



# Using risk communication before, during and after an emergency: Are you ready to respond?

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**REMEMBER:**

**DIKES ARE SAFE AT PRESENT.  
YOU WILL BE WARNED IF NECESSARY.  
YOU WILL HAVE TIME TO LEAVE.  
DON'T GET EXCITED.**

# Empowering people to make decisions: Risk communication

## Risk Communication

An open, two-way exchange of information and opinion about risk leading to better understanding and better risk management decisions.



*Highway 36/ Triangle Lake Exposure Investigation*

# Non-routine events: Crisis communication

## Crisis Communication

- Heightened media attention
- Uncertain situation
- Short response time



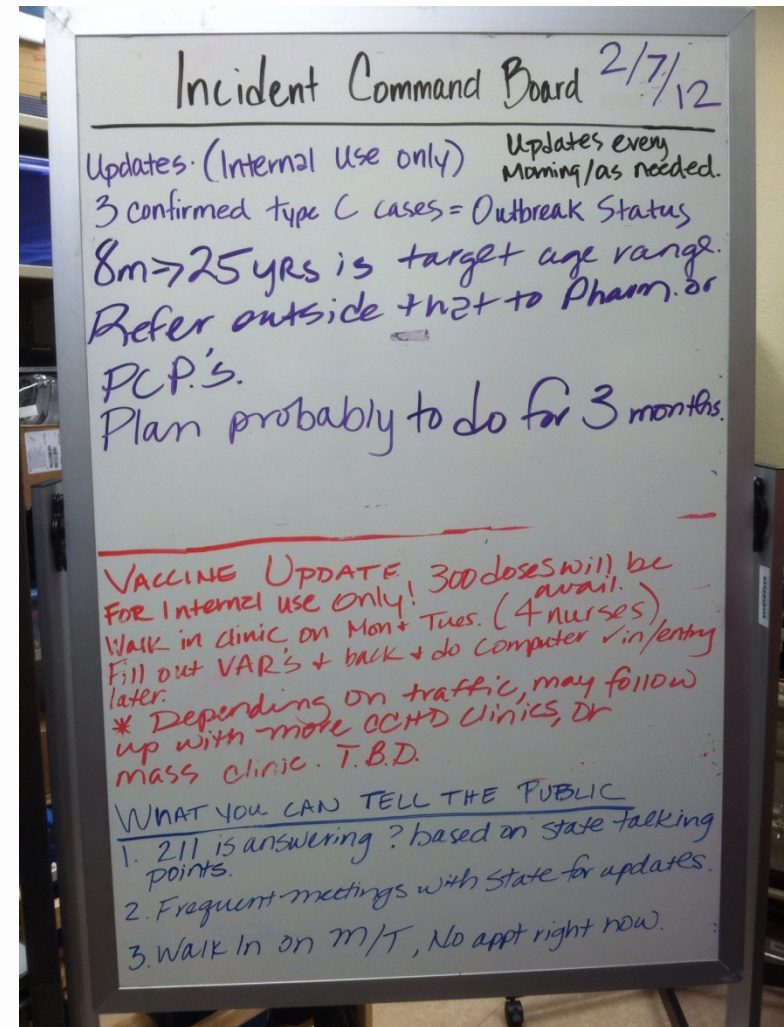
# Emergency risk communication

Messages that include the **urgency of crisis communication** with the need to **communicate risk and benefits** to stakeholders and the public.



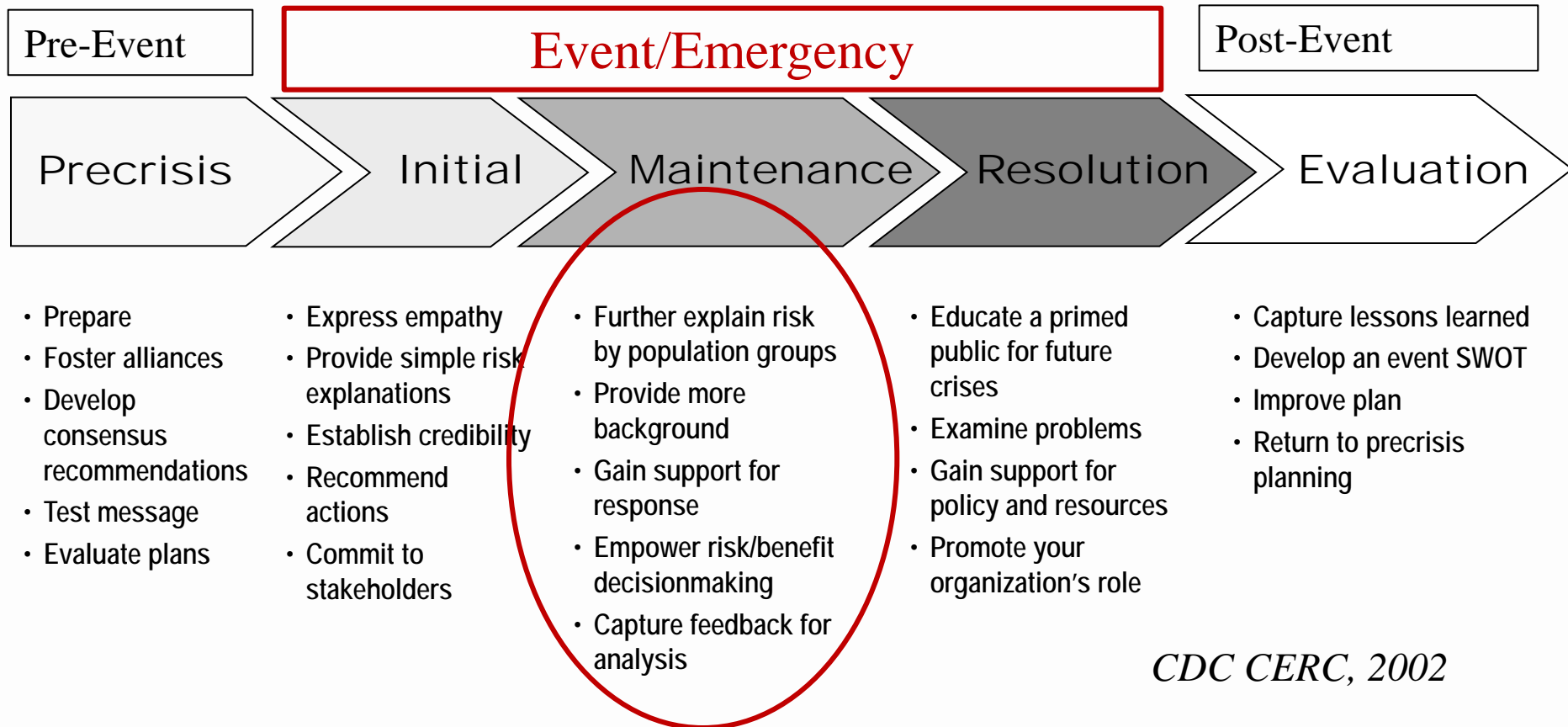
# Emergency risk communication: What to say

