- b. Conduct media monitoring to determine the need to clarify issues and distribute updated public instructions.

- c. Manage rumor control.
 - d. Conduct news conferences, briefings, provide necessary informational materials, and arrange interviews as needed.
4. Recovery
- a. Provide public information relating to recovery process and programs.
 - b. Compile record of events and all public safety messages or alerts.
 - e. Assess effectiveness of public information and education program
 - f. Determine shortfalls and identify and/or implement possible solutions.

VI. ORGANIZATION & ASSIGNMENT OF RESPONSIBILITIES
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A. General

1. The overall responsibility for providing emergency information and instructions to the public rests with the Mayor or designee.
2. The Mayor or designee shall provide general guidance for Public Information programs and appoint a Public Information Officer (PIO).
3. The PIO 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.
4. Trained public information specialists will staff PIO positions at the Incident Command Post, Joint Information Coordination Center, and in the EOC.

B. Task Assignments

1. The Mayor or designee will:
 - a. Appoint a Public Information Officer (PIO).
 - b. 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 emergency situations.
 - c. Authorize release of all IC approved incident information to the media.
 - d. Ensure that a Joint Information Center (JIC) is activated when warranted by the incident.
2. The Public Information Officer (PIO) will:

- a. Represent and advise the IC/UC on all public information matters relating to the management of the incident.
- b. Ensure the IC/UC approves the release of all incident-related information.
- c. Coordinate and integrate public information functions across jurisdictions and functional agencies as required.
- d. Develop accurate and complete information on the incident for both internal and external consumption.
- e. Coordinate the overall emergency public information efforts of local government.
- f. Recommend the establishment of a JIC when warranted by the incident.
- g. Serve as the official City of Beaumont representative in the JIC.
- h. Conduct public education programs as an ongoing activity.
- i. 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:
 - 1) 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.
 - 2) Hazard specific instructions on "where to go and what to do" in an emergency.
 - 3) Information on how emergency warnings are disseminated and the meaning of warning signals.
- j. In coordination with the EMC, and respective Department Directors, develop pre-scripted warning messages for known hazards for use by the local warning point and the ICP/EOC.
- k. Develop methods (i.e., websites, briefings, speaking engagements, booths in high traffic areas, newspaper supplements, prepared TV/radio scripts for broadcast stations) for distribution of emergency preparation materials to the public, to include materials for non-English speaking groups, if appropriate.
- l. In cooperation with the EMC, coordinate with broadcasters (radio, television stations, and cable television companies) to develop procedures for local government to disseminate warning messages and emergency information through the broadcast media.
- m. Authenticate sources of information, verify for accuracy, and obtain authorization before issuing news releases.

- n. Provide authorized news releases to the media while keeping the appropriate key elected and appointed officials, 911/311 Operations Center, and IC informed of message content.
 - o. Monitor media coverage of emergency operations for accuracy of reports and issue corrections where necessary.
 - p. Take action to control rumors.
 - q. Brief potential and/or functioning Incident Commanders, department heads and key staff, and the EOC staff on basic public information needs, working with the media, and media access during emergency operations. See Appendices 2, 3 and 4 for further information on these subjects. Maintain a media briefing area in the vicinity of the EOC.
 - r. Maintain a media briefing area in the vicinity of the EOC
 - s. Periodically brief the media on local warning systems and warning procedures and encourage cellphone registration for emergency messages.
 - t. Maintain a Media Contact Roster. See Appendix 1 for a sample.
 - u. Compile printed and photographic documentation of the emergency/disaster if necessary.
 - v. Develop public information emergency checklists for known hazards. See Appendix 6.
 - w. Anticipate and be prepared to handle unscheduled inquiries from the media and the public.
 - x. Train a group of government employees and/or volunteers to staff PIO positions at the Incident Command Post and in the EOC.
 - y. Recommend updates for the Emergency Management website.
3. The EMC will:
- a. Reports to the Mayor regarding when to disseminate emergency instructions to the public.
 - b. Coordinate with the PIO in the development of pre-scripted emergency messages.
 - c. Work with the PIO in public education activities relating to emergency management.
 - d. Identify concerns raised by the public, rumors, and other issues involving citizens to the PIO so they may be addressed in public information activities.
 - e. Manage the City's Emergency Management website, posting appropriate information as applicable.

