

ANNEX I

EMERGENCY PUBLIC INFORMATION

Burnet County
(Jurisdiction)

APPROVAL & IMPLEMENTATION

Annex I

EMERGENCY PUBLIC INFORMATION

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County Judge

06/01/2017

Date

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06/01/2017

Date

RECORD OF CHANGES

Annex I

EMERGENCY PUBLIC INFORMATION

Change #	Date of Change	Entered By	Date Entered

ANNEX I

EMERGENCY PUBLIC INFORMATION

I. AUTHORITY

- A. See Section I, Basic Plan for general authorities.
- B. Texas Local Government Code, Chapter 203 (Management and Preservation of Records).

II. PURPOSE

The purpose of this annex is to outline the organization and process by which the county will provide information and instructions to the public during emergencies. This annex also provides for conducting disaster-related public education campaigns in advance of emergencies.

III. EXPLANATION OF TERMS

A. Acronyms

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

B. Definitions

Public Information: Information provided to citizens before, during and after emergency situations/incidents specifically including instructions on how to protect personal health, safety, and property; and how to obtain assistance.

IV. SITUATION & ASSUMPTIONS

A. Situation

1. Burnet County faces a number of hazards which may cause emergency situations; see Section IV, Basic Plan for a summary of those hazards and their possible impact.
2. During emergencies, the public needs timely and accurate information on the emergency and appropriate instructions regarding protective actions to take to minimize injuries, loss of life and damage to property.
3. For some slowly developing emergency situations such as river flooding, there may be several days for local government and the media to provide detailed information about the hazard and what citizens should do.
4. For other more rapidly developing emergencies, there may be no warning. The public information system may not have sufficient time to properly inform the public about the hazard and what actions to take. A public information campaign about likely hazards and appropriate protective actions will lessen the impacts of an emergency and/or disaster.

B. Assumptions

1. An effective program combining both education and emergency information can significantly reduce the loss of life and property.
2. Many people are unconcerned about hazards until they are directly affected. Many others will not participate in or retain pre-emergency education. As a result, greater emphasis must be placed on the delivery of emergency information during emergencies and disasters.
3. Local media will cooperate in disseminating warning and emergency public information during emergencies and may participate in pre-disaster awareness programs and other disaster education activities.
4. Some emergencies may generate substantial media interest, drawing local media as well as those from outside the local area, possibly overwhelming the emergency public information staff.

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 the specific event related information. This information, generally of an instructional nature, will primarily focus on warning, evacuation, and shelter. Appendix 2 describes some basic emergency information needs.
2. The county will make a special effort to keep the public informed of the progress of events. Reporting positive information regarding emergency response will help to reassure the

community that the situation is under control. Rumor control is a major component of the informational program. Public feedback is a measure of the program's effectiveness.

3. Education efforts should be directed toward increasing public awareness about potential hazards and protective actions. All public information and education efforts will rely heavily on the cooperation of all local media organizations.

B. Information Dissemination

1. In the initial stages of an emergency, the Local Warning Point (LWP) may have to take action on time-sensitive hazards. Within the limits of its authority, the LWP, located at the Burnet County Sheriff's Office, will determine if a warning needs to be issued, formulate a warning if necessary, and disseminate it. Appendix 6, Annex A, Warning contains pre-scripted emergency messages for likely hazards. Appendix 5 of this Annex provides a list of these messages. The county may use these pre-scripted messages as written or tailor them as needed for specific circumstances.
2. As Emergency Alert System (EAS) messages are limited to two minutes, Special News Advisories with amplifying emergency information, prepared by the PIO staff and faxed to media outlets, may supplement EAS warning messages.
 - 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, the Incident Commander will warn the public in and around the incident site. If the EOC is not activated, a designated PIO at the Incident Command Post (ICP) will provide information on the emergency to the media. All information to the media by the PIO will be approved by the IC and the County Judge regardless of the command structure- single or unified.
4. Upon activation of the EOC, the EOC Director will determine the need for additional warning and instructions. The PIO staff will formulate additional warning messages and public instructions. The LWP will execute 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 directly to the media.
5. In large-scale events involving responders from other jurisdictions and/or state or federal agencies and where the response and recovery efforts may continue for an extended period, the responsible authority may establish a Joint Information Center (JIC). The JIC, an element of the Joint Information System (JIS) developed to provide information to the public during an emergency, is a working facility designed to coordinate the emergency public information efforts of all participating jurisdictions, agencies, volunteer organizations, and responders to ensure information provided is consistent and accurate. In federally declared disasters, a JIC will be a part of the Disaster Field Office.
6. Emergency information and instructions to the public will be provided by:

- a. EAS broadcasts by radio, television, and cable companies.
- b. Special news broadcasts by radio, television, and cable companies.
- c. Local newspapers.
- d. Mobile units with public address systems.
- e. Recorded information on the Citizen's Information Hotline.
- f. The local government Internet site.

C. Providing Emergency Information to Special Populations

Burnet County will provide information on emergencies and appropriate instructions to special populations 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.

D. Resources

The PIO shall maintain a Media Roster that contains the names, telephone and fax numbers, and e-mail addresses of each of the media resources listed below. See Appendix 1 for current contact list.

- 1. Radio
 - a. KBEY - 103.9 FM
- 2. Broadcast Television
 - a. KXAN - CH 36
 - b. KVUE - CH 24
 - c. KTBC - CH 7
 - d. KEYE - CH 42
 - e. NEWS 8 - CH 8
- 3. Cable Television
 - a. Northland Cable
- 4. Newspapers
 - a. The Highlander
 - b. Burnet Bulletin
 - c. Citizen's Gazette
 - d. The Picayune
 - e. The River Cities Daily Tribune

E. Emergency Management Activity by Phases

1. Mitigation
 - a. Conduct hazard awareness programs.
 - b. Develop systems to enhance information dissemination during emergencies.
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 local media on local warning systems and coordinate procedures for transmitting emergency information to media.
 - d. Conduct public education on warning systems and actions to take for various types of warnings.
 - e. Train public information staff.
 - f. Brief local officials and emergency responders on working with the media. See Appendix 3 of this Annex.
 - g. Maintain this annex.
 - h. Identify suitable facilities for a Joint Information Center.
3. Response
 - a. Develop and release emergency public information.
 - b. Conduct media monitoring to determine the need to clarify issues and distribute updated public instructions.
 - c. Manage rumor control.
 - d. Conduct news conferences and arrange interviews as needed.
4. Recovery
5. Provide public information relating to recovery process and programs.
 - a. Compile record of events.
 - b. Assess effectiveness of public information and education program.

VI. ORGANIZATION & ASSIGNMENT OF RESPONSIBILITIES

A. General

1. The overall responsibility for providing emergency information and instructions to the public rests with the County Judge.
2. The County Judge shall provide general guidance for Public Information (PI) programs and appoint a Public Information Officer (PIO).
3. The Public Information Officer will manage and coordinate all emergency public information related activities and direct any staff assigned or recruited to assist in those activities.

B. Task Assignments

1. The County Judge 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 on all public information matters relating to the management of the incident.
 - b. Ensure the IC 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 public information efforts of local government.
 - f. Serve as the official county representative in the JIC.
 - g. Conduct public education programs as an ongoing activity.
 - h. 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.
 - i. In coordination with the Sheriff and the EMC, develop pre-scripted warning messages for known hazards for use by the local warning point and the EOC.
 - j. Develop methods (i.e., newspaper supplements, prepared TV/radio scripts for broadcast stations) for distribution of EPI materials to the public, including materials for non-English speaking groups, if appropriate.
 - k. In cooperation with the EMC, coordinate with broadcasters (radio and television stations and cable television companies) to develop procedures for local government to disseminate warning messages and emergency information through the broadcast media.
 - l. Authenticate sources of information and verify for accuracy before issuing news releases.
 - m. Provide news releases to the media, keeping the County Judge informed of message content.
 - n. Monitor media coverage of emergency operations for accuracy of reports and issue corrections where necessary.
 - o. Take action to control rumors.
 - p. Brief potential Incident Commanders, department heads and key staff, and the EOC staff on basic public information needs (see Appendix 2), working with the media (see Appendix 3), and media access during emergency operations (see Appendix 4).
 - q. Maintain a media briefing area in the vicinity of the EOC.
 - r. Periodically brief the media on local warning systems and warning procedures.
 - s. Maintain a Media Contact Roster. See Appendix 1.
 - t. Compile printed and photographic documentation of the emergency/disaster.
 - u. Develop emergency public information checklists for known hazards. See Appendix 6.
 - v. Anticipate and prepare to handle unscheduled inquiries from the media and the public.
 - w. Train a group of government employees and/or volunteers to staff PIO positions at the Incident Command Post and in the EOC.
3. The EMC will:
 - a. Advise the County Judge on 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. Notify the PIO of concerns raised by the public, rumors, and other issues involving citizens. The PIO will address the issues in public information activities.
4. All local government departments and agencies will:
- a. To the extent possible, refer media inquiries during emergencies to the PIO.
 - b. Assist the PIO in responding to requests for information from the public or the media.
5. Media organizations will be 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 County Judge has overall responsibility for the emergency public information program. He or she shall provide general guidance for emergency-related public education and information activities, shall appoint a Public Information Officer, and in conjunction with the IC 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 information to the public and the media during emergency operations. 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. EMC
2. County Judge

VIII. READINESS LEVELS

A. Readiness Level 4 - Normal Conditions.

See the mitigation and preparedness activities in Section V.E of this Annex.

B. Readiness Level 3 - Increased Readiness

1. Monitor the situation.
2. Check and update Media Contact Roster.
3. Alert media of the increased threat and to prepare to disseminate warnings and public instructions if necessary.

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.
3. Alert personnel for possible emergency operations. 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 EOC or at the Incident Command Post when activated.

IX. ADMINISTRATION & SUPPORT

A. Media Contact Roster

The PIO shall maintain a contact roster for the media organizations involved in local emergency management programs. Appendix 1 provides a roster.

B. Records

1. The PIO shall maintain a file of all news advisories and press releases issued during emergency operations.
2. The PIO shall also compile and maintain copies of newspaper articles, videotapes of emergency operations and news broadcasts relating to an emergency, and other media materials distributed for use in post-incident analysis 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. Local media may be requested to assist with such activities and local businesses may be asked to sponsor such events and assist with costs. Educational brochures may also be distributed using regularly scheduled government, utility, or business mailings.
2. The PIO will obtain and maintain materials for disaster-related public education. There are many publications in ready-to-distribute form or as fact sheets to incorporate into locally developed materials. Materials available include emergency preparedness information of general interest and specialized preparedness publications for school children, the elderly, and special needs populations. Public education materials are available in a variety of foreign languages.
3. The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), the American Red Cross (ARC), and the Texas Division of Emergency Management provide disaster-related educational materials. Many agencies and volunteer organizations also publish 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 Texas Division of Emergency Management distributes hazard-specific awareness materials to EMCs as part of state awareness campaigns.

D. Training

Emergency public information staff, particularly those not involved in public information activities on a daily basis, should attend public information training. The Texas Division of Emergency Management and FEMA offer Public Information Officer training.

X. ANNEX DEVELOPMENT & MAINTENANCE

- A. Development.** The Public Information Officer is responsible for developing and maintaining this annex.
- B. Maintenance.** Section X, Basic Plan outlines the schedule for the annual review and updating of this annex.
- C. Operating Procedures.** The Public Information Officer is responsible for developing and maintaining SOPs covering recurring emergency 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

APPENDICES:

Appendix 1 Media Contact Roster
Appendix 2..... Emergency Public Information Needs
Appendix 3..... Working With the Media
Appendix 4..... Media Access & Identification
Appendix 5..... List of Pre-scripted Emergency Messages
Appendix 6..... Emergency Public Information Checklists

Tab A EPI Checklist for Flooding
Tab B EPI Checklist for Hazmat Incident
Tab C EPI Checklist for Hurricanes (Remove if not in hurricane area)

XII. MEDIA CONTACT ROSTER

A. Radio

1. Station Name: KBEY
 - a. Address: 1007 Ave K, Marble Falls 78654
 - b. Frequency & Operating Hours: 103.9 FM 24 Hours
 - c. Contact Name: General Manager/Owner
 - d. Telephone Number/Fax Number: 830-693-5551 Main 830-693-3085 Fax
 - e. E-mail Address: info@kbeyfm.com or editor@thepicayune.com

B. Television

1. Station Name: KXAN
 - a. Address: 908 W MLK, Austin 78701
 - b. Frequency & Operating Hours: 14/36 24 Hours
 - c. Contact Name: News Desk
 - d. Telephone Number: 512-476-2863
 - e. E-mail Address: news36@kxan.com
2. Station Name: KVUE
 - a. Address: 3201 Steck Avenue, Austin 78757
 - b. Frequency & Operating Hours: 24 24 Hours
 - c. Contact Name: News Desk
 - d. Telephone Number: 512-459-9442
 - e. E-mail Address: news@kvue.com
3. Station Name: KTBC
 - a. Address: 119 East 10th Street, Austin 78701
 - b. Frequency & Operating Hours: 7 24 Hours
 - c. Contact Name: News Desk

- d. Telephone Number: 512-472-0988
- e. E-mail Address: news@fox7.com
- 4. Station Name: KEYE
 - a. Address: 10700 Metric Blvd., Austin 78758
 - b. Frequency & Operating Hours: 42 24 Hours
 - c. Contact Name: News Desk
 - d. Telephone Number: 512-490-2199
 - e. E-mail Address: news@keyetv.com
- 5. Station Name: NEWS 8
 - a. Address: 1708 Colorado Street, Austin 78701
 - b. Frequency & Operating Hours: 8 24 Hours
 - c. Contact Name: News Desk
 - d. Telephone Number: 512-531-8800
 - e. E-mail Address: newsdesk@news8austin.com

C. Cable Television Company

- 1. Station Name: Northland Cable
 - a. Address: 1101 Mission Hill Dr., Marble Falls 78654
 - b. Frequency & Operating Hours: 24
 - c. Contact Name: General Manager
 - d. Telephone Number/Fax Number: 830-693-7500 fax -None
 - e. E-mail Address: Northlandcable.com

D. Newspapers

1. Name: The Highlander
 - a. Address: 304 Gateway Loop, P.O. Box 1000, Marble Falls 78654
 - b. Distribution Area: Burnet County
 - c. Contact Name: News Desk
 - d. Telephone Number: 830-693-4367
 - e. Fax Number: 830-693-3650
 - f. E-mail Address: newscopy@highlandernews.com

2. Name: Burnet Bulletin
 - a. Address: 220 South Main Street, Burnet 78611
 - b. Distribution Area: Burnet County
 - c. Contact Name: News Desk
 - d. Telephone Number: 512-756-6136
 - e. Fax Number: 512-756-8911
 - f. E-mail Address: editorial@burnetbulletin.com

3. Citizen's Gazette
 - a. Address: 206 East Jackson, Burnet 78611
 - b. Distribution Area: Burnet County
 - c. Contact Name: News Desk
 - d. Telephone Number: 512-756-6640
 - e. Fax Number: 512-756-6640
 - f. E-mail Address: cgazette@tstar.net

4. The Picayune
 - a. Address: 1007 Avenue K, Marble Falls 78654
 - b. Distribution Area: Burnet County

- c. Contact Name: News Desk
 - d. Telephone Number: 830-693-7152
 - e. Fax Number: 830-693-3085
 - f. E-mail Address: editor@thepicayune.com
5. The River Cities Daily Tribune
- a. Address: 1007 Avenue K, Marble Falls 78654
 - b. Distribution Area: Burnet County
 - c. Contact Name: News Desk
 - d. Telephone Number: 830-693-7152
 - e. Fax Number: 830-693-3085
 - f. E-mail Address: editor@thepicayune.com

XIII. PUBLIC INFORMATION NEEDS

A. Background

During emergencies, public information on the situation should be provided as rapidly as possible. This will help 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 provided by the news media reduces the time and manpower that local government would have to devote to dealing with inquiries from the public. Every effort should be made to cooperate with the news media in providing information and in recognizing the responsibilities of the news media to perform their proper function.

B. Information Needs

Provide the following types of information to the public as soon as possible in as much detail as possible.

1. What Happened

- a. Nature of incident or emergency
- b. Location
- c. Time of occurrence
- d. Situation resolved or response on-going
- e. Cause (Do not speculate on what might have happened. Only use facts.)

2. Current Response Actions

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

- a. Known Damages
- b. Homes
- c. Businesses
- d. Government buildings
- e. Infrastructure – roads, bridges, parks, etc.

3. Casualties

- a. Number dead and apparent cause
- b. Number injured, nature/severity of injuries, and location of treatment centers

- c. Number missing and circumstances
- d. General identification of casualties – age, sex, situation (employee, homeowner, responder, etc.
- e. Names of casualties – only released after notifying next of kin
4. Evacuations
 - a. Areas and facilities evacuated
 - b. Approximate number of evacuees
5. Shelter & Mass Care
 - a. Shelters open – name and location
 - b. Approximate number of persons housed in shelters
 - c. Mass feeding site or other mass care facilities in operation – name, location, and number of persons served.
6. Status of Utilities
 - a. Electric service
 - b. Telephone system
 - c. Water system
 - d. Sewer system
 - e. Natural gas distribution
7. Road and Facility Closures
8. Organizations Responding
 - a. Local government
 - b. State agencies
 - c. Federal agencies
 - d. Volunteer groups
9. Means of contacting evacuees
10. Restricted access areas and the reason(s) for such restriction
11. For ongoing emergency situations, the planned response activities

12. In the recovery phase:

- a. Disaster assistance programs available
- b. How to apply for disaster assistance

C. Collection and Dissemination of Information

1. The appropriate personnel shall collect and disseminate information as soon as possible as follows:
 - a. If the Incident Command Post is operating, but the EOC has not been activated, a qualified public information staff member on the scene may provide information to the media. If no qualified public information staff member is present at the scene, the Incident Commander or a member of his staff may provide information to the media or pass the information to the PIO for release to the media.
 - b. If the Incident Command Post is operating with an activated EOC, the Incident Commander or a member of his staff should pass information from the incident scene to the Public Information Officer at the EOC. The PIO will use reports from the scene and other available information to brief the media and prepare news advisories for release.
 - c. The Shelter and Mass Care Officer is responsible for collecting information on shelter and mass care activities and providing that information to the PIO.
 - d. The Energy and Utilities representative in the EOC is responsible for obtaining information on the status of utilities and providing it to the PIO.
 - e. Law Enforcement and Public Works/Engineering are responsible for obtaining information on road and facility closures and providing this information to the PIO.
 - f. The PIO is responsible for collecting 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 arranging for announcements directly to the public via radio and/or television hookups.
 - g. Hospitals are responsible for release of information concerning casualties and deaths. They generally have policies restricting the release of detailed information without permission of patients or their families. Hospitals will usually release information directly to the news media. The PIO should request that the hospitals provide to the EOC copies of any information released to the media.

XIV. WORKING WITH THE MEDIA

A. What to do when working with the media:

1. Identify your spokesperson beforehand.
2. Have a pre-determined telephone number for the media to call when they need information.
3. Make certain the person answering the phones knows where to direct media calls.
4. Get all the information you can from those in charge before you talk with the media.
5. Write out the answers to these questions for **your** use:
 - a. What happened?
 - b. When did it happen?
 - c. Where did it happen?
 - d. Why did this happen?
 - e. Who is responsible, involved, injured?
 - f. How many were hurt or killed? What are their names/ages/addresses?
 - g. Can I shoot video/take photos? How close can I get?
 - h. Who can I talk to?
 - i. What is your agency doing about it?

B. When you talk with the media:

1. Tell the truth.
2. Be courteous and do not play favorites.
3. Avoid "off the record" remarks.
4. Never say anything you would not want to see printed or broadcast.
5. Stay on top of the interview by listening to the reporter's questions.
6. Do not accept the reporter's definitions of what happened.
7. Pause, think; ask for more time if you need it.
8. Respond only to the question asked. Do not speculate.
9. Stick to the core message

XV. MEDIA ACCESS & IDENTIFICATION
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A. Media Access

In recognition of the public's right to know as much as possible about a disaster, local response agencies will cooperate with legitimate news media representatives and provide equal access to information. Within the limits of safety and other response needs, access to the incident scene will be provided to news media. News media representatives are required to cooperate with response personnel. On-scene media representatives will be under the direction of the Incident Commander to ensure safety and operational efficiency.

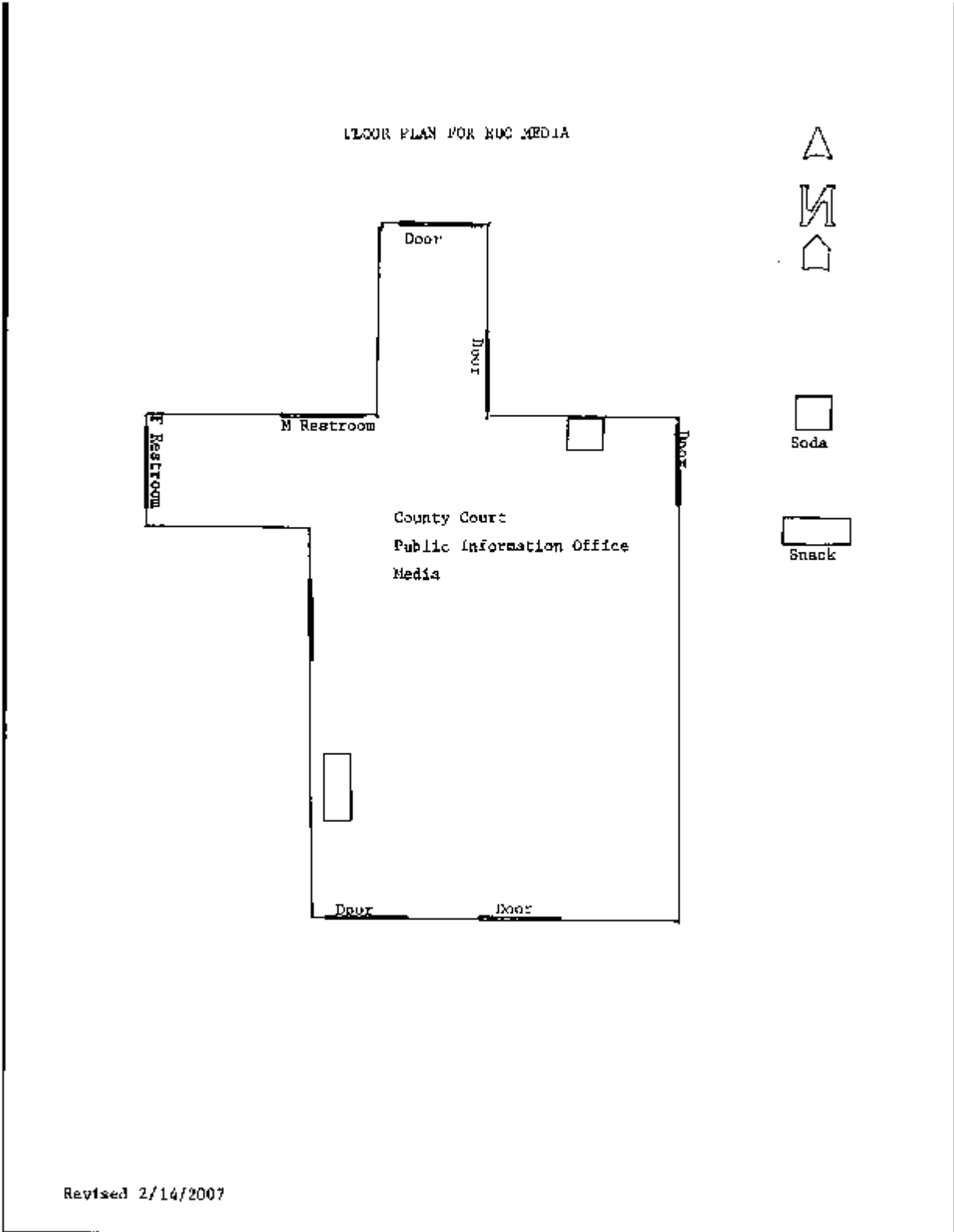
1. The Incident Commander or his designated representative will allow media access to the incident scene that is consistent with safety and does not disrupt critical operations.
2. The EMC, in coordination with the PIO, shall establish rules for media access to the EOC. Upon activation of the EOC, the EMC may provide access to representatives of news media to designated areas of the EOC. Press briefings will be conducted in the press area of the EOC and not the main room. Photo shoots and interviews may be allowed in the EOC, but will be scheduled to minimize operational disruptions.
3. Hospitals establish their own rules of access for news media representatives and these may vary for individual circumstances. For emergencies where there have been substantial casualties, hospitals may find it desirable to provide a pressroom or other designated area with access to telephones for the use of news media representatives.
4. When incident scenes are on private property, the property owner may establish and enforce rules regarding access by the media and other persons who are not emergency responders.

B. Media Identification

The following provide satisfactory identification of representatives of news media:

1. 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.
2. Texas Department of Public Safety Press identification card.
3. In the event a long term crisis occurs, press badges may be issued by the sheriff's office at the county judge or PIO's discretion.

EOC Media Designated Area Floor Plan



XVI. LIST OF PRE-SCRIPTED EMERGENCY MESSAGES

Annex A, Warning contains the following pre-scripted emergency messages:

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

XVII. EMERGENCY PUBLIC INFORMATION CHECKLISTS

EPI Checklist for Slowly Developing Flood Events*

✓	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 instruction messages ready for use. See Appendix 6, Annex A.
	3. Coordinate with school authorities/PIOs on policies/procedures for announcing school closures.
	4. Review local Hazard Analysis and Annex E, Evacuation 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 Appendix 6, Annex A, Warning.
	5. Develop maps of likely evacuation areas and evacuation routes to provide 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 the provision of transportation 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 with restricted reentry due to damage.
	2. Coordinate with the 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 for slowly developing floods. For a fast-breaking flood situation, there may not be time to conduct some of the readiness activities listed.

EPI Checklist for Hazmat Incidents

✓	Pre-Emergency Phase
	1. Review local Hazard Analysis and Annex E, Evacuation, 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 instruction messages ready for use. See Appendix 6, Annex A, Warning.
	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 to develop an effective PIO-to-PIO communication system.
	7. Coordinate with local media to ensure 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 Appendix 6, Annex A, Warning.
	5. Develop maps of likely evacuation areas and evacuation routes to provide to the media.
	Emergency Response Phase
	1. Provide information to the media and public about the incident. 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.
	<i>3. 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.
	<i>4. Evacuation Actions</i>
	a. Release evacuation recommendation through media.
	b. Provide evacuation area and evacuation route maps to media.
	c. Release information on the provision of transportation 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 ensure that you have the information on shelters accepting 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 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 the 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, you may lack the time to conduct some of the activities listed in the Readiness Phase.