- Incident Action Plan for public information
  - Who else needs to be involved?
  - What do we know now?
  - Is there a health threat?
  - Can the health threat be reduced, mitigated, eliminated?
  - Has the media called yet?
- Create phased based messaging





# Emergency risk communication: When to say it



*CDC CERC, 2002*

# Communication Plan Development

- Goals
- Identifying partners
- Communication objectives (can we measure them?)
- Strategies
- Tactics
- Target audiences
- Key messages
- Key channels
- Evaluation



# Communication Goals

- These refer to longer-term, broad, more global, future statement of “being.” Goals may include how an organization is uniquely distinguished in the minds of its target publics.
- Example: To become a recognized leader, foster continuing public support, etc.

# Communication Objectives

- Focuses on short-term, defines WHAT behavior, attitude or opinions you want to achieve from specific audiences, HOW much to achieve, and WHEN you want to achieve it.
- Create basis for evaluation
- Include time-frame
- Include level of behavioral/opinion change (awareness, attitude, action)
- Include publics affected

# More on Communication Objectives

- Outcome objectives
  - Change behavior, awareness, opinion, support. Outcome objectives usually requires high-level strategic thinking.
- Process objectives
  - Serve to “inform” or “educate”
- Outputs
  - Measures activities, for example, number of contacts or news releases. Output can help monitor your work but have no direct value in measuring the effectiveness of a campaign.

# Communication Strategies

- These serve as road maps or the approach you will use to reach your objective.
- Strategies describe HOW to reach your objectives.
- Strategies include things like “enlist community influentials...” “accelerate” and “position.”

# Communication Tactics and Tools

- There serve as specific elements of a strategy or specific tools, more of the “how to”
- Examples include meetings, publications, tie-ins, community events, news releases, etc.

# 2013 Douglas Complex Fire



# Crisis and Emergency Risk Communication Toolkit for Wildfires



Developed for Oregon Local Health Departments by the  
Oregon Health Authority, Public Health Division  
Health Security, Preparedness, and Response Program



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## NOTICE

If you are currently experiencing wildfire and air quality issues, turn to the Crisis Phase section of this toolkit, which is marked by **red bands** on the right margins of the pages

## NOTICE

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# Activity: Are you ready to respond?

## Scenario based activity (30 – 35 minutes)

- Small group discussion (15 minutes)
  - Assign Scenarios
    - Draft messages
    - Use Communication Plan Development template
- Large group discussion (20 minutes)
  - Did you have everything you needed?
  - Who else should be involved with communication planning and implementation?

# Communication Surveillance: Ensuring the right messages at the right time

- Communication Surveillance Reports
  - Prominent themes
  - Misinformation, rumors
  - Information gaps
  - Agency mentions
- Media and public inquiries
  - What is the media asking?
  - What is the public asking?
    - Connecting with 2-1-1 Info

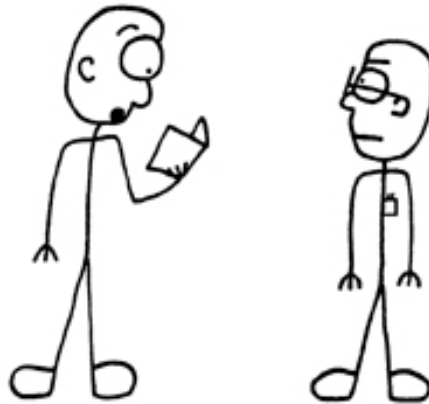
# Emergency risk communication: How to get it right

- Make an emergency risk communication plan
- Coordinate with neighboring counties, local agencies
- Tailor communication
  - Create multiple communication products for multiple audiences
    - Providers need to know specific information
    - The public needs to know how to protect themselves
- Media relations
  - Press releases are not the only option
  - Websites, social media, reverse 9-1-1, 2-1-1 Info
  - Earned media vs. paid media
- Who are your communication mentors, advisers?

# That's a wrap!

What is one thing you will work on, change, remove, add when you get back to the office?

Crisis Management Center



I'm not sure "everyone dies" is a great emergency plan.

reodorant.com

# Contact Information

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