- f. Coordinate and manage a notification system capable of individual, citywide, employee, and geographic notifications utilizing available databases and reverse 911 data.
4. All City government departments and entities will:
 - a. Refer media inquiries during emergency situations to the IC, PIO or EMC as appropriate.
 - b. Assist the PIO in responding to requests for information from the public or the media.
 - c. Assist the PIO in responding to request for information from the public or the media.
 5. Media companies are expected to:
 - a. Disseminate warning messages and special news advisories provided by local government to the public as rapidly as possible.
 - b. Participate in periodic tests of the EAS and other warning systems.
 - c. Provide coverage of emergency management activities.
 - d. Work with PIO and EMC on public educational programs relating to emergencies.
 - e. Check accuracy of information on emergency operations with the PIO or EMC.

VII. DIRECTION & CONTROL

A. General

1. The Mayor or designee has overall responsibility for the emergency public information program, shall provide general guidance for emergency-related public education and information activities, shall appoint a PIO, and in conjunction with the IC or EMC, approve all information released to the news media.
2. The Public Information Officer shall direct all emergency public information activities, coordinating as necessary with other individuals, departments, and agencies performing other emergency functions.
3. To the extent possible, the PIO shall release, upon approval, all appropriate information to the public and the media during emergency operations. Certain emergencies or disasters may entail sensitive or classified information where public dissemination would be illegal or counter-productive to an ongoing investigation. During emergency operations, departments and agencies shall refer media inquiries to the PIO.

B. Line of Succession. The line of succession for the Public Information Officer is:

1. Assistant PIO

2. Incident Commander
3. Emergency Management Coordinator

VIII. READINESS LEVELS

A. Readiness Level 4 - Normal Conditions

1. See the mitigation and preparedness activities in Section V.E, Emergency Management Activities by Phase.
2. Small events/incidents will likely be handled by the IC, appropriate dispatch center, or a temporary PIO most qualified for the function.

B. Readiness Level 3 - Increased Readiness

1. Monitor the situation.
2. Review and update Media Contact Roster.
3. Alert media of the increased threat so they are aware of the situation and are prepared to disseminate warnings and public instructions if necessary.
4. Alert City Employees to the increased threat.

C. Readiness Level 2 - High Readiness

1. Monitor the situation.
2. Review pre-scripted warning messages and public instruction messages; draft updated versions or additional messages tailored for the impending threat. Maintain approved version(s) at the intended and alternate warning points.
3. Alert personnel for possible emergency operations and/or staff ICP to the appropriate level; identify personnel for increased staffing during primary vulnerability period.
4. Determine requirements for additional pre-emergency public information and instructions and produce and disseminate those materials.
5. Consider placing public information personnel on shifts to provide for increased situation monitoring and to conduct additional public information planning.

D. Readiness Level 1 - Maximum Readiness

1. Monitor the situation.
2. Update warning messages as necessary.

3. Update public information materials based on current threat and disseminate.
4. Provide information to the media on local readiness activities.
5. Place selected off-duty personnel on standby to increase staffing if necessary.
6. Staff public information positions in the ICP (or EOC if applicable) when activated.
7. Monitor major news networks and local TV, Radio stations as appropriate to verify for accuracy, maintain situational awareness and to identify additional information needs.

IX. ADMINISTRATION & SUPPORT

A. Media Contact Roster

The PIO shall maintain a contact roster for the media organizations that are involved in local emergency management programs. A roster is provided in Appendix 1. During major incident/events, if additional media organizations respond, an incident /event specific roster will be developed and filed as documentation.

B. Records

1. The PIO shall maintain a file of all news advisories and press releases issued during emergency operations.
2. When possible, the Documentation Unit Leader, with the assistance of the PIO, shall compile and maintain copies of newspaper articles, digital or video records of emergency operations and news broadcasts relating to an emergency, and other media materials as applicable for use in post-incident analysis, reimbursement requests, and future training activities.

C. Educational Programs

1. The PIO and the EMC 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.
2. The Office of Emergency Management 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 pamphlets, posters, videotapes, CD-ROMs, and complete training curricula for school children. 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 school children, the elderly, and people with various disabilities. Public education materials relating to emergency management are available in a variety of foreign languages.

