

How to Form a Successful Preparedness/Survival Group & Plan

"Emergency preparedness is a team sport."

Eric Whitaker

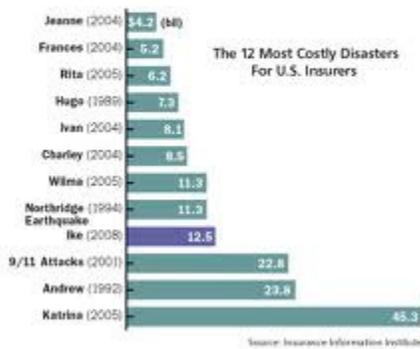


Taking it one step
at a time.

The human tendency is to believe, "it will never happen to me", yet it is our responsibility as adults, parents, friends, neighbors and citizens to be prepared. Forming a group to do so is a logical next step.

At Nature's Mercy

Hurricane Ike pounds a Key West beach. The 2008 storm led to 1.35 million insurance claims, costing the industry \$12.5 billion.



U.S. crime statistics

After rising for two straight years, the estimated number of violent crimes in the nation declined in 2007. Property crimes also dropped for the fifth straight year.

Crime Clocks:

Violent Crimes



Numbers at a glance:

Violent Crimes -0.7%



Property Crimes



Property Crimes -1.4%



I have been asked numerous times about preparedness/survival groups. What they are; what makes them successful or not and how to find them. Why is my block's group so successful? Sorry, there are no cut and dried answers to these questions.



*"Defeat is not the worst of failures.
Not to have tried is the true failure."*

George Edward Woodberry

How to Form a Successful Preparedness/Survival Group & Plan- Continued

There are just way too many variables from location, type of group, the groups goals, goods, knowledge and skills to finances, training/practice and just what crises the group is preparing for – *to name a few*.



It is unlikely that your group will be able to draw up a complete strategy at the outset. The group will need flexibility to be able to respond to new circumstances and opportunities. Planning a provisional overall strategy is a useful discipline so that everyone understands the context in which the chosen methods are being used and for what purpose, at each growth stage of the group.



My Preparedness Group is a good example. Although I will not discuss specific details of my neighborhood preparedness group, I can tell you that it started almost 17 years ago with just 3 households on a close section of the block.

We decided back then to run our group like a community association with by-laws, rules, regulations and the like. About 6 years ago the seventh household joined our group. We are first a Safety/Security group and then a consolidated knowledge and supply exchange.

Being as we are a small group, we quickly decided to define the knowledge and skills we felt we would need to be able to: *a)* close off our section of the block; *b)* defend against intrusion; *c)* be as self-sustaining as possible *d)* for as long as possible.

This required covering items from shelter, water, food, clothing, security, medical/dental, education; to entertainment. As a result our team leaders, team members and instructors were chosen on merit of the knowledge and skills they possess and not on any other criteria. Which resulted in some rather surprising selections; a few of which are: our sniper is a female and our no-see/no-hear recon scout is an adolescent; our strategist is a former Vietnam LAR recon commander, now in a wheel chair due to a drunk driver here in the states.

Our group consists of 13 adults, 10 children in ages from 8-17 and about 14 “grandfathered” members which are mostly adult children or extended family of the 7 households. We were then and are now, active members of our entire block’s Neighborhood Watch and CERT groups, as well as our area’s larger Community Association.

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Most of the children are active in scouting and 4H; in troupes that are **not** stuck on urban or gender specific activities and skills.



We have a good mix of ages, genders, knowledge and skills from: big time DIY'ers; mechanic; physician assistant; EMT; former medic; dental assistant; homeschooler; former combat military leader; professional sharp shooter; arts'n'crafts instructor; hobbyists (knitting, crocheting, sewing) and gardeners. We have major re-loaders, one RACES (Radio Amateur Civil Emergency Service-communications) member and one household makes its own bio-diesel.

Of the other households between us we know which ones will be on our side and willing assets, as well as which ones will be a downright problem should the SHTF. We also have plans on how to handle each scenario with these other neighbors.



We have two mandatory meetings a year, along with two mandatory shoots a year, coupled with monthly meetings and shoots and various informal how-to "classes". During the two mandatory shoots we all utilize and clean each other's firearms so we are all functionally familiar with what is on hand within our group – ie we can all shoot and maintain each other's firearms.



Cross-training is also vital to us, again because we are such a small group. We have contingency plans and back-up plans to the back-up plans. We cannot afford to assume that all members will be available, all the time, during any crisis. Some may not be able to make it back to the block in a timely fashion or could fall ill or be injured.



We have even thrown 4 block parties, complete with permits to close off our block; where after the event we core households studied our weak points and made adjustments to our security plans based on how easily people by-passed our block party check points. The rest of the block only knew about the fun and games – we on the other hand knew differently.

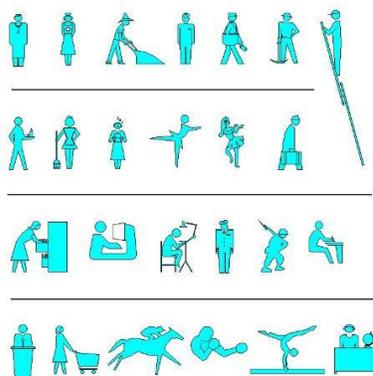
Get my drift here ;-}

"No institution can possibly survive if it needs geniuses or supermen to manage it. It must be organized in such a way as to be able to get along under a leadership composed of average human beings."
Peter Drucker

There however some practical steps that will tip the scales in favor of a group's success. The following *must be clear, concise, all encompassing and written with accessibility to all:*

- Keep It Simple (K.I.S)
- Reality Checks to keep things attainable, successful and members involved.
- Everyone knows what the group's long term goal or dream (vision) is and agrees with it.
- Everyone knows what the group's mid-term steps (mission) that must be taken to reach the long term goal are.
- Everyone knows what the group's short term steps are (goals & objectives) to achieve the ultimate vision.
- Everyone knows not only how to accomplish each and every step to reach that long term dream, but also all the individual tasks to get there (process and procedures or SOPs).
- Everyone knows exactly what is expected of each other in order to "win" each and every task along the way (rules & regulations or code of conduct/ethics).
- And everyone knows what will happen if they don't "perform" (disciplinary actions and consequences that apply to ALL members) as expected to achieve each objective and task needed to reach the finish line of that long term vision.
- Good, Wise and Strong Leadership (able to delegate without over delegating, manage without micro-managing, participation in all aspects of the group).
- Governing/ Organizational Structure with clearly defined "Job" Descriptions, Duties and Responsibilities.
- Capability Matrix to show growth, strengths and weaknesses.
- A Glossary or Dictionary of *terms* and their *meanings*, so everyone is on the same page.
- A Group Plan that is based on goods, knowledge and skills (needs) rather than crisis specific and (if necessary for the group type) with drills, meeting and training/cross-training schedules.
- Group members/participants encompass a well rounded set of knowledge, skill, ages, genders and talents.
- All of the above is available to all members of the group in written and verbal format as well as demonstrated by the day to day actions of the group and all its members.

How to Form a Successful Preparedness/Survival Group & Plan- Continued



*"Goals are dreams we convert to plans
and take action to fulfill."
Zig Ziglarx*



As you can see it is far easier to determine what the benefits of a preparedness group are:

Getting a group together to *prepare* for crises helps everyone in the group accept *the possibility that a disaster can happen*. It provides an opportunity to identify and collect the resources to meet basic needs, after a crisis occurs.

Whenever individuals, households, neighborhoods, communities or groups of people prepare in advance, for any future crisis, this enables them to increase each participant's ability to cope. Resources, skills, knowledge, capabilities and goods become complementary, as well as more encompassing.

Being able to sustain not only yourself; household, neighborhood, community or group to survive and or shelter-in place, with the least amount of trials and tribulations, should be the ultimate goal of a preparedness group.

There is strength in numbers and this allows each member to "assist" the authorities (local to national) by NOT being a burden to them. Also if there is some kind of physical threat caused by some human induced crisis, the group is far more capable to withstand any threats than an individual or household.

Above all taking *action* to prepare can *reassure* the individual, household and or group that one *can exert a measure of control* even in the face of such events. Preparing will also help reduce anxiety and stress by *knowing* there is a plan and that everyone *knows the plan*.

Now let's get to it ...

Group Members; their participation and personalities will play a vital role in the overall group "health" and viability.

- Good mix of ages, genders, knowledge and skills
- People skills (conflict resolution)
- Pleasant Personality
- Agrees with the group's goals, objectives, guidelines and is a team player
- Will participate in group meetings, training and practice drills, etc.



Consider the following attributes of the potential member and group "headquarters":

- **Proximity:** If a storm leaves a member confined to their neighborhood, workplace or school; or if they must travel to get to a group retreat immediately following a crisis - *is an important factor that must be accounted for in the group plan.*
- **Resources:** Who can share their resources? Whether it's a snow blower, child care, medical training or just a sympathetic ear, how can your participants pool their resources in a crisis; where is the storage facility?
- **Special Needs:** Are there people in your group who have needs that other members could help meet:
 - Wheelchair users
 - Young Children
 - Elderly
- **Decide** when, where and how often the group will meet for:
 - Training & Cross Training
 - Knowledge and Information exchanges
 - Practice activation drills
 - Learning and Practice on any other function of the group

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• Membership Detail Information

- Create a *printable* database with all the contact, goods, knowledge and skills of the members of the group.
 - Name
 - Address
 - Landline and Cell phone numbers, including any household members
 - Work and or School address and phone numbers
 - If the member is part of a household copy of their Who, What, When, Where schedule
 - Inventory stored at the participant's location for shared group use
- Keep *current* hard copies of this information. ***This is vital!*** Do not wait for a crisis with a power outage or computer failure to think about this.
- Decide *what* information will be shared with the entire group and what will not.

Links to the following documents can be found @ <http://formerlynurbanhomesteader.weebly.com/preparedness.html>

Tips on Selecting Members for a Successful Preparedness/Survival Group - Getting Along Today & Tomorrow

How to Form a Successful Preparedness Survival Group - Membership Information Form to collect membership information

How to Form a Successful Preparedness Survival Group - Membership Information Form & Capability-Competency Survey to collect membership information and the full range of capabilities and competencies The above two forms complement the *Membership, Capability, Competency, Skill, Ability, Talent Matrix* (Excel Workbook)

"We must become the change we want to see."
Mahatma Gandhi

What Kind of Group Will this Be?



What is it that you want this group to accomplish?

- ❖ Knowledge Warehouse/Library Exchange or Facility
- ❖ Warehouse and or Supply Line of goods
- ❖ Spiritual/Emotional Support or Legal Assistance
- ❖ Defense, Safety and Security
- ❖ Secondary Retreat
- ❖ Other, all of the above and or combination

*"There are those who dream and wish and
there are those who dream and work."*

Jeune McIntyre

Size of the Group



How many people are there now and projected to be in the group? This is important in determining your organizational structure, by-laws and other “business” aspects of the routine functions of the group.



There are quite a few similarities between a business and a successful preparedness/survival group. From what you want the group to accomplish – right now, next month, next year and 10 years from now; To how group members work together, what is expected in terms of team effort, tasks and behavior, as well as any consequences for misbehavior. *And that is just to name a few!*

*"Recipe for success: Study while others are sleeping;
work while others are loafing;
prepare while others are playing;
and dream while others are wishing."*

William A. Ward

Let's cover some of the similar business aspects of a preparedness/survival group:



Key Terms and Definitions Used in Mission and Vision Statements

- **Team:** There's no "I" in a team or preparedness/survival groups. Be sure ALL understand this.
- **Vision:** A Vision statement **outlines what the organization wants to be** – it's a long-term goal or dream, or how it wants the world in which it operates to be. **It concentrates on the future.** It is a source of inspiration. It provides *clear* decision-making criteria. Defines the desired or intended future state of an organization, enterprise or group in terms of its **fundamental objective** and/or **strategic direction**. *Vision is a long term view*, sometimes describing how the organization would like the world in which it operates to be. For example a charity working with the poor might have a vision statement which read "A world without poverty".
- **Mission:** A Mission statement tells you the **fundamental purpose** of the organization or group. It *defines* the customer/member and the critical processes. It informs you of the desired level of performance. It also succinctly **describes why the group exists and what it does to achieve its Vision**. It is sometimes used to set out a 'picture' of the organization in the mid-future. **A mission statement provides high level details of what is done and answers the question: "What do we do?"** For example, the charity might provide "job training for the homeless and unemployed".
- **Values:** Are **Shared Beliefs** among the stakeholders of an organization or members of the group. Values drive an organization's/group's culture and priorities, as well as provide a framework in which decisions are made. For example, "Knowledge and skills are the keys to success" or "give a man bread and feed him for a day, but teach him to farm and feed him for life". These example values may set the priorities of self sufficiency over shelter. Values are often detailed in Codes of Conduct or Ethics.
- **Strategy:** Strategy narrowly defined, means "the art of the general" (from Greek stratigos). A combination of the *ends* (goals) for which the group is striving and the *means* (policies) by which it is seeking to get there. Strategy is often detailed in the organization's Standard Operating Procedures (SOP).



*"Imagination is more important than knowledge.
Knowledge is limited.
Imagination encircles the world."
Albert Einstein*

Vision Statement

The purpose of a vision statement is to describe what your ultimate objective is; a high level glimpse of how the group wishes to be seen by others in the long-term distant future. A vision adds to the motivation of the group to keep working along the path to achieve this vision.

Mission Statement

The purpose of a mission statement is to describe what your values are, what you do and who you serve. It is often a mid-term (timeline) general goal. A mission statement is *not* a slogan. You can come up with a slogan; you can even derive a slogan from a good mission statement. But remember that the mission statement's principle function is *not* to sound catchy, but to let people in and out of the organization know what its purpose is and to guide decision-making.

Be clear and specific in your wording. For instance, you can include your geographic reach and services provided. *"To end homelessness"* might perfectly describe your organization's mission, if it's global in scope and uses a plethora of venues to achieve its goal. But chances are something more specific and realistic like *"To combat homeless in Hometown County through job-training, affordable housing and advocacy"* would work much better.

You don't want your organization's mission statement to be too narrow, however. *"To decrease homelessness by 25% in Hometown County through affordable housing at the 12th Street Apartments"* might be a great goal for a specific project, but as a mission statement it is very limiting in terms of future partnerships or growth.

Goals & Objectives

Goals are statements of direction. These are the detailed stepping stones of accomplishment and are guidelines for choosing tasks. In order to know if your ship is on the right course, you need to know the destination. How you get there may be the series of objectives you identify, but the purpose of the journey is expressed through the goals.

Objectives are measurable tasks or steps that are developed to achieve the goals. Objectives may have a quality and/or quantity dimension that may be part of the way in which achievement will be measured.

Goals and Objectives are often considered the *"light that guides us to the end of the tunnel"*; for reaching our ultimate vision or dream.



*"Motivation is what gets you started.
Habit is what keeps you going!"
Jim Ryun*

Overall:

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- The **Vision Statement** is the status of the group and its goals and objectives for the far, distant future. How it wishes to be seen in this future.
- The **Mission Statement** is the high level viewpoint of the group's mile stones to achieve the Vision and how it wishes the public to see them while performing these steps. Although this is still in the future, it is a much closer future than the Vision.
- The **Goals and Objectives** are the all the attainable and measurable steps between point A and Point Z to achieving the end Vision.

If the group fails to distinguish between these key aspects, it most often loses "steam". Without a clear path to the other end of the tunnel, the membership will fail to see the attainability of the dream or vision. Members get frustrated; they don't see the viability for the group in the present; which leads to never joining or participating, to eventually dropping out all together. These aspects are tied together with all the measurable "mini" steps (goals & objectives) between the starting line and the finish line (the vision or dream).

*"One step - choosing a goal and sticking to it
- changes everything."
Scott Reed*

Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs)



A standard operating procedure is a document that describes how to perform the job or task, tells which position does it, showing how individual functions work separately as well as together and details how frequently it is performed for the group.

It is not so detailed as to instruct someone on how to say, milk a goat or cow; rather it contains the detail of how and why the group wants to milk a cow or goat. This allows the group to achieve consistent results for the same process, as the same steps need to be carried out each time.

Although many companies use their SOPs to cross-train a novice in the specific detailed step-by-step instructions to a particular job or task (through *Work Instructions* within the SOPs) a *preparedness group need only do this type of cross-training through its various training seminars* and not its SOPs.

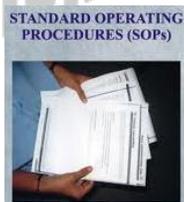
The Need For policies & procedures



SOPs in the business world are rather large, long winded documents needed in order to comply with any government rules and regulations; which usually tell a company they must do this, with this result; yet *fail* to tell the company *HOW* to do it. So for the businesses involved, the SOPs become a “Save Your Butt” tool and are heavily detailed and monitored documents, complete with revision tracking, training and roll-out processes. This type of detail is usually **not** required for a preparedness group.

There are, however, four very basic reasons that necessitate writing policies and procedures for a preparedness/survival group:

- **Continuity** — Policies and procedures ensure that fundamental organizational processes are performed in a consistent way that meets the group’s needs.
- **Risk management** — Established policies and procedures are a control activity needed to manage risk. (Baling and plowing with a horse or tractor are both dangerous without rules and processes to do so.)
- **Continuous improvement** — Procedures can improve processes, building important internal communication practices and overall effectiveness.
- **Uniform Compliance** — Well-defined and documented processes and procedures along with records that document the process capability of a member, often creates an effective internal control system compliant with rules, boundaries and limitations (Code of Conduct) of the group. They also assist in removing subjectivity and installing quantifiable measurements a team leader can use if disciplinary or consequential action needs to be taken with a group member.



Writing SOPS

The K.I.S. principle and writing in plain simple English are vital aspects to writing your groups SOPs. There should be no pretension, no haughty references to obscure allusions and no strange acronyms; rather it’s all there in black and white.

For instance:

Milking of Animals

The Animal and Livestock team performs the milking of cows and goats so the group has milk and milk products for use in group consumption.

1. Performed twice daily by the Animal and Livestock team:

How to Form a Successful Preparedness/Survival Group & Plan- Continued

- a. 6am
 - b. 6pm
2. Any member performing the milking task will wash their hands and wear protective biological gloves for the task.
 3. Milking buckets are stored in the supply room of barn A.
 4. Before milking the bucket(s) will be washed with boiling water and bleach.
 5. Full buckets are emptied into the collection vat on the north side of barn A.
 6. The collection vat supervisor will move a full vat to the pasteurization barn and replace with an empty vat.
 7. Used buckets will be washed with boiling water and bleach before being placed back in the supply room of barn A.
 8. Pasteurization of the milk and how it will be utilized by the group are described in the following SOPs
 - a. Pasteurization Team
 - b. Food Team

There are more tips on writing SOPs near the end of this document.

Regulations or Rules, Boundaries, Limitations and Consequences

Are related to SOPs and is much like a corporate Code of Conduct or Ethics.

These *Must* apply to ALL group members – no exceptions.

This is what guides the group in its day to day operational *behaviors*. It sets performance levels, what is expected of each member and it equalizes the “importance” of each member. Leaders and team members “suffer” the same rewards and consequences. Everyone knows what to do, how to do it (or where to get how-to instruction) and what will happen when they don’t.

A Code of Conduct or Ethics should cover:

- Define accepted/acceptable behaviors
- Promote high standards of practice
- Provide a benchmark for members to use for self evaluation
- Establish a framework for acceptable/professional behavior and responsibilities
- Be a vehicle for occupational identity (each group member shares a common “status” or *identity* within the group)
- Be a mark or measure of occupational maturity
- Consist of consequences of failure
- Applies evenly to ALL members of the group no matter what their individual “title” or “status” within the group

"To move the world we must first move ourselves."

Socrates



And remember that a code of ethics will NOT solve all ethical problems: *"But we must remember that good laws, if they are not obeyed, do not constitute good government. Hence there are two parts of good government; one is the actual obedience of citizens to the laws, the other part is the goodness of the laws which they obey..." Aristotle (Politics 1294a3-6).*

Example of a Preparedness Secondary Retreat Group Code of Conduct:

Group: Every member participates in all tasks they are physically able to do – expert or novice. Leaders and expert members teach other members so everyone can learn and do a little of just about everything. Failure to participate for any reason other than; injury, sickness or physical health; results in blah-blah-blah and after three offenses results in expulsion from the group...

Team: Members of the Defense & Security Team will patrol the area for threats (specify details); train and cross-train other members in security and defense methods; inform the leader of any threats or needed group training in this area; be the first responders/defenders of the group from a sudden threat...



*"There are two primary choices in life:
to accept conditions as they exist,
or accept the responsibility for changing them."
Denis Waitley*

Organizational or Governing Structure (with Duties and Responsibilities)



Organizational structure allows the expressed allocation of responsibilities for different functions and processes to different entities such as the branch, chapter, workgroup, team and individual.

The Organizational or Governing Structure will be directly influenced by the group's overall purpose (type of group or mission & vision) as well as its size. **All "positions" or "titles" in the group should be based on merit (ability, skill, capability, competency, talent) and nothing else!**

Organizational structure can be defined as the way or method through use of a hierarchy that a group, business, organization, people or objects collaborate to achieve success on one common goal or to put it another way: *An organizational structure is mainly a hierarchical concept of subordination of entities that collaborate and contribute to serve one common aim.*

It is a formal and informal framework of policies and rules, within which an "organization" arranges its lines of authority and communications and allocates rights and duties.

In business, organizations there are a variant of "clustered entities" (departments, divisions, etc.). The "clustered entities" for a preparedness/survival group can be the sub-teams and regions or chapters depending on the size of the group.

*"A discovery is said to be an accidental meeting
of a prepared mind."*

Albert Szent-Gyorgyi (1893 - 1986)

Any organization or group can be structured in many different ways and styles, depending on their objectives and ambience. The structure of the group will determine the modes in which it operates and performs. Thus the governing structure determines the manner and extent to which; roles, power and responsibilities are delegated, controlled and coordinated, as well as how information and communication flows between levels of the group. This structure depends first and foremost on the group's objectives and the strategy chosen to achieve them and next by its size.

In a centralized structure, the decision making power is concentrated in the top layer of the group (team leaders/management) and tight control is exercised over chapters, teams and divisions.

In a decentralized structure, the decision making power is distributed and the chapters, teams and divisions have varying degrees of autonomy.

An *organization chart* illustrates the organizational structure.

Keep It Simple

- Each position must be clearly defined
- Each position must have clear and detailed Duties
- Each position must have clear and detailed Responsibilities
- One "Chief" to at least 10 "Indians"

Group Leader: Like a Head Coach of a football team

- Good Conflict Resolution Skills
- Appoints and Guides Team Leaders
- Delegates without over delegating
- Manages without micro-managing
- Keeps the group on track and is fair in all dealings with group members
- Is an active group member
- Motivational and morale booster

Team Leaders: Like the Offense & Defense Coaches on a football team

- Good Conflict Resolution Skills
- Knowledge of the team's specific duties and responsibilities and how to achieve them
- Delegates without over delegating
- Leads/Instructs by action not threat
- Fair in all dealings with team members
- Is an active team member
- Motivational and morale booster

"We will either find a way, or make one!"
Hannibal

Common success criteria for organizational structures are:

- Decentralized reporting
- Flat hierarchy
- High transient speed
- High transparency
- Low residual mass
- Permanent monitoring
- Rapid response

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- Shared reliability
- Matrix hierarchy

Samples of Organizational Structures are towards the end of this document.

*"The difference between the impossible and the possible lies in a man's determination."
Tommy Lasorda*



Capability-Competency Matrix



A capability matrix is a type of check list that also contains an itemization of your member's goods, knowledge, skills, abilities and talents or capabilities and competencies needed to utilize those goods effectively. In short the physical "functionality" of the group as a whole.

As the group forms, gathering this information will assist in determining what goods, knowledge and skills your group lacks and thus setting specific goals and objectives – from acquiring missing goods, etc to the more mid-term goals and objectives of education and cross-training of your group membership; then on to the long-term goals of acquiring various specializations, etc. to meet the group's vision.

		A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P
Legend:																	
N/M = Novice/Minimum																	
I/E = Intermediate/Extended																	
A/E/B = Advanced/Extra/Beyond																	
1	Capability, Competency, Skill, Ability, Talent MEMBER STATUS MATRIX																
2																	
3																	
4	Category	Detail	Name 1	Name 2	Name 3	Name 4	Name 5	Name 6	Name 7	Name 8	Name 9	Name 10	Name 11	Name 12	Name 13	Name 14	N
5	Capability																
6	Alternative Energy	Ability to recharge NiMH or NiCd batteries from an indefinite power source, in the sizes used (AAA, AA, C, D, 9V)															
7	Alternative Energy	Generator with enough capacity to power critical needs for 14+ days for things like a refrigerator.															
8	Alternative Energy	Store of fuel to power generator for 14+ days and within any local fire codes.															
9	Alternative Energy	Put Uninterruptible Power Supplies/Devices on all computers and other sensitive critical electronics.															
10	Alternative Energy	Spare extension cords															
11	Alternative Energy	Battery Maintenance items and schedule.															
12	Alternative Energy	Other renewable/long-term power (solar, wind, hydro, geothermal) set-up capable of running all mission critical devices for indefinite period, working eventually to															

This is also a handy "checklist" for any household or individual plan as well. For details see:

Membership: Capability, Competency, Skill, Ability, Talent Matrix (Excel Workbook) (link to this document is found @ <http://formerlyurbanhomesteader.weebly.com/preparedness.html>)

*"Yesterday is history, tomorrow is a mystery,
and today is a gift; that's why they call it the present."
Eleanor Roosevelt*

Glossary of Terms



This is where you define all key terms and or acronyms so that every member/participant understands, without a shadow of doubt, what your group “manual” is talking about.



The words “camping, rural or kitchen duty” may mean one thing to one person and something completely different to another.

Example: Kitchen Duty

- Person A: Planning, Prep & Cooking
- Person B: Serving
- Person C: Clean-up
- Person D: Inventory of kitchen supplies
- Person E: All of the above

In order for the group to operate efficiently and effectively in achieving its goals and objectives it is necessary that there be no confusion about what means or consists of what.



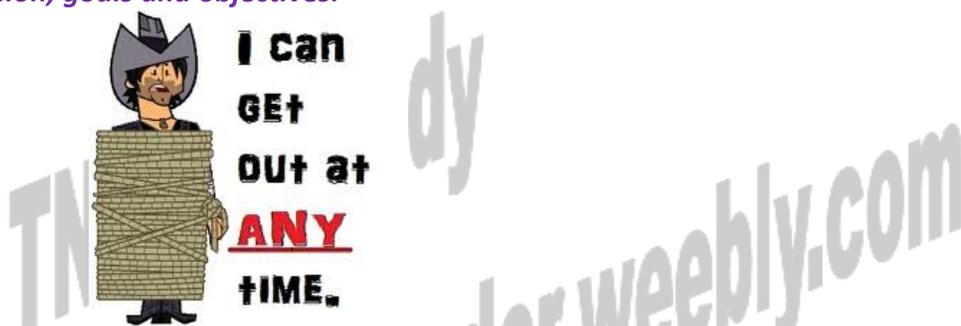
*"No great discovery was ever made without a bold guess."
Isaac Newton*

Reality Checks



Throughout each step of the way to forming and formalizing your Preparedness/Survival Group Plan **Reality Checks are a MUST!**

Let's face it; you **cannot** save the world if your group is only a dozen strong; your group **cannot** fend off an entire heavily funded, supplied and supported army with 10, 20 or even 300 people; your group **cannot** easily be a supply delivery group if the only vehicles it has are motorcycles. *This is where that long term vision is so different from the shorter term mission, goals and objectives.*



Things may sound really cool and appear to be the perfect solution when brainstorming – then **Reality Check** – actually writing the tasks and defining the necessities shows you the unrealistic fallacy of attempting that particular “solution” – you can see it as a “no win” situation at worst or a far, far into the future *vision* at best. **Your operational/governing documents should include all the steps between the group today and what it wishes to be, in “milestone” increments, to achieve its vision of the future.**



The **Reality Check** also assists in **setting expectations** and in pinpointing those often ugly moral and subjective situations and decisions that will occur from time to time – **upfront before group activation.**

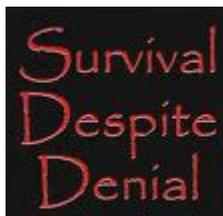


If you are a secondary retreat **you cannot allow members to bring an unannounced/expected friend or associate to the retreat.** This would only stress your infrastructures of lodging, food, water, protection, etc. to the max and thus **endangering the entire group.** It is much wiser to deal with this scenario at a member induction *before* a crisis occurs, rather than during or after.

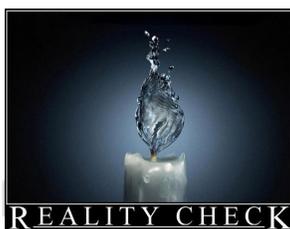
For example my family and Friends (yes capital F) know that if they come to me during a crisis, they must bring a fixed amount of necessity to life items and other supplies with them. I am one person, with 1 person's worth of supplies that I can effectively rotate; I have limited space so I can give them shelter - not their own bed or

How to Form a Successful Preparedness/Survival Group & Plan- Continued

bedroom. *I have set their expectations realistically by stressing their responsibility to bring their own supplies and be willing to work to sustain them. A preparedness/survival group must do the same!*



Any crisis that activates the group requires tough decisions. To facilitate these tough choices apply the **Reality Check** to each and every step; then **thoroughly document them in your plan and SOP's so there can be NO misunderstandings and or exceptions.**



To indentify and collect any possible extended family type individuals be sure that your membership collection form covers this type of information. For details see *How to Form a Successful Preparedness Survival Group - Membership Information Form* (link to this document is found @ <http://formerlynmurbanhomesteader.weebly.com/preparedness.html>).

"Just because something doesn't do what you planned it to do doesn't mean it's useless."
Thomas A. Edison

Finances & Membership Fees



This is always a toughie and the more “tight” the economy, the tougher it is. The trick here is again the “Reality Check”. People just are not going to fork over a lot of monies when they are struggling, **unless** they get something tangible that they desire out of it.

No matter what, it is wise to set your membership fees low when you start out and be sure that your participants actually get something they feel they need out of these annual or pay as you go fees. As the group matures and the membership grows, you can increase the fees that accumulate goods and other goals of the group.

Tip: Be sure your SOP (Standard Operating Procedures) has a section covering the distribution/pay-out of group items (goods) and monies should the group dissolve. In a bad economy this will reduce member fears of paying

into something and losing it if the group breaks up. Remember just about everyone wants a good bang for their hard earned dollars.



As an example, let's say you are forming a Secondary Retreat group.

When you first start out you have about 20 members, 12 of which are truly active, so your membership fee is \$10.00 a year. With this ten bucks you are providing education to help the membership create their individual preparedness plans and a few "how-to" training seminars on say canning and dehydrating food or CPR and the like. (Additional class fees *are* allowed as long as members have a discounted fee per class over non-members.)

In the second year your group increases to about 70 members with 15-20 that are truly active, so you increase your membership fee to \$20.00 dollars. With this you continue to provide education and training as well as setting aside \$5.00 of each membership fee for the accumulation of the group preparedness supplies that will be needed at the group retreat. (Remember that food stores need to be rotated so limit the group stores to only those long shelf life items or provide a process and procedure to rotate out these group stores to group members, where the membership provides more recent items in exchange.)

In the third year your group grows to about 200 members, with 110 active participants and you increase your membership fees to \$50.00 for a full membership and \$20.00 for an Associate membership. You put aside \$15.00 dollars towards group supplies and start accumulating more "intensive" and specific items like the livestock purchases and maintenance or first-aid supplies or a "live-in manager" at the secondary retreat and the like. Again you continue with the education and training, however a reduced fee for particular training classes is provided to Full Memberships, a slightly higher fee for Associates and a bit more for non-member (open to the public) training participants. You can now offer extra "specialty" courses on say; Strategic Home Defense, firearm cross-training, livestock care, first aid, etc. and you have a rotation schedule for membership to provide maintenance labor at the secondary retreat location.

*"Delegating work works,
provided the one delegating works, too."
Robert Half*

Detail Plan

The Detailed Plan will include the specific process and procedure that covers the high level Mission, Vision, Conduct, Goals and Objectives of the group, along with a blending of repeated process and procedures from the member's individual/household plans.

written individual/household plan in place and completes a Membership Form and Capability/Competency Survey.

- **Determine what you want the primary purpose and goals of the group to be; ie: What kind of group is this and what is it trying to accomplish – your Vision and Mission.** A “members only” retreat or “supply line”; communications warehouse; physical transportation or evacuation assistance or what?
- **Finances.** Determine what kind finances the group will need for daily standard operations. This may affect the organizational structure of the group as well.
- **Identify any sub-teams** that are required for the daily operations of the group and each team’s *specific tasks* and or *process and procedures* – during non-crisis and crisis modes.
- **Prioritize the Goals, Objectives and SOP’s of the group.** This will include:
 - **Define the overall rules and regulations that apply to ALL members/participants, including consequences** (Code of Conduct - Rules, Boundaries, Limitations, Consequences). So if a rule is everyone must pull laundry duty – then everyone MUST pull laundry duty. The consequence could be: Having to do the laundry for an extra week if one fails in this task due to anything but illness, injury or attack, death and the like.
 - **Determine and outline what is required for the day to day non-crisis and crisis activities of the group.** These are your standard operating procedures.
- **Define the organizational structure of the group;** Leader and sub-leaders along with the *duties and responsibilities* for each. These leadership selections should be based on merit/qualifications and *nothing else* for any needed sub-team.
- **Identify and prioritize any Needs specific to the group as a whole** (goods, knowledge, skills), along with these *processes and procedures*.
- **Prioritize the Repeated Needs** from each members **Per Crisis Needs Lists** and their process and procedure.

*"In order to succeed you must fail,
so that you know what not to do the next time."
Anthony J. D'Angelo*



1. State your Vision, Mission, Goals and Objectives. Remember the Vision and Mission are general, in the mid to long term future and the Goals and Objectives, although still rather general they are a bit more detailed. Leave the really detailed goals and objectives for the SOPs with its process and procedures.
2. Start with the process and procedure specific to the “vision, mission, goals and objectives” of the group.
3. Identify and Define your teams or sub-groups based on the “vision, mission, goals and objectives” of the group.

How to Form a Successful Preparedness/Survival Group & Plan- Continued

4. Select and outline the organizational structure of the group. Define positions, responsibilities and duties of each position.
5. Determine the detailed daily operational strategy (SOP) of the group and each team in crisis and non-crisis modes.
6. As a group; perform the planning information collection the same as you would for an individual/household plan – only be specific to the group *not* individuals and includes items identified by the Member Information Form.
7. Follow that with all those "processes and procedures" behind all the completely repeated "Needs" for the group and then the across the board repeats to each member/participant's individual or household plan (most likely they will be just about identical).
8. After this general portion of the group plan you can then address any *specific crisis* tasks that are generated in a group over a household environment. For instance: cooking, communications, security and first aid are common things that will function differently in a group VS a household.
 - Organize the process and procedures behind all the "Needs" outlined above and detail them in the group's overall Standard Operating Procedures.
9. Create and print a group "Manual" that includes all of the above (vision, mission, goals & objectives, organizational structure, conduct, SOPs and any shared membership detail, etc) to be distributed to each member.
10. Create a scaled down version of the group manual that does *not* include *detailed* SOP's or membership shared data that can be distributed to interested/potential members. This is usually the vision, mission, goals and objectives with references to rules, regulations and SOPs (no detail, just references letting the potential member know they exist).

*"In the middle of difficulty, lies opportunity."
Albert Einstein*

Links to the following documents can be found @ <http://formerlynmurbanhomesteader.weebly.com/preparedness.html>

For additional information on defining crises, needs, etc. see: *How to Make a Preparedness Plan That Works & Note Go Broke*

Tips on Selecting Members for a Successful Preparedness/Survival Group - Getting Along Today & Tomorrow



*"The best executive is the one who has sense enough to pick good men to do what he wants done, and self-restraint to keep from meddling with them while they do it."
Theodore Roosevelt*

Recap of Critical Success Factors

- **Reality Checks** to keep things attainable and successful
- **Keep It Simple**
- A strong **vision**, coupled with **goals and objectives** is needed to guide the purpose of the group and keep it on track.
- **A Plan.** An overall process and procedure that applies to all members/participants with concise goals and objectives for the overall group. Along with a Back-up and Back-up to the Back-up Plans - Contingencies for missing/lost personnel; worst case scenarios; FUBAR's, etc.; What constitutes "activation" of the group's purpose and who makes the final call; Duties of the first individual(s) to show up; Who does what in the first 24, 48 and 72 hours.
- **Standard Operating Procedures (SOP)** Outline and define who does what in the day to day operation of the group. Based on goods, knowledge and skills rather than crisis specific.
- **Governing/ Organizational Structure** with clearly defined "Job" Descriptions, **Duties** and **Responsibilities.** **Leader, sub-leaders, teams and chapters;** along with the *duties and responsibilities* for each. These leadership selections should be based on merit/qualifications and *nothing else* for any needed sub-team, etc. One "Chief" to at least 10 "Indians".
- **Finances, clearly defined and realistic** for the daily standard operations and as many unexpected situations as possible.
- **Rules & Regulations** (Code of Conduct/Ethics) with **Disciplinary Actions** and **Consequences** that apply to *ALL* members. All members participate in all tasks (no exceptions) of the group in compliance to the member's knowledge and or skill.
- Good, Wise and Strong **Leadership.** People skills; Pleasant Personality; Appoints and Guides Team Leaders; Delegates without over delegating; Good Conflict Resolution Skills; Manages without micro-managing; Motivational and morale booster; Leads/Instructs by action not threat; Keeps the group on track and is fair in all dealings with group members; Is an active group member.
- **Training and Education** for group members (knowledge and skill development).
- **Group members/participants** encompass a well rounded set of knowledge, skill; ages and talents; Pleasant Personality; Agrees with the group's goals, objectives, guidelines and is a team player; Will participate in group meetings and practice drills, etc.
- **Group Capability/Competency Matrix** this will provide the group with strong starting goods, knowledge and skills inventory, as well as a measurement in assessing accomplished goals and objective.
- A **Glossary or Dictionary** of *terms* and their *meanings* so the entire group is on the same page for words like: Camping ; laundry duties; kitchen duties; goods; knowledge; skills; hiking; defense; security and the like.

"Ingenuity, plus courage, plus work, equals miracles."

Bob Richards

As you can see these are nothing more than "common sense" factors. To implement just about any group project effectively will require; a plan, organization structure, rules, boundaries and limitations, as well as, goods, knowledge and skills and of course monies. Preparedness/Survival groups are no exception.

Keep in mind that this is **not** Hollywood or fiction. There is **no** fairy godmother out there to wave their magic wand and make it happen NOW, you **cannot** just build it and they will come.

This Is Real Life!

"The difference between a successful person and others is not a lack of strength, not a lack of knowledge, but rather in a lack of will."

Vincent T. Lombardi



Some examples and resources follow ...

"When making your choice in life, do not neglect to live."

Samuel Johnson

Related and or Additional Information

Misc Related Resources:

Survival Retreat Operations Manual (a very good SOP narrative, rather than outline)

<http://nationalprepperexchange.com/forum/index.php?action=downloads;sa=view;down=195;PHPSESSID=0f4b63b740>

If this is going to be a Secondary Retreat Group, I highly recommend that you read and print out *Preparedness Capability Checklist* <http://www.thepreparednessblog.com/capability-checklist/>

Don't forget that just like households need Crisis Drills so do groups. *Emergency Preparedness Drills & Evaluation Form* http://formerlynmurbanhomesteader.weebly.com/uploads/2/2/5/0/22509786/emergency_preparedness_drill_evaluation_form_new_site.pdf

Standard Operating Procedure for Minuteman Civil Defense Corps <http://www.minutemanhq.com/hq/sop.php>

PM 8-94 By Major George Westmoreland, USMC Ret. 1994 [http://www.scribd.com/doc/33843351/PM-8-94-Re-](http://www.scribd.com/doc/33843351/PM-8-94-Re-Formatted-2010-How-to-Start-and-Train-a-Militia-Unit)

[Formatted-2010-How-to-Start-and-Train-a-Militia-Unit](http://www.constitution.org/mil/doc/How_to_Start_&_Train_a_Militia_Unit--PM_8--94.pdf) or

http://www.constitution.org/mil/doc/How_to_Start_&_Train_a_Militia_Unit--PM_8--94.pdf

Long Range Recon Patrols and Operations Centers For Survival Groups <http://ezinearticles.com/?Long-Range-Recon-Patrols-and-Operations-Centers-For-Survival-Groups&id=1402145>

Example Group Preparedness Plan for:

XYZ Preparedness Secondary Retreat Group

Vision: To create a cohesive, functional, self-sustaining miniature “society” in which all the members of the group produce the physical, mental, medical, educational and spiritual needs for all members to live and flourish through an extended crisis.

Mission: To provide a well organized, efficient, stocked, safe and secure location for the group during a crisis. Where all are equal and each individual treats the others as they wish to be treated.

Goals: Self-reliant and self-sustaining group for all necessities to life.

Objectives: The group will produce/provide its own: food, clothing, shelter, education, safety & security, defense, communications, mechanical and trading needs.

Values: Everyone treats each other as they wish to be treated; everyone learns a little of everything so we can all assist each other.

Rules & Regulations: Every member participates in all tasks they are physically able to do – expert or novice. Leaders and expert members teach other members so everyone can learn and do a little of just about everything. Failure to participate for any reason other than injury, sickness or physical health; results in blah-blah-blah and after three offenses results in expulsion from the group.

SOP’s: blah, blah, blah and blah

Governing Structure:

Group Leader								
Medical & Dental	Gardening	Child Care & Education	Kitchen	Communications	Supplies	Defense & Security	Machinery, Tools & Transportation	Livestock
Team Leader	Team Leader	Team Leader	Team Leader	Team Leader	Team Leader	Team Leader	Team Leader	Team Leader
Members	Members	Members	Members	Members	Members	Members	Members	Members

Description of leadership duties and responsibilities goes here.

The Plan

- I. Mobility
 - a. Getting to retreat
 - b. Bug-Out or evacuation
- II. Practice Drills
- III. Process and procedure behind all the First Aid, Medical and Dental Needs
- IV. Process and procedure for all Safety, Security, Defense Needs
- V. Process and procedure for Shelter – human and animal
- VI. Process and procedure for Gardening Food Production
- VII. Process and procedure for Animals, Pets and Livestock
 - a. Chickens
 - b. Rabbits
 - c. Goats
 - d. Sheep
 - e. Cattle (meat & milk)
 - f. Horses

- g. Dogs
 - h. Cats
 - i. Ducks
 - j. Turkey
 - k. Bees
- VIII. Process and procedure for Kitchen
 - IX. Process and procedure for Child Care and Education
 - X. Process and procedure for Communications
 - XI. Process and procedure for Supplies
 - XII. Process and procedure for Machinery, Tools and Transportation
 - XIII. Process and procedure for Energy
 - XIV. Process and procedure behind all the Needs that replicated themselves on all the per crisis Needs Lists of the individual/household plans not already covered above
 - XV. Process and procedure behind all the Needs that replicated themselves on most of the per crisis Needs Lists of the individual/household plans not already covered above
 - XVI. Process and procedure behind all the Needs that replicated themselves on some of the per crisis Needs Lists of the individual/household plans not already covered above
 - XVII. Continue as XV above until all process and procedure Needs are covered of the individual/household plans not already covered above

Glossary of Group Terms

Animal/livestock duty
Kitchen Duty
Etc ...

For an example of all of this in a narrative format see: *Survival Retreat Operations Manual* (must register at this site to download)

<http://nationalprepperexchange.com/forum/index.php?action=downloads;sa=view;down=195;PHPSESSID=0f4b63b740>

Organizational Structures

Operational and Informal Organizations/Groups:

An effective organizational structure will facilitate working relationships between various entities in group and may improve the working efficiency within the various group units.

This organizational structure sets the order and control to enable monitoring the processes and results in a “chain of command” for coping with a mix of orders and or change of conditions during the performance of daily work or tasks, application of individual skills and enables flexibility and the ability to apply creativity.

When a group expands, the chain of command will lengthen and the spans of control will widen. When a group comes to “age” or is very large like a multi-national company, the flexibility will decrease and the creativity will fatigue. *Therefore organizational structures need to be altered from time to time to keep them effective.* If

How to Form a Successful Preparedness/Survival Group & Plan- Continued

alterations are prevented internally, the group will most likely fail or fall apart. In business that prevent these alterations, the “final escape” is to “turn down” the organization to prepare for a re-launch in an entirely new set up (often seen in some form of bankruptcy, buy out, merger and or spin offs).



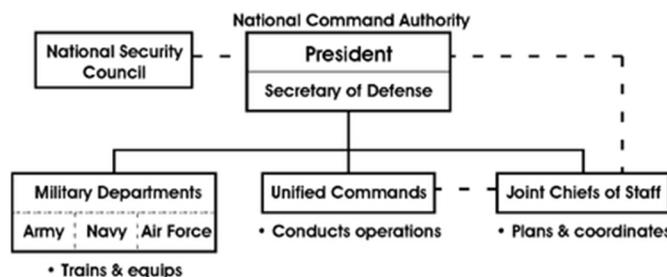
The Military organization is hierarchical. The use of formalized ranks in a hierarchical structure came into widespread use with the Roman Army. It is worthwhile to make mention of the term “joint”. In western militaries, a *joint force* is defined as a unit or formation comprising representation of combat power from two or more branches of the military.

In a military context, a **command** is a collection of units and formations under the control of a single officer. Although during the Second World War a Command was also a name given to a battle group in the US Army, in general it is an administrative and executive strategic headquarters which is responsible to the national government or the national military headquarters. It is not uncommon for a nation's services to each consist of their own command (such as Land Force Command, Air Command, and Maritime Command in the Canadian Forces), but this does not preclude the existence of commands which are not service-based.

A **formation** is a composite military organization that includes a mixture of integrated and operationally attached sub-units, and is usually combat-capable. A formation is defined by the US Department of Defense as 'two or more aircraft, ships, or units proceeding together under a commander.' The Shorter Oxford English Dictionary describes a formation as an 'arrangement or disposition of troops.' Formations include brigades, divisions, wings, etc.

A **typical unit** is a homogeneous military organization, either combat, combat support or non-combat in capability, that includes service personnel predominantly from a single Arm of Service, or a Branch of Service, and its administrative and command functions are integrated (self-contained). Anything smaller than a unit is considered a "sub-unit" or "minor unit".

All U.S. Military Units fall under the Department of Defense and its National Command Authority and have their own unique structures.



How to Form a Successful Preparedness/Survival Group & Plan- Continued

- The **Army** is organized in Squads (8-16 soldiers), Platoons (25-60), Companies (7-250), Battalions (300-1000), Brigades (2000–5000), Divisions (10,000–20,000), and Corps (30,000–80,000).
- The **Air Force** is organized in Flights (20-100), Squadrons (100-300), Group/Wing including EAWs or Station (300-1,000), Wing/Group including EAGs (1,000-5000), Numbered Air Force/No RAF Equivalent are by Region (subordinate units & personnel varies), and Major Command/Command or Tactical Air Force are by Region (subordinate units & personnel varies).
- The **Marine Corps** is organized in Teams (varies), Squads (8 to 50), Platoons (16 to 50 soldiers), Companies (75-200), Regiments (2,000-3,000), and Divisions (10,000-20,000).
- The **Navy** has a somewhat complicated organizational structure. Navies are generally organized into groups for a specific purpose, usually strategic and these organizational groupings appear and disappear frequently based on the conditions and demands placed upon a navy. (This contrasts with army organization where units remain static, with the same men and equipment, over long periods of time.) Basically the US Navy contains: Navy or Admiralty; Fleet; Battle Fleet or Task Force; Task Group; Squadron (naval) or Task Unit and Task Element.

Sample Group Organizational Structures

Football Team

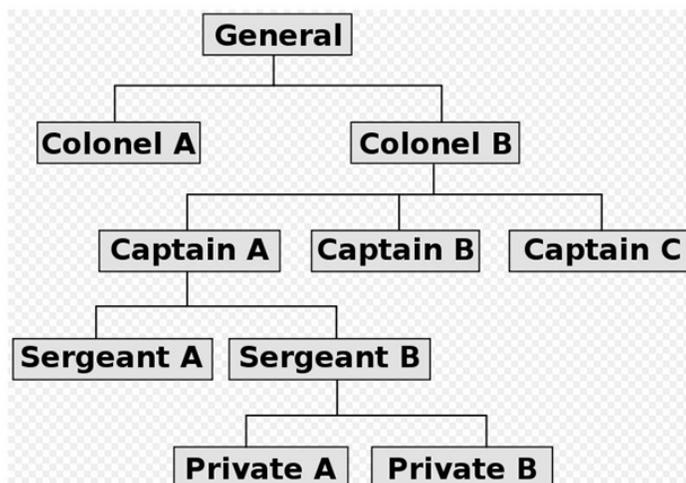
Head Coach		
Assistant Head Coach		
Team Medical Advisor <i>** Reports to all coaches</i>		
Offense Coach	Defense Coach	Field Goal – Kick Off Coach
Assistant Offense Coach	Assistant Defense Coach	Assistant Field Goal – Kick Off Coach
Offense Team Members	Defense Team Members	Field Goal – Kick Off Team Members

Preparedness Secondary Retreat Group

Group Leader								
Medical & Dental	Gardening	Child Care & Education	Kitchen	Communications	Supplies	Defense & Security	Machinery, Tools & Transportation	Livestock
Team Leader	Team Leader	Team Leader	Team Leader	Team Leader	Team Leader	Team Leader	Team Leader	Team Leader
Members	Members	Members	Members	Members	Members	Members	Members	Members

- The **Leader** and **Team Leader** may be a Member of another team.
- Any group Member can be a member of multiple teams and/or a Team Leader of a team.
- A **Team Leader** does *not* need the *Skills* associated to the team he/she is leading, but *does* need the fundamental *Knowledge* of that team’s primary tasks.

Simple Military Example



Tips for Writing SOPS

The best way to implement policies and procedures is to ensure they are well-written, useful, and simplify things for the reader.

Corporations generally have the following sections within their template for SOPs:

- Heading
- Approval or Effective Date
- Version Control
- Introduction
- Scope
- Purpose
- Procedure Description
- Approval Signature
- Document History

A preparedness or group need only have:

- Heading
- Brief explanation or description of the task and its overall purpose
- Detail procedure that also states any related SOPs and where to find them
- Effective date

In order to write an SOP, you will need to thoroughly understand the task at hand.

- Write down each step clearly and concisely-in plain simple English. Be sure to keep the process divided into individual steps to make them easily understood.
- After steps have been documented, have someone go through the procedure, following the steps as written. This will allow for corrections and additions.
- Get team approvals as needed.

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- See how it all fits together. Once all of the SOPs have been created, it's essential to see how related jobs interact. Do the SOPs cover all transfers of responsibility from one position or team to the next? You may need to have team or work group meetings to compare SOPs and make sure there are no gaps or overlaps.

One writing style is to *write headings as questions*, which each section answers. If you include sub-sections, use a numbered outline format (e.g. 1.2, 1.3) for the section headings. This helps the reader find the main sections quickly and see the relationship among subsections.

Use several different type sizes for headings. In many documents, the headings are in San Serif font (i.e. Verdana) and the body is in a Serif font (e.g. Times New Roman). Use a contrast in style to add emphasis.

Format the document to make it easy to read and attractive in presentation. This will reduce the time spent on preparing and reading the document.

- Leave a blank line between paragraphs
- Use bulleted lists
- Highlight main points with **bold** and *italics*
- Use boxes for examples
- Use white space generously
- Include margins of at least one inch all around the page
- If practical, use two (2) columns to increase readability

Tips for Writing a Code of Conduct or Ethics (Rules, Boundaries, Limitations, Consequences)

1. What will be the purpose of your new code? Is it to regulate behavior or to inspire?
2. Different kinds of documents serve different purposes. Is your new document intended to guide people or to set out requirements? Is it really a Code of Ethics that you need? You might consider creating a Statement of Values, a Policy, a Mission Statement, a Code of Conduct...
3. A code of ethics should be tailored to the needs and values of your organization or group.
4. Many ethics codes have two components. *First*, an aspirational section, often in the preamble, that outlines what the organization aspires to, or the ideals it hopes to live up to. *Second*, an ethics code will typically list some rules or principles, which members of the organization will be expected to adhere to.
5. Will your new ethics document include some sort of enforcement? If so, what kind?
6. Often the principles or values listed in an ethics document will be listed in rough order of importance to the organization. The ordering need not be strict, but generally the value or principle listed first will have a natural prominence.
7. Think carefully about the process by which you create your new code. Who will be involved? Is it specific to a small working group or are ALL the members affected by the code? How will you distil the needs of your organization and the beliefs of your members into a document? The process may matter as much as the final product.
8. How will your new code be implemented? How will it be publicized, both inside and outside (if necessary) of your group? What steps, if any, will be taken to ensure that the values embodied in your code get implemented in the groups organizational policies and practices?
9. How / when will your code be reviewed / revised, as well as notification of such changes to the members of your organization or group?
10. Tailor-make your code. Ideally, a Code of Ethics should be custom-made for your group. Ask yourself, what makes your Code specific to your group? Is there anything that differentiates it from similar documents devised by other groups in your field, or in similar fields? If not, what makes it your Code, other than the fact that your "logo" is at the top?

How to Form a Successful Preparedness/Survival Group & Plan- Continued

11. Get members involved. The people who will be guided by the code should be actively involved in writing it. If your group or organization is too large to get everyone involved, consider selecting representatives from various sub-teams, chapters, departments or business units. The document is bound to be more meaningful and find higher levels of acceptance, if members are part of the creation process.
12. Consult key “stakeholders” or in our case members and or chapter/team leaders. In businesses this is one of the keys to success. Ask what they think should be in your Code. This will help reveal what is important to members and external constituencies of what they see as your key obligations and will help make sure that the Code you write deals with the full range of issues that might confront your group/organization.
13. Seek out good examples. If you’re writing your own code, begin by looking at relevant examples. There are lots of good Codes out there (a quick internet search can be very revealing.) A code that is simply copied from another group/organization is unlikely to provide either effective guidance or inspiration – but there’s also no point in reinventing the wheel.
14. For preparedness and survival groups (even civilian defense/militia groups) the code should apply to all members. Any “exemptions” should be related to “bed ridden illness, death or dying” or physical and emotional *quantifiable* (tested) skills/competencies. If all members are not “judged” by the same rules there will be no compliance or buy in.
15. Be specific about implementation. How will the Code be implemented? Once it’s written, will it gather dust or will it influence policy and practice? What procedures are in place to make sure that writing a Code is more than just group “navel-gazing”? An effective implementation scheme (in businesses this is often as an appendix to the Code) will explain to all concerned how the values embodied in your Code will be put into practice.
16. Plan how each and every member will be “educated” about your Code. This is a key aspect of implementation and acceptance. A Code can only be effective if your members know about it. Perhaps this can be part of a group “member handbook”. For regular feedback have a place on your monthly or annual meetings as to “any questions on the Code or issues with the Code” to keep the Code current and functional , as well as renew buy in and adherence.
17. Be clear about enforcement and consequences. How will the Code be enforced? Are there specific penalties for violating the Code or is the Code merely there to provide guidance? Who will decide when a member has violated the Code – will that be up each member or to the team leaders? What is the process to report an infraction?
18. At the very least set a specific timeframe that the Code will be reviewed, revised and updated. If you are asking about concerns or problems with the code at routine meetings, then specify the process, procedure and timeframe to implement changes identified in these meetings.

"The best thing about the future is that it only comes one day at a time."

Abraham Lincoln

Above all being successful requires work, time, effort, human ingenuity, inventiveness, patience and tenacity, common courtesy and a good dose of luck. So that’s it folks everything I know and have researched on successful preparedness/survival groups. Remember if you want details on what to look for in a group, how to select group members or how to make plan, follow the links listed in this document - ***Good Luck and Have at It!!***

"Today is the Tomorrow that you worried about Yesterday"



Keep On Preppin ;-}

TNT

If you think that forming a preparedness group is a sign of insanity or just plain paranoid – **Think Again!!!**



Take a gander at the **Los Angeles Fire Department's** "Emergency Preparedness Booklet" <http://lafd.org/eqbook.pdf> :

"... **COMMUNITY PREPAREDNESS**

- _ Suggest that local organizations of which you are a member undertake a specific preparedness program or acquire special training to be of assistance in the event of a damaging earthquake.
- _ Participate in neighborhood earthquake preparedness programs.
- _ Attend training for neighborhood residents in preparedness, first aid, fire suppression, damage assessment and search & rescue.
- _ Develop self-help networks between families and your neighborhood through a skills and resources bank which includes a listing of tools, equipment, materials and neighborhood members who have special skills and resources to share.
- _ Identify neighbors who have special needs or will require special assistance.
- _ Have your neighborhood develop a secret signal to notify friends if everyone and everything is OK. Don't use obvious signals. This could identify vacant houses to criminals.

DEVELOP A MESSAGE DROP

You need to identify a secure location outside your home where family members can leave messages for each other. This way if you're separated, and unable to remain in your home, your family will know where to go to find you.

You don't want to publicize that you are not at home. That is why this location should be secure and discreet, i.e., under a paving stone, inside a tin can, in the back yard, etc ..."

The **Emergency Email Network** <http://www.emergencyemailnetwork.com> may also be helpful in case of emergency. It is a public private partnership between government, public services and private underwriting sponsors. Users can obtain free updates about disasters and other news via email or cell phone.

Training Resources

In most cases, if you have a group of ten (10) or more people, the **Red Cross** will come to you and give a free preparedness presentation tailored specifically for your needs. Most presentations take about 60 minutes. The Red Cross also offers specialized disaster education materials for children, students and youth groups.

Topics include general preparedness, earthquake preparedness, pandemic flu, how to use 9-1-1, how to build an inexpensive and effective disaster kit and much more. We work with all types of community groups including:

- PTAs
- Community organizations
- Housing associations
- Senior groups
- Senior care givers
- Childcare providers
- Caregivers for people with special needs
- Faith-based groups
- Refugee associations

The **Community Preparedness Website Project** @ www.PrepareNow.org/, supports special needs, handicapped, disabled, and vulnerable populations in disaster.

Check this site out: **Community Preparedness The Facts** <http://www.serve.gov/toolkits.asp> & <http://www.serve.gov/toolkits/disaster/>

Believe it or not even eHow has group or community Preparedness Planning tips:

http://www.ehow.com/how-does_5233609_process-community-planning-disaster-management.html

The Process of Community Planning for Disaster Management

By [Laura Reynolds](#)

1. Map out how the government functions in emergencies..

Emergency management sometimes resembles martial law---the suspension of civil rights in the face of an overwhelming threat to public safety. It is local government's responsibility to identify when a crisis rises to a level that justifies the type of suspension of ordinary procedures called for in most disaster plans. Plans must be adaptable to fit unexpected crises but must also identify hazards that are unique to the community. The plan must be compact and organized rather than lengthy and exhaustive; management personnel cannot waste time leafing through large packets of information in the face of a crisis. Community plans may consult experts and use state and federal models for their emergency plans, but to be successful, they must also involve citizens. The Emergency Planning and Community Right To Know Act (EPCRA), which outlines requirements for chemical hazard plans, provides a useful framework for all community plans.

Involve Shareholders

2. Responders need to know where to look for people.

Identifying and including the people who will be affected by the plan is the first job of emergency plan leaders. Many communities are fortunate in having professional expertise at hand: doctors to head up public health; clergy to deal with counseling; emergency personnel to handle evacuation and movement; engineers, firefighters and public works employees to address mitigation; and service groups and schools to assist with evacuation and housing. The task of leadership falls to public officials. Organizing this diverse group to work together to identify potential issues and design strategies to mitigate

How to Form a Successful Preparedness/Survival Group & Plan- Continued

disasters and crises can be challenging. It requires leaders willing to define tasks and maintain focus for groups developing the plan. Members must be tasked with studying potential dangers at local industries, climate-based threats and any geographical features that might contribute to crises. Study groups should assemble reports on basic topics like emergency management activation, command structure and responsibilities, resource management, situation assessment and mitigation and human resources. State statutes and local ordinances must establish structure and limits for each section and should be cited in appendices.

Finalize the Plan

3. Provide clear, easy-to-manage documents for use in emergencies.

The entire group (or as much of it as can be assembled to meet at one time) discusses and makes corrections and additions to a rough draft for each section of the plan. Solicit community involvement by inviting interested community groups and individuals to provide feedback at each step of the procedure after the initial drafts. The process will educate people in the issues involved in possible crises and challenges that their local leaders might face. The final plan should be brief and logically organized with a checklist for each department of the emergency management organization. Details such as resource lists and existing departmental emergency management plans should be included in the final document as appendices for each emergency management unit to add to its copy. The final plan should be available for discussion and examination to the community. Because the plan will be reevaluated and updated on a regular basis, plans should be clearly dated and collected when revisions are issued.

References

- Plan Development
- Emergency Management
- Emergency Operations Plan, City of Horicon, Wisconsin

Resources

- EPCRA 2008
- Emergency Preparedness
- FEMA Emergency Planning course

From Essentials: Introduction to Disaster Management

About Disaster Management

Disaster management, also known as emergency management, arose out of Cold War era Civil Defense... More
More: See All Articles in this Essentials

How to Plan for Disaster Management

Disaster can strike at any time. Depending on where you live, the disaster could be a tornado,... More
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How Can Students Prepare for Disaster Management?

Every school should have a plan to implement in the event of a disaster. Preparing this plan is... More
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Preparing for Disaster Management

Nobody wants to think about disasters and their effects. The fact is, though, disaster does... More
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Company Disaster Recovery Plans

Disaster can strike at any time. The Federal Emergency Management Agency describes a disaster,... More
More: See All Articles in this Essentials

http://www.ehow.com/topic_3715_introduction-disaster-management.html

Introduction to Disaster Management

by [Vivian Pearson](#)

Disaster management is essential for maintaining safety and order before and after a hurricane, tornado, wildfire or other incident that ends in mass casualties and damage. The following articles will show you the basics of disaster management.

[About Disaster Management](#)

Disaster management, also known as emergency management, arose out of Cold War era Civil Defense initiatives. Since Sept. 11, 2001, businesses and government agencies have [more »](#)

[How to Plan for Disaster Management](#)

Disaster can strike at any time. Depending on where you live, the disaster could be a tornado, hurricane, earthquake, flood or fire. It is important for you and your family [more »](#)

[How Can Students Prepare for Disaster Management?](#)

Every school should have a plan to implement in the event of a disaster. Preparing this plan is a task in which every group inside the school should take part. Even [more »](#)

[Preparing for Disaster Management](#)

Nobody wants to think about disasters and their effects. The fact is, though, disaster does occur from hurricanes, floods and fires. Whether it's a man-made or natural [more »](#)

[The Process of Community Planning for Disaster Management](#)

Emergency management sometimes resembles martial law---the suspension of civil rights in the face of an overwhelming threat to public safety. It is local government's [more »](#)

[Company Disaster Recovery Plans](#)

Disaster can strike at any time. The Federal Emergency Management Agency describes a disaster, or emergency, as an unexpected occurrence that may potentially cause harm to [more »](#)

[How to Be Financially Prepared if Disaster Strikes](#)

When disaster strikes, it is important to be prepared. Having your finances and possessions in order will greatly reduce the stress and disorder created by catastrophes [more »](#)

[How to Recover your Home from a Natural Disaster](#)

The good news is you've survived. Whether it's an earthquake, hurricane, flood, or wild fire you and your family are still alive, but in many ways now, at least [more »](#)

[Stocking Disaster Survival Supplies](#)

When stocking emergency supplies, it's important to consider how these supplies are going to have to be stored. Discover why it's important to use non-perishable food items [more »](#)

[Natural Disaster Emergency Plan](#)

Each of us hopes a natural disaster will never come our way, but every corner of the world faces its own gauntlet of dangers from Mother Nature, from the earthquakes of [more »](#)

[IT Disaster Recovery Planning](#)

Disaster recovery planning is one of the most important jobs of the IT professional. It includes working with upper management and winning the cooperation of all [more »](#)

[How to Prepare Yourself for a Natural Disaster](#)

Disaster can strike at any time and being underinsured or unprepared can wreak havoc in anyone's life. This is of paramount importance to homeowners who generally have a [more »](#)

[How to Make a Disaster Preparedness Kit](#)

Every safe room or storm shelter needs an emergency kit. The contents of the kit may vary according to the type and duration of the disaster, but whether you're preparing [more »](#)

[Stocking Emergency Disaster Supplies](#)

In case of an emergency or disaster situation, make sure everybody has one gallon of water per day, make sure there are non-perishable foods and stock extra prescription [more »](#)

[Computer System Disaster Recovery Plan](#)

Every computer user needs a plan for the day when the computer needs major repair or replacement. The disaster recovery plan should cover key topics like how to back up [more »](#)

From the **National Service Resources** <http://www.nationalservicerresources.org/practices/17608>

Designing a community disaster Preparedness plan

It is never too late to institute a disaster preparedness plan within your community. Public health and safety are increased as plans are devised and implemented. Tips included in this effective practice can also be modified to create a disaster preparedness plan within your organization. This information is excerpted with permission from the National Crime Prevention Council (NCPC) website.

Issue

Disaster often strikes without warning. The best way to prepare for disaster is to create a specific plan of action that can be put in place at a moment's notice.

Action

Arrange a meeting of community members through Neighborhood Watch or another civic association and work together to develop a community disaster preparedness plan. Begin with a discussion of the following topics:

Potential terrorist targets. Look at potential terrorist targets in or near your community (e.g., power or chemical plants, airports, high-profile landmarks, bridges, government buildings). Discuss the likelihood and consequences of an attack on any of these targets. Contact your local emergency management office (you can find the number in your phone directory or check your county/state Web site) for more information.

Terrorism prevention. Community members should know what kind of behavior and incidents to look for and how to report suspicious activities.

Community warning system. Community members should know their local warning system. In the event of a disaster, local radio and television stations will provide information on evacuation routes, temporary shelters, and other emergency procedures. Depending on the circumstances, any one of three protective actions (shelter-in-place, prepare-to-evacuate, or evacuate) may be appropriate.

Neighborhood directory. Create a list of home and work phone numbers and e-mail addresses for all community members, noting contact information and plans for children and seniors who may be home alone during emergency situations. Include important phone numbers, such as the local emergency management office and the non-emergency numbers for the police department, fire department, and FBI field office.

Members with special needs. Identify members of the community who may need special assistance during an emergency. These members might include seniors, individuals who are hearing or mobility impaired, and children who are home alone. Develop a plan to assist them during an emergency.

Members with special skills or equipment. Identify members of the community who have special skills (medical, technical) or equipment that they would be willing to share in the event of an emergency. Consider CPR and first aid training for community volunteers. To find CPR and first aid training in your area, contact a local hospital community outreach program or the American Red Cross.

Mail safety. Community members should know how to identify and protect themselves from suspicious mail.

Caring for pets. Community members should know what to do with pets in an emergency.

Property protection. Community members should have working fire extinguishers and know how to shut off their utilities such as gas, electricity, and water in the event of an emergency. House address numbers should be large and well-lighted so emergency personnel can find homes easily. Consider having a representative from a local utility company or fire department speak to your neighborhood watch group about property protection during a disaster.

How to Form a Successful Preparedness/Survival Group & Plan- Continued

Evacuation procedures. Develop a neighborhood evacuation plan. Contact the local emergency management office and find out ahead of time what evacuation routes have been designated for your area. Distribute maps to community members. Become familiar with major and alternate routes to leave your area before a disaster.

Local shelters. Provide the location of all county shelters to community members. (Shelters are often located in public school buildings.) Include their pet policies, if possible. Also, identify any community members who would be willing to provide shelter to others in an emergency.

School emergency plans. Find out what your local school district and day care centers plan to do in the event of an emergency. Many school districts stagger school hours so schools can share buses and therefore might not be able to evacuate all the schools at the same time. Make sure children know where to meet parents in the event schools are evacuated or an early release occurs.

Family emergency plans. Encourage community members to develop family preparedness plans that cover emergency contact information for family members, predetermined meeting places, home evacuation procedures, emergency pet care, safe storage of food and water, and assembling disaster supplies kits.

Context

During a disaster — natural or manmade — it may take several days for emergency management officials and other governmental agencies to restore services. Having a disaster preparedness in place, before a disaster strikes, makes good sense. As each individual does their part to prepare, whole communities will become safer and better equipped to cope with emergencies.

Related Practices

- [Creating a community inter-agency disaster organization \(CIDO\)](#)
- [Program, Financial and Grant Management](#)
- [Resources for Specific Groups](#)
- [Effective practices](#)
- [Lending library](#)

Some Additional Tips from **Community Planning**

<http://www.communityplanning.net/aboutcp/aboutcp.php> :

Accept different agendas

People will want to be involved for a variety of reasons, for instance: academic enquiry, altruism, curiosity, fear of change, financial gain, neighbourliness, professional duty, protection of interests, socialising. This need not be a problem but it helps to be aware of people's different agendas.

Accept limitations

No community planning activity can solve all the world's problems. But that is not a reason for holding back. Limited practical improvements will almost always result, and community planning activity can often act as a catalyst for more fundamental change.

Accept varied commitment

Far too much energy is wasted complaining that certain people do not participate when the opportunity is provided. All of us could spend our lives many times over working to improve the local environment. Everyone has their own priorities in life and these should be respected. If people do not participate it is likely to be because they are happy to let others get on with it, they are busy with things which are more important to them or the process has not been made sufficiently interesting.

How to Form a Successful Preparedness/Survival Group & Plan- Continued

Agree rules and boundaries

There should be a common understanding by all main interest groups of the approach adopted. Particularly in communities where there is fear – for instance that others may be trying to gain territorial advantage – it is vital that the rules and boundaries are clearly understood and agreed. In particular it is important to be clear about what can and cannot be changed as a result of any community involvement.

Avoid jargon

Use plain language. Jargon prevents people from engaging and is usually a smokescreen to hide incompetence, ignorance or arrogance.

Be honest

Be open and straightforward about the nature of any activity. People will generally participate more enthusiastically if they know that something can be achieved through their participation (eg if there is a budget for a capital project). But they may be quite prepared to participate 'at risk' providing they know the odds. If there is only a small chance of positive change as a result of people participating, say so. Avoid hidden agendas.

Be transparent

The objectives and people's roles should be clear and transparent at events. For instance, it may seem trivial but the importance of name badges to prevent events being the preserve of the 'in-crowd' can never be stressed enough.

Be visionary yet realistic

Nothing much is likely to be achieved without raising expectations. Yet dwelling entirely on the utopian can be frustrating. Strike a balance between setting visionary utopian goals and being realistic about the practical options available.

Build local capacity

Long-term community sustainability depends on developing human and social capital. Take every opportunity to develop local skills and capacity. Involve local people in surveying their own situation, running their own programmes and managing local assets. Help people to understand how planning processes work and how they can be influenced. Communications and cultural activities are particularly effective at building capacity.

(Source: part [APaNGO project](#))

Communicate

Use all available media to let people know what you are doing and how they can get involved. Community newspapers or broadsheets in particular are invaluable. Community newspapers and, increasingly, websites are invaluable. Information provision is a vital element of all participatory activities

Encourage collaboration

Create partnerships wherever possible between the various interest groups involved and with potential contributors such as financial institutions.

Flexibility

Be prepared to modify processes as circumstances dictate. Avoid inflexible methods and strategies.

Focus on attitudes

Behaviour and attitude are just as, if not more, important than methods. Encourage self-critical awareness, handing over control, personal responsibility and sharing.

How to Form a Successful Preparedness/Survival Group & Plan- Continued

Focus on existing interests

Start participatory working with a focus on the existing interests and motivations of local people. They will then see the relevance of being involved.

(Source: [APaNGO project](#))

Follow up

Lack of follow-up is the most common failing, usually due to a failure to plan and budget for it. Make sure you set aside time and resources for documenting, publicising and acting on the results of any community planning initiative.

Go at the right pace

Rushing can lead to problems. On the other hand, without deadlines things can drift. Using experienced external advisors may speed up the process but often at the expense of developing local capacity. Get the balance right.

Go for it

This is the phrase used most by people who have experienced community planning when asked what their advice would be to others. You are bound to have doubts, it is usually a leap in the dark. But you are unlikely to regret taking the plunge.

Have fun

Getting involved in creating and managing the environment should not be a chore. It can be a great opportunity to meet people and have fun. The most interesting and sustainable environments have been produced where people have enjoyed creating them. Community planning requires humour. Use cartoons, jokes and games whenever possible.

Human scale

Work in communities of a manageable scale. This is usually where people at least recognise each other. Where possible, break up larger areas into a series of smaller ones and translate regional issues to a local scale. Working on regional planning issues requires a high level of coordination between community and interest groups and the use of specific methods.

(Source: part [APaNGO project](#))

Integrate with decision-making

Community planning activity needs to be integrated with government decision-making processes. Participatory processes are undermined if there is no clear link to decision-making.

(Source: [APaNGO project](#))

Involve all those affected

Community planning works best if all parties are committed to it. Involve all the main interested parties as early as possible, preferably in the planning of the process. Activities in which key players (such as landowners or planners) sit on the sidelines are all too common and rarely achieve their objectives completely. Time spent winning over cynics before you start is well worthwhile. If there are people or groups who cannot be convinced at the outset, keep them informed and give them the option of joining in later on.

Involve all sections of the community

People of different ages, gender, backgrounds and cultures almost invariably have different perspectives. Ensure that a full spectrum of the community is involved. This is usually far more important than involving large numbers.

Learn from others

There is no need to re-invent the wheel. One of the best sources of information is people who have done it before. Don't

How to Form a Successful Preparedness/Survival Group & Plan- Continued

think you know it all. No one does. Be open to new approaches. Get in touch with people from elsewhere who have relevant experience. Go and visit them and see their projects; seeing is believing. Do not be afraid of experienced 'consultants' but choose and brief them carefully.

Local ownership of the process

The community planning process should be 'owned' by local people. Even though consultants or national organisations may be providing advice and taking responsibility for certain activities, the local community should take responsibility for the overall process.

Maintain momentum

Regularly monitor progress to ensure that initiatives are built on and objectives achieved. Development processes are invariably lengthy, the participation process needs to stay the course. If there has to be a break, start again from where you left off, not from the beginning. Periodic review sessions can be very valuable to maintain momentum and community involvement.

Mixture of methods

Use a variety of involvement methods as different people will want to take part in different ways. For instance, some will be happy to write letters, others will prefer to make comments at an exhibition or take part in workshop sessions.

Now is the right time

The best time to start involving people is at the beginning of any programme. The earlier the better. But if programmes have already begun, participation should be introduced as soon as possible. Start now.

Ongoing involvement

Community involvement in planning issues needs to be an ongoing and continuous activity and be supported accordingly. One-off consultations with tight deadlines only have limited value.

(Source: [APaNGO project](#))

Personal initiative

Virtually all community planning initiatives have happened only because an individual has taken the initiative. Don't wait for others. That individual could be you!

Plan your own process carefully

Careful planning of the process is vital. Avoid rushing into any one approach. Look at alternatives. Design a process to suit the circumstances. This may well involve combining a range of methods or devising new ones.

Plan for the local context

Develop unique strategies for each neighbourhood. Understand local characteristics and vernacular traditions and use them as a starting point for planning. Encourage regional and local diversity.

Prepare properly

The most successful activities are invariably those on which sufficient time and effort have been given to preliminary organisation and engaging those who may be interested.

Process as important as product

The way that things are done is often as important as the end result. But remember that the aim is implementation. Participation is important but is not an end in itself.

Professional enablers

Professionals and administrators should see themselves as enablers, helping local people achieve their goals, rather than as providers of services and solutions.

Quality not quantity

There is no such thing as a perfect participation process. The search for one is healthy only if this fact is accepted. Generally, the maximum participation by the maximum number of people is worth aiming at. But any participation is better than none and the quality of participation is more important than the numbers involved. A well organised event for a small number of people can often be more fruitful than a less well organised event for larger numbers.

Reach all sectors

Use methods to reach all sectors of the community – for example young people, minority ethnic communities, small businesses, the ‘silent majority’, the ‘hard to reach’. But take care to avoid further alienation of disadvantaged groups by creating separate processes.

(Source: [APaNGO project](#))

Record and document

Make sure participation activities are properly recorded and documented so that it can be clearly seen who has been involved and how. Easily forgotten, such records can be invaluable at a later stage.

Respect cultural context

Make sure that your approach is suitable for the cultural context in which you are working. Consider local attitudes to gender, informal livelihoods, social groupings, speaking out in public and so on.

Respect local knowledge

All people, whether literate or not, whether rich or poor, whether children, women or men, have a remarkable understanding of their surroundings and are capable of analysing and assessing their situation, often better than trained professionals. Respect local perceptions, choices and abilities and involve local people in setting goals and strategies.

Shared control

The extent of public participation in any activity can vary from very little to a great deal. Different levels are appropriate at different stages of the planning process but shared control at the planning and design stage is the crucial ingredient.

([see Participation matrix](#)).

Special interest groups

important Groups representing different special interests have a vital role to play in shaping the environment because of its complexity. Decision-makers need to consider evidence which represents best the variety of interests of current and future communities, including taking into account views of specific interest groups with particular knowledge.

(Source: [APaNGO project](#))

Spend money

Effective participation processes take time and energy. There are methods to suit a range of budgets and much can be achieved using only people’s time and energy. But over-tight budgets usually lead to cutting corners and poor results. Remember that community planning is an important activity, the success or failure of which may have dramatic implications for future generations as well as your own resources. The costs of building the wrong thing in the wrong place can be astronomical and make the cost of proper community planning pale into insignificance. Budget generously.

Think on your feet

Once the basic principles and language of participatory planning are understood, experienced practitioners will find it easy to improvise. Avoid feeling constrained by rules or guidance (such as this handbook)!

Train

Training is invaluable at all levels. Encourage visits to other projects and attendance on courses. Build in training to all your activities.

Trust in others' honesty

Start from a position of trusting others and generally this will be reciprocated. Lack of trust is usually due to lack of information.

Use experts appropriately

The best results emerge when local people work closely and intensively with experts from all the necessary disciplines. Creating and managing the environment is very complicated and requires a variety of expertise and experience to do it well. Do not be afraid of expertise, embrace it. But avoid dependency on, or hijacking by, professionals. Keep control local. Use experts 'little and often' to allow local participants time to develop capability, even if it means they sometimes make mistakes.

Use facilitators

Orchestrating group activities is a real skill. Without good facilitation the most articulate and powerful may dominate. Particularly if large numbers of people are involved, ensure that the person (or people) directing events has good facilitation skills. If not, hire someone who has.

Use local talent

Make use of local skills and professionalism within the community before supplementing them with outside assistance. This will help develop capability within the community and help achieve long-term sustainability.

Use outsiders, but carefully

A central principle of community planning is that local people know best. But outsiders, if well briefed, can provide a fresh perspective which can be invigorating. Getting the right balance between locals and outsiders is important; avoid locals feeling swamped or intimidated by 'foreigners'.

Visualise

People can participate far more effectively if information is presented visually rather than in words. A great deal of poor development, and hostility to good development, is due to people not understanding what it will look like. Use graphics, maps, illustrations, cartoons, drawings, photomontages and models wherever possible. And make the process itself visible by using flipcharts, Post-it notes, coloured dots and banners.

Walk before you run

Developing a participatory culture takes time. Start by using simple participation methods and work up to using more complex ones as experience and confidence grow.

Work on location

Wherever possible, base community planning activities physically in the area being planned. This makes it much easier for everyone to bridge the gap from concept to reality.

How to Form a Successful Preparedness/Survival Group & Plan- Continued

Dr. Steven Taylor, an associate professor of government at **American University** in Washington, DC, offers the following advice on community disaster preparedness.

1. Vote If You Want Your Emergency Preparedness Needs to Be Taken Seriously.

Use the ballot box to convey your [disaster preparedness](#) concerns.

“Many elected officials look up residents’ voting records before they decide whether or not to respond to a resident,” Dr. Taylor says. “People who vote in both primaries and general elections on the local, state and national levels are taken more seriously.”

“Vote in every election!” he urges. “If you feel there are no candidates deserving of your vote, then you should simply appear at the polls, go inside the booth and then leave. This way, you are recorded as having voted.”

2. Support Candidates Who Are Dedicated to Disaster Preparedness.

As we learned from Hurricane Katrina, elected officials at the local, state and federal levels play a major role in how disaster response is managed.

If you’re concerned about your community’s [emergency preparedness](#) and response capabilities, put your support behind a candidate who echoes your views.

“Get involved in that campaign,” Dr. Taylor says. “Even if the candidate loses, volunteers are taken seriously by elected officials. A person who works on a campaign is seen as representing more than just himself or herself.”

3. Don’t Be Shy About Stating Your Emergency Preparedness Concerns

“Concerned citizens should show up at officials’ offices, get to know them and their aides, write letters to them and hand-deliver them,” Dr. Taylor recommends. “I tell citizens to express their opinions about the issues at hand. Always express them in writing; then, they’re on file. But try to hand-deliver them so elected officials and their staff members get to know you.”

4. Attend Community Forums on Emergency Response

Community meetings allow you to express your concerns about [emergency preparedness](#) and disaster response to elected officials.

“When a citizen at a forum makes a statement and receives supportive comments from others in attendance, elected officials take pause and view this as a statement coming from a group of people—not just one individual,” Dr. Taylor says. “Community meetings are also a way for citizens to meet elected officials and high-level municipal and county appointees.”

Your town or city may not feel the need to be prepared yet D.C. has a serious campaign going.

<http://dcema.dc.gov/dcema> and **DC 18 Major Hazards**

<http://dcema.dc.gov/dcema/cwp/view,a,1226,q,533340,dcemaNav,|31810|.asp>

The **Community Emergency Response Network (CERN)** of Howard County, Maryland also has an extensive informational website: www.bepreparedbeready.org/

How to Form a Successful Preparedness/Survival Group & Plan- Continued

You and your neighbors may be without police, firefighters or relief workers for 3 to 5 days or longer during a disaster or other emergency. Thinking ahead now about how neighbors can help each other is important.

Step 1 – Get to know your neighbors

- A. Discuss how you can work together in times of an emergency or disaster.
- B. Sharing emergency contact information could be valuable when emergencies strike.
- C. Do you or your neighbors have special needs that would require help in times of an emergency or disaster?
 - 1. Do you need help to shovel snow?
 - 2. Do you have special physical limitations that may require assistance?
- D. Do you or your neighbors have special skills and/or equipment that could be used during an emergency or disaster?
 - 1. A chain saw, snow blower, wet vac, etc.?
 - 2. A 4-wheel-drive vehicle?
 - 3. Are you a carpenter or an electrician or have those skills?
 - 4. Are you a nurse, physician or mental health professional?
 - 5. Are you trained in emergency response (e.g., CERT training)?
 - 6. Do you have emergency communications equipment such as an NOAA Weather Radio or hand-crank radio or even medical equipment like a defibrillator?
 - 7. Other vital skills or equipment?

Step 2 – Make a list for each other

- A. Share your response to the information in Step 1 with your neighbors. The Howard County Community Emergency Response Network (CERN) has a form to help record this information at www.cernhc.org. need to find a local quivaliant
- B. Keep information that neighbors share with you in a private, easy to- find place. Be sure you have permission to distribute information among neighbors.

Step 3 – Being Prepared

- A. Communicate within your family and with neighbors.
 - 1. Your name, home, cell and work phone numbers
 - 2. Your emergency contact person’s home, cell and work phone numbers
 - 3. Designate a meeting place for family members if there is an evacuation
 - 4. Your out-of-town contacts: address, home, cell and work phone
- B. Obtain the CERN “Sheltering and Evacuation: Be Responsible. Be Ready.” card and keep it where you can find it and follow its check list. Key items on that list are:
 - 1. Know how to shut off your water, gas, electricity and other utilities
 - 2. Put together a “Go Kit” that you could quickly pick up if you needed to leave your home. Encourage your neighbor to do so, too. It should contain:
 - Water, food that doesn’t spoil, a can opener, flashlights, radio (hand-crank ones would be ideal) and batteries
 - Copies of some important papers so you can identify yourself and your property
 - Name of your insurance companies and their contact numbers
 - Clothes, a blanket, towels, soap, toilet paper, etc.
 - List of medications (copies of prescriptions)
 - Copies of contact lists in 3A

Step 4 – Children and Pets

- A. For each child, assemble a “Go Kit” or backpack with a favorite animal or blanket and a favorite book. The child can help update this as needed.
- B. If you have pets, have some pet food as part of the “Go Kit.”

Make a List of HELPFUL NUMBERS

- Police Department (Emergency)
- Police Department (Non-emergency)

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Fire and Rescue (Emergency)
Fire and Rescue (Non-emergency)
County Health Department
Health/Poison/Flu lines
Hospital(s)
Local Emergency Radio Station
Local Radio Stations (part of EAS and or NOAA networks)

According to the **International City/County Management Association (ICMA)**

(<http://www.emergencymgmt.com/disaster/Emergency-Planning-Improve-Community.html>) researchers have identified eight fundamental principles of community emergency planning that can be used to increase a community's level of preparedness, regardless of the amount of funding available. Although the report is geared to Communities, some of these principles do indeed apply to "private" preparedness groups too.

"1. Anticipate both active and passive resistance to the planning process, and develop strategies to manage these obstacles.

Emergency planning is conducted in the face of apathy on the part of some and resistance on the part of others. People are apathetic because they don't like to think about their vulnerability to disasters. Alternatively public officials and residents resist disaster planning because it consumes resources that could be allocated to more immediate community needs - police patrols, road repairs, and the like..."

"2. Address all hazards to which the community is exposed.

The plans for each hazard agent - flood, tornado, HAZMAT release - should be integrated into a comprehensive plan for multihazard emergency management... After identifying these hazards, emergency planners should examine the extent to which different hazard agents make similar demands on the emergency response organization..."

"3. Include all response organizations, seeking their participation, commitment and clearly defined agreement.

To be effective, emergency planning should promote inter-organizational coordination. Mechanisms should be developed to elicit participation, commitment and clearly defined agreement from all response organizations. ... The reason coordination is required is that emergency response organizations of differing capabilities must nonetheless work in concert to perform the four major functions of responders - emergency assessment, hazard operations, population protection and incident management."

"4. Base pre-impact planning on accurate assumptions about the threat, about typical human behavior in disasters, and about likely support from external sources such as state and federal agencies.

Emergency planning should be based on accurate knowledge of the threat, of likely human responses and of likely aid from external sources. Accurate knowledge of the threat comes from thorough hazard-vulnerability analyses. Accordingly emergency managers must identify hazards to which their communities are vulnerable, determine which geographical areas are exposed to those hazards (100-year floodplains and toxic chemical facility vulnerable zones), and identify the facilities and population segments located in those risk areas. Part of knowing the threat means understanding the basic characteristics of these hazards, such as speed of onset, scope and duration of impact, and potential for producing casualties and property damage.... Moreover, looting in evacuated areas is extremely rare, and crime rates tend to decline following disaster impact. Finally, concerned citizens believe they can best help the victims by entering the impact area to donate blood, food and clothing, even though doing so creates major problems of convergence..."

"5. Identify the types of emergency response actions that are most likely to be appropriate.

Sometimes the response that is usually the most appropriate one might not, in fact, be most suitable given the circumstances that arise in a specific event. ... In the highly charged atmosphere of imminent disaster, it is hard for an emergency manager to appear to be "doing nothing." ... it is important to recognize that the best action might be to mobilize emergency personnel and *actively* monitor the situation for further information rather than initiate unnecessary hazard operations, population protection or incident management actions. Thus, planning and training should focus on *principles of response* rather than trying to define overly specific procedures that contain a multitude of details."

“6. Address the linkage of emergency response to disaster recovery.

It is increasingly recognized that there is no clear line between emergency response and disaster recovery. At any point after impact, some portions of the community will be engaged in emergency response tasks whereas others will have moved on to disaster recovery. ... senior elected and appointed officials are likely to be inundated with policy decisions that need to be made to implement the emergency response at the very time they must plan for the disaster recovery. Consequently pre-impact emergency response planning should be linked to pre-impact disaster recovery planning. Coordination between the two plans will speed the process of disaster recovery by ensuring that the priorities for disaster recovery have been clearly established so that recovery actions can be initiated while the emergency response is still under way.”

“7. Provide for training and evaluation of the emergency response organization at all levels - individual, team, department and community.

Emergency preparedness also has a training and evaluation component. The first part of the training process involves explaining the provisions of the plan to the administrators and personnel of the departments that will be involved in the emergency response. Second, all those who have emergency response roles must be trained to perform their duties. Of course, this includes fire, police and emergency medical services personnel, but there also should be training for personnel in hospitals, schools, nursing homes and other facilities that might need to take protective action. Finally, the populations at risk must be involved in the planning process so they can become aware that planning for community threats is under way and be knowledgeable about what is expected of them under those plans. These populations need to know what is likely to happen in a disaster and what emergency organizations can *and cannot* do for them. ... It is also essential that training be followed by evaluation in the form of tests and exercises to determine whether it has been effective. Emergency drills and exercises provide a setting in which the adequacy of the emergency operations plan, standard operating procedures, staffing, facilities and equipment can all be tested as well. ... And multifunctional exercises also produce publicity for the broader emergency management process, which informs community leaders and the public that disaster planning is under way and preparedness is being enhanced.”

“8. Recognize that emergency planning is a continuing process.

Preparedness is a continuing process because conditions within the community change over time, conditions outside the community can change as well and the products of planning itself change. Conditions inside the community include hazard vulnerability, organizational staffing and structure, and emergency facilities and equipment. Conditions outside the community include federal regulations (witness the requirements for communities to adopt the National Incident Management System). The preparedness process results in some products that are tangible and others that are intangible - hard to document on paper and not realized in hardware. An example of such intangible products is the development of emergency responders' knowledge about disaster demands, about their own emergency response roles and about other agencies' capabilities.”

Additional Resources

CounterTerrorismTraining.gov has some interesting links.

<http://www.counterterrorismtraining.gov/comm/index.html>

Community Emergency Response Teams (CERT)

CERT promotes both improved emergency response and partnerships between emergency services and the communities they serve by enlisting emergency responders to train community members in basic response skills.



FEMA and American Radio Relay League Partner in Preparedness Through Citizen Corps

Federal Emergency Management Agency, June 2003

The partnership among [FEMA](#), the [American Radio Relay League](#), and [Citizen Corps](#) aims to raise awareness about the use of amateur radio as a public safety resource, provide training and accreditation for amateur radio emergency communications, and assist Citizen Corps Councils with public education, training, and volunteer service opportunities that support first responders, disaster relief organizations, and community safety efforts.

[Fire Corps](#)

Fire Corps was created to help fire departments use citizen advocates. It works in partnership with the [International Association of Fire Chiefs](#)¹, the [International Association of Fire Fighters](#), the [National Volunteer Fire Council](#), and the [USA Freedom Corps](#). Fire Corps provides individuals with opportunities to support their local fire departments and enhance fire department operations.

[HVAC Building Vulnerability Assessment Tool \(PDF\)](#)

Rhode Island Department of Health, November 2004

Rhode Island created this Building Vulnerability Assessment Tool to help building owners and managers identify air-handling system vulnerabilities to biological terrorism agents. The tool provides a comprehensive checklist to guide the evaluation of air handling systems. Although the tool was created for buildings in Rhode Island, it could perhaps be applied elsewhere.

[IACP Info](#)

International Association of Chiefs of Police

This free biweekly e-mail newsletter is sent automatically to all International Association of Chiefs of Police members who have provided their e-mail addresses, unless they request otherwise. Nonmembers may subscribe at the above hyperlink.

[Interim Pre-Pandemic Planning Guidance: Community Strategy for Pandemic Influenza Mitigation in the United States—Early, Targeted, Layered Use of Nonpharmaceutical Interventions \(PDF\)](#)

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, February 2007

This document provides interim planning guidance for local, state, territorial, and tribal communities on several measures other than vaccination and drug treatment that might be useful during an influenza pandemic. This interim guidance introduces a Pandemic Severity Index to characterize the severity of a pandemic, provides planning recommendations for specific interventions that communities may use for a given level of pandemic severity, and suggests when these measures should be started and how long they should be used.

[Medical Reserve Corps](#)

The Medical Reserve Corps gives health professionals the opportunity to volunteer their time and skills to assist their communities before and during a large-scale emergency and with ongoing public health needs.

[National Crime Prevention Council \(NCPC\)—Homeland Security](#)

NCPC's mission is to help people create safer and more caring communities by addressing the causes of crime and violence and reducing the opportunities for crime to occur. This site provides links to homeland security-related issues such as national and religious profiling, emergency preparedness, workplace and building security, community mobilization and volunteerism, and terrorism prevention.



[TRANSCAER® \(Transportation Community Awareness and Emergency Response\)](#)

TRANSCAER® is a voluntary national outreach effort that focuses on helping communities to prepare for and respond to a possible hazardous material transