

Local Church Emergency Communication

Establish / update your church's communications directory. Please do this now!

- Create an "emergency contact team" to call families & individuals within your church during a major crisis situation. There should be a single contact person for these teams to report to, who then gives completed report to the lead pastor for review and determination on how to proceed.
- To allow for the fastest information return response time, have a 1 to 10 contact ration. Each volunteer should have access to a pre-made information check list that will have peoples names / addresses / phone numbers / open space to write down notes & other information.
- Establish a separate contact team to identify and connect with those that are elderly, have special needs or significant medical conditions. Be sure to note specific critical needs on the contact list. This team should have a "1 to 5" person contact ratio. This team must make contact as soon as feasible following a crisis & identify what responses are required to assist.
- Develop a local map, highlight constituent home locations, travel routes with potential hazards identified to help facilitate responding. Include hospitals, fire stations, police stations, designated Red Cross shelters...plus any other pre-arranged emergency gathering points on all maps.

Expanded communication options

- Identify licensed amateur radio / ham operators within your church. Select a lead radio technician and send their contact (phone & call sign) to Krystal at NWMN.
- The NWMN is forming an emergency communications radio network. There are currently 3 stations at this time, covering Western, Central and Eastern Washington. The goal is to have a contact person with every church in the network during a significant emergency event.
- Note: During a significant emergency events, cell service is typically unavailable due to commandeering by emergency responder usage. Also, regular phone line access may also be limited. Check within your congregation to see if any own a Satellite Phone, inquire if it may be available during an emergency.
- Satellite communication relies on a clear view of the horizon to provide connectivity. They are able to connect (as allowed) with land lines and cell phones inside and outside of crisis areas.
- Satellite Phones are available for under \$300. Monthly plans start at \$50. Special offers are available from various dealers, so it pays to shop around. Some offer a free phone with a yearly contract. Note: There is a slight delay in talk times, so it takes some practice getting used to.
- Satellite "hot spot" devices are also available within this same price point. These units allow for the connection of multiple smart phones, tablets & laptops with via Bluetooth, very helpful for groups.

Network Communication

- Following a crisis event, contact your Area Leader ASAP. Provide any pertinent information, structure damage, critical needs and the best contact options for them to get back to you. This will allow your Area Leader to give a clear picture of your particular situation to the NWMN Leadership and assist them in their efforts to respond to you and your church accordingly.

Community Communication

- Exchange contact information with Local & County Emergency Response Teams. Let them know what resources are available within your church community (food, shelter, access to heavy equipment, etc.). Around your church: locate water, gas, electrical shut-offs. Have proper tools to shut off and learn how to do it. Inspect regularly for potential problems...ie: stuck / damaged valves, access blockage, duplicate fixtures. Address any deficiencies, print up shut-off information and post in church office. In the event of significant damage from an emergency, close shut offs. Should a leak be detected, immediately evacuate building and contact 911 ASAP.