3. The principal providers of disaster-related educational materials are the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), the American Red Cross (ARC), and the Texas Division of Emergency Management (TDEM); many agencies and volunteer organizations also published specialized disaster-related educational materials. FEMA publishes a catalog of their publications and both FEMA and the ARC include educational materials on their web sites; see Section XI, References, for their addresses. The TDEM also distributes hazard-specific awareness materials periodically throughout the year to local EMCs as part of state awareness campaigns.
4. The Emergency Management Division will also conduct disaster preparedness, response and recovery training, education, certification and awareness programs for all City Employees commensurate with NIMS requirements and to enhance capabilities. Principal providers for the programs include internal certified instructors, FEMA, ARC, TDEM, Texas Forest Service, and the U.S. Military Services. References are similar to section 3 and available in Section XI.

D. Training

The designated PIO shall have at least a TDEM or FEMA designated basic public information officer course. Members of the public information staff for whom public information is not their primary daily work should attend public information training, preferably training focusing on emergency public information activities and have at least one year experience as a PIO. TDEM and FEMA offer Public Information Officer training to include the following courses: G289 Public Information Officer Awareness Course, G290 Basic Public Information Officer Training, G291 JIS/JIC Planning for Tribal, State, and Local PIOs, E388 Advanced Public Information Officer Course. The training for these courses should be coordinated through the Emergency Management Coordinator. The designated PIO will be required to attend the Advanced PIO Officer Course (E388) within two years of assignment.

X. ANNEX DEVELOPMENT & MAINTENANCE

- A. Development.** The Public Information Officer, in coordination with the EMC, is responsible for developing and maintaining this annex.
- B. Maintenance.** This annex will be reviewed annually and updated in accordance with the schedule outlined in Section X of the Basic Plan.
- C. Operating Procedures.** The Public Information Officer is responsible for developing and maintaining SOPs covering recurring public information tasks.

XI. REFERENCES

- A. FEMA, *FEMA Publications Catalog***

- B. FEMA, *Guide to All-Hazard Emergency Operations Planning* (SLG-101)
- C. FEMA web site: www.fema.gov
- D. American Red Cross web site: www.redcross.org
- E. Department of Homeland Security, *National Incident Management System*
- F. TDEM: <http://www.txdps.state.tx.us/dem/about.htm>
- G. Texas Forest Service: <http://txforestservicetamu.edu/main/default.aspx>
- H. United States Coast Guard: <http://homeport.uscg.mil/mycg/portal/ep/home.do>
- I. Southeast Texas Info: www.SETINFO.org
- J. Sabine Neches Chiefs Association: www.snychiefs.com

APPENDICES:

Appendix 1	Media Contact Roster
Appendix 2.....	Public Information Needs
Appendix 3.....	Working With the Media
Appendix 4.....	Media Access & Identification
Appendix 5.....	List of Pre-scripted Emergency Messages
Appendix 6.....	Public Information Checklists
Tab A	Public Information Checklist for Flooding
Tab B	Public Information Checklist for Hazmat Incident
Tab C	Public Information Checklist for Hurricanes

MEDIA CONTACT ROSTER

1. Radio

A. Station Name: Clear Channel Broadcasting

- 1) Address: 2885 IH 10 E., Beaumont, TX 77702
- 2) Frequency & Operating Hours: KLVI 560 AM, KYKR 95.1 FM
- 3) Telephone Number/Fax Number: office-409-896-5555; fax-409-896-5500
- 4) Website: www.klvi.com

B. Station Name: Cumulus Broadcasting

- 1) Address: 755 S. 11th St., Beaumont, TX
- 2) Frequency & Operating Hours: KQXY 94.1 , FM/KTCX 102.5 FM, KAYD 101.7 FM, LAGRAN 1450 AM, 1550 AM
- 3) Telephone Number/Fax Number: office-409-951-2500 fax-40
- 4) Website: www.beaumont.cumulusradio.com

Station Name: KSHN News

- 1) Address: 2099 Sam Houston Street, Liberty, Texas 77575
- 2) Frequency & Operating Hours: KPFT FM 99.9 (Liberty) 89.5 FM (Houston)
- 4) Telephone Number/Fax Number: office- 936-336-5793; fax- 936-336-5250
- 5) Website: www.kshn.com

2. Television

Station Name: KBMT Channel 12

- 1) Address: 525 IH10 S., Beaumont, TX
- 2) Frequency & Operating Hours: Channel 12/ 204mhz FM/
- 3) Telephone Number/Fax Number: office-409-838-7512; fax-409-835-1617
- 4) Website: www.12newsnow.com

Station Name: KFDM Channel 6

- 1) Address: 2955 IH 10 E., Beaumont, TX
- 2) Frequency & Operating Hours: Channel 6/ 87.74mhz FM/
- 4) Telephone Number/Fax Number: 409-895-4664 or 895-4675 fax-409-892-7305
- 5) E-mail Address: news@kfdm.com

Station Name: KBTv Channel 4

- 1) Address: 6155 Eastex Frwy, Suite 300, Beaumont, TX
- 2) Frequency & Operating Hours: Channel 4/ 66.72mhz FM
- 3) Contact Name: Scott Price
- 4) Telephone Number/Fax Number: office- 409-840-4444; fax-409-899-4639
- 5) E-mail Address: news@kbtv4.tv

3. Cable Television Company

Name: Time Warner Cable

- 1) Address: 1460 Calder, Beaumont, TX
- 2) Service Area: Jefferson County
- 3) Telephone Number: 409-727-1515
- 4) Fax Number:
- 5) Website: www.timewarnercable.com

4. Newspapers

Name: Beaumont Enterprise

- 1) Address: 380 Main St., Beaumont, TX
- 2) Distribution Area: Southeast Texas Region (Hardin, Jefferson, Orange Counties)
- 3) Telephone Numbers: 409-880-0737,0735,0728,0733,0731
- 4) Fax Number: 409-880-0757
- 5) E-mail Address: localnews@beaumontenterprise.com

Name: La Voz (Spanish)

- 1) Address: 11475 HWY 90, Beaumont, TX
- 2) Distribution Area: Beaumont, Pt. Arthur
- 3) Contact Name: Robert Castillo
- 4) Telephone Number: 409-299-6447
- 5) Fax Number: 409-838-2173
- 6) E-mail Address: lavozdebmt@sbcglobal.net

Name: The Examiner

- 1) Address: 795 Willow, Beaumont, TX 77701
- 2) Distribution Area: Hardin, Jefferson and Orange Counties
- 3) Contact Name: Sharon Brooks
- 4) Telephone Number: 409-498-1074
- 5) Fax Number: 409-832-6222
- 6) E-mail Address: jerry@theexaminer.com

Name: Port Arthur News

- 1) Address: 3501 Turtle Creek Drive, Port Arthur, TX
- 2) Distribution Area: City of Port Arthur
- 3) Contact Name: Mary Meaux
- 4) Telephone Number: 409-721-2426
- 5) Fax Number: 409-724-6854
- 6) E-mail Address: panews@panews.com

PUBLIC INFORMATION NEEDS

1. Background

During emergency situations, it is important to provide the general 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 manpower that local government would have to divert from response and recovery tasks to deal with (which 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.

2. Information Needs

The following types of information should be provided to the public as soon as possible in as much detail as possible.

A. What Happened

- 1) Nature of incident or emergency
- 2) Location
- 3) Time of occurrence
- 4) Situation resolved or response on-going
- 5) Cause (Until an investigation has determined the cause with reasonable certainty, it may not be advisable to speculate.)

B. Current Response Actions

What actions have been or are being taken to protect public health and safety and public and private property?

C. Known Damages

- 1) Homes
- 2) Businesses
- 3) Government buildings
- 4) Infrastructure – roads, bridges, parks, etc.

D. Casualties

- 1) Number dead and apparent cause
- 2) Number injured and nature/severity of injuries and where being treated
- 3) Number missing and circumstances
- 4) General identification of casualties – age, sex, situation (employee, homeowner, responder, etc.
- 5) Names of casualties – only released after next of kin have been notified

E. Evacuations

- 1) Areas and facilities evacuated
- 2) Approximate number of evacuees

F. Shelter & Mass Care

- 1) Shelters open – name and location
- 2) Approximate number of persons being housed in shelters
- 3) Mass feeding site or other mass care facilities in operation – name, location, and number of persons being served.

G. Status of Utilities

- 1) Electric service
- 2) Telephone system
- 3) Water system
- 4) Sewer system
- 5) Natural gas distribution

H. Road and Facility Closures

I. Organizations Responding

- 1) Local government
- 2) State agencies
- 3) Federal agencies
- 4) Volunteer groups

J. Means of contacting evacuees

K. Applicable City (cityofbeaumont.com) and Informational websites

L. Areas to which access is restricted and the reason(s) for such restriction

M. For ongoing emergency situations, planned response activities

N. In the recovery phase:

- 1) Disaster assistance programs available
- 2) How to apply for disaster assistance

3. Collection and Dissemination of Information

Information shall be collected and disseminated as soon as possible by the appropriate personnel. All incident related information must be approved by the IC prior to dissemination.

- A. 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 EOC 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.

- B. Where an Incident Command Post has been established and the EOC has been activated, information from the incident scene will still be passed to the established Public Information Officer. 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.
- C. The Shelter and Mass Care Unit leader is responsible for collecting information on shelter and mass care activities and providing that information to the PIO.
- D. The Situation Unit leader is responsible for obtaining regular update information on the status of utilities and providing it to the IC and PIO. This can be coordinated through an Energy and/or Utilities representative if one is available in the EOC. In event lasting multiple days, a status update should be provided by the beginning of each operational period.
- E. Law Enforcement and Public Works/Engineering are responsible for obtaining information on road closures and facility closures and providing it to the PIO.
- F. The PIO is responsible for collection of information from the Incident Commander, the EOC staff, and other sources and agencies. The PIO staff is responsible for preparation of news releases, for the dissemination of information directly to the news media, and, where appropriate, for making arrangements for announcements directly to the public via radio and/or television hookups.
- G. Hospitals are responsible for dissemination of information concerning casualties and deaths within the hospital's area of responsibility. They generally have policies restricting the release of detailed information without permission of patients or their families. This information that they choose to release will normally be disseminated directly to the news media. The PIO should request that the EOC be provided copies of any information released to the media.

WORKING WITH THE MEDIA

1. What to do when working with the media:

- A. Identify your spokesperson beforehand.
- B. Have a number the media know to call when they need information.
- C. Make certain the person answering the phones knows to whom to direct media calls.
- D. Get all the information you can from those in charge before you talk with the media.
- E. Write out the answers to these questions for **your** use:
 - 1) What happened?
 - 2) When did it happen?
 - 3) Where did it happen?
 - 4) Why did this happen?
 - 5) Who's responsible, involved, injured?
 - 6) How many were hurt or killed? What are their names/ages/addresses?
 - 7) Can I shoot video/take photos? How close can I get?
 - 8) Who can I talk to?
 - 9) What is your agency doing about it?

2. When you talk with the media:

- A. Tell the truth and if related to the incident, ensure the IC has approved the information.
- B. Be courteous and don't play favorites.
- C. Avoid "off the record" remarks.
- D. Never say anything you would not want to see printed or broadcast.
- E. Stay on top of the interview by listening to the reporter's questions.
- F. Don't accept the reporter's definitions of what happened.
- G. Pause, think; ask for more time if you need it.
- H. Respond only to the question you've been asked. Don't speculate.
- I. Stick to the core message

MEDIA ACCESS & IDENTIFICATION

1. 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.

- A. 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.
- B. The EMC or Incident Commander when applicable, in coordination with the PIO, shall establish rules for media access to the EOC or ICP. When the EOC or ICP is activated, representatives of news media may be provided access to those areas of the EOC or ICP designated by the EMC or IC. As a general rule, press briefings will not be conducted in the EOC or ICP because they can disrupt on-going operations; briefings locations will be determined based on the immediate situation. Photo shoots and interviews may be conducted in the EOC with appropriate approval, but these should be scheduled by the PIO so as to minimize disruption or unauthorized disclosures.
- C. Hospitals establish their own rules of access for news media representatives and these may vary for individual circumstances. For emergency situations where there have been substantial casualties, it may be desirable for hospitals to provide a pressroom or other designated area with access to telephones for the use of news media representatives.
- D. 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.

2. Media Identification

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

- A. A media company identification card with photo that identifies them as a media representative, unless there is reason to believe that the identification is not genuine.
- B. Texas Department of Public Safety Press identification card.

LIST OF PRE-SCRIPTED EMERGENCY MESSAGES
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The following pre-scripted emergency messages have been prepared and are included in Annex A, Warning:

1. Warning – General Incident
2. Warning – Road/Facility Closure
3. Warning – Shelter-in-Place
4. Special News Advisory – Pre-Evacuation
5. Warning – Urgent Evacuation
6. Warning – Deliberate Evacuation
7. Special News Advisory – Supplemental Evacuation Information
8. Special News Advisory – Schools & Public Facility Status

PUBLIC INFORMATION CHECKLISTS

This appendix includes the following Emergency Public Information (PI) Checklists:

- Tab A Pubic Information Checklist for Flooding
- Tab B Public Information Checklist for Hazmat Incidents
- Tab C Public Information Checklist for Hurricanes

Public Information Checklist for Flooding

✓	Pre-Emergency Phase
	1. Conduct public education and distribute preparedness materials highlighting local flood risk areas, precautionary actions, and protective actions.
	2. In coordination with the EMC, maintain a set of pre-scripted warning and public instructions messages ready for use. See Annex A to the Basic Plan.
	3. Coordinate with school authorities/PIOs on policies/procedures for announcing school closures.
	4. Review local Hazard Analysis and Annex E to EM Plan to identify potential flood risk areas and evacuation routes.
	5. Coordinate with Animal Control, Animal Shelter, and other organizations to determine availability of facilities for evacuated pets and large animals.
	6. Coordinate with PIOs from local response agencies and volunteer groups and develop an effective PIO-to-PIO communication system.
	Readiness Phase
	1. Ensure PIO receives current information on flood watches & warnings.
	2. Coordinate with the Shelter and Mass Care Officer to determine likely shelter sites.
	3. Coordinate with Law Enforcement to determine planned/likely evacuation routes.
	4. In coordination with the EMC, update precautionary action and evacuation message(s). See Annex A of EM Plan.
	5. Develop maps of likely evacuation areas and evacuation routes that can be provided to the media.
	6. Disseminate property protection and evacuation preparedness information to public through media.
	Emergency Response Phase
	1. Provide evacuation area and evacuation route maps to media.
	2. Release evacuation recommendation through warning system.
	3. Release information on how transportation will be provided for those who lack it.
	4. Release public instructions on securing property, evacuation routes, and what to take with you.
	5. Release information to media on shelter and mass care facilities available.
	6. Release information to media on where persons needing assistance should call.
	7. Release special instructions for those evacuating pets.
	8. Release information on curfews and travel restrictions in effect within evacuation areas.
	9. Release information on disaster welfare inquiry procedures.
	10. Advise the public not to return to the evacuation area until told to do so.
	11. Inform media of emergency response actions and organizations participating.

✓	Post-Emergency Phase
	1. Coordinate with Law Enforcement to obtain information on routes for return of evacuees and areas where reentry is restricted due to damage.
	2. Coordinate with EMC to obtain and release damage assessments to media, updating as additional information becomes available.
	3. Release information to media on return of evacuees and preferred reentry routes, if any.
	4. Release information to media on access controls for damaged areas, if any.
	5. Provide public information on safety precautions for entering damaged buildings and the need to document damage and contact insurance companies.
	6. Release information on disaster relief/recovery programs and facilities.
	7. Release information to media on termination of shelter operations
	8. Release information on debris removal activities.
	9. 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 Hazmat Incidents

✓	Pre-Emergency Phase
	1. Review local Hazard Analysis and Annex E, to obtain information on potential Hazmat risk areas and evacuation routes.
	2. Conduct public education and distribute preparedness materials highlighting local Hazmat risk areas, precautionary actions, and protective actions.
	3. In coordination with the EMC, maintain a set of pre-scripted warning and public instructions messages ready for use. See Annex A.
	4. Coordinate with school authorities, other PIOs, and local media on policies/procedures for announcing school closures or evacuations.
	5. Coordinate with special facilities or special needs populations and local media on policies/ procedures for announcing closures or evacuations.
	6. Coordinate with PIOs from local response agencies and volunteer groups and develop an effective PIO-to-PIO communication system.
	7. Coordinate with local media to insure thorough understanding of Hazmat response operations and protective actions such as shelter-in-place and evacuation.
	8. Disseminate evacuation preparedness information to the public.
	Readiness Phase
	1. Insure PIO receives current information on potential Hazmat incidents.
	2. Coordinate with the Shelter and Mass Care Officer to determine likely shelter sites.
	3. Coordinate with Law Enforcement to determine planned/likely evacuation routes.
	4. In coordination with the EMC, update precautionary action and evacuation message(s). See Annex A to the Basic Plan.
	5. Develop maps of likely evacuation areas and evacuation routes that can be provided to the media.
	Emergency Response Phase
	1. 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.
	2. Disseminate property protection and evacuation preparedness information to public through the media.
	3. <i>Shelter in Place Actions</i>
	a. Release shelter in place recommendation through the media.
	b. Provide shelter in place instructions to the media.
	c. Provide maps of geographic area that will shelter in place.

Emergency Response Phase (Continued)	
4. Evacuation Actions	
	a. Release evacuation recommendation through media.
	b. Provide evacuation area and evacuation route maps to media.
	c. Release information on how transportation will be provided for those who lack it.
	d. Release public instructions on securing property, property protection, and what to take with you.
	e. Release information to media on shelter and mass care facilities available.
	f. 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.
5. General Actions	
	a. Release information to media on where persons needing assistance should call.
	b. Release information on curfews and travel restrictions in effect within evacuation areas.
	c. Release information on disaster welfare inquiry procedures
	d. Advise the public not to return to the evacuation/shelter in place area until told to do so by the proper authorities.
	e. Inform media of emergency response actions and organizations participating.
Post-Emergency Phase	
	1. Coordinate with law enforcement to obtain information on routes for return of evacuees and areas where reentry is restricted due to damage.
	2. Coordinate with EMC, or IC when applicable, to obtain and release damage/contamination assessments to media, and update them as additional information becomes available.
	3. Release information to media on return of evacuees and preferred reentry routes, if any
	4. Release information to media on access controls for damaged areas, if any.
	5. Provide public information on safety precautions for entering damaged areas and the need to document damage and contact insurance companies.
	6. Release information on disaster relief/recovery programs and facilities.
	7. Release information on termination of shelter operations.
	8. Release information on decontamination activities.
	9. Release information on volunteer assistance.
	10. Release information on clean-up/decontamination activities, if needed.
	11. 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 Hazmat incidents occur without significant warning, it may not be feasible to conduct some of the activities listed in the Readiness Phase.

Public Information Checklist for Hurricanes

✓	Pre-Emergency Phase
	1. Conduct public education and distribute preparedness materials highlighting local hurricane risk areas, precautionary actions, and protective actions.
	2. In coordination with the EMC, maintain a set of pre-scripted warning and public instructions messages ready for use. See Annex A to the Basic Plan.
	3. Coordinate with school authorities/PIOs on policies/procedures for announcing school closures.
	4. Review local Hazard Analysis and Annex E to EM Plan, to identify potential hurricane risk areas and evacuation routes.
	5. Disseminate information on the availability of facilities for evacuated pets and large animals.
	6. Coordinate with PIOs from local response agencies and volunteer groups and develop an effective PIO-to-PIO communication system.
	7. Disseminate information emphasizing the need for ride sharing during an evacuation.
	Readiness Phase
	1. Ensure PIO receives current information on hurricane watches & warning.
	2. Coordinate with the Shelter and Mass Care Officer to determine likely shelter sites that could be used during the recovery phase.
	3. Coordinate with Law Enforcement to determine planned/likely evacuation routes.
	4. In coordination with the EMC, update precautionary action and evacuation message(s). See Annex A to the Basic Plan.
	5. Develop maps of likely evacuation areas and evacuation routes that can be provided to the media.
	6. Disseminate property protection and evacuation preparedness information to public through media.
	7. Disseminate information to special need facilities and those in mobile home/trailer parks recommending an early precautionary evacuation.
	Emergency Response Phase
	1. Provide evacuation area and evacuation route maps to media.
	2. Release evacuation recommendation through warning system.
	3. Release information on how transportation will be provided for those who lack it.
	4. Release public instructions on securing property, evacuation routes, and what to take with you.
	5. Release information to media on shelter and mass care facilities available.
	6. Release information to media on where persons needing assistance should call.
	7. Release special instructions for those evacuating pets.
	8. Release information on curfews and travel restrictions in effect within evacuation areas.
	9. Release information on disaster welfare inquiry procedures.
	10. Advise the public not to return to the evacuation area until told to do so.
	11. Inform media of emergency response actions and organizations participating.
	12. Release information on the availability of food service, gas stations, and medical facilities.

✓	Post-Emergency Phase
	1. Coordinate with Law Enforcement to obtain information on routes for return of evacuees and areas where reentry is restricted due to damage.
	2. Coordinate with EMC to obtain and release damage assessments to media, updating as additional information becomes available.
	3. Release information to media on return of evacuees and preferred reentry routes, if any.
	4. Release information to media on access controls for damaged areas, if any.
	5. Provide public information on safety precautions for entering damaged buildings and the need to document damage and contact insurance companies.
	6. Release information on disaster relief/recovery programs and facilities.
	7. Release information to media on termination of shelter operations
	8. Release information on debris removal activities.
	9. Release information on where to obtain disaster mental health/crisis counseling services.
	10. Release information on volunteer assistance for home cleanup and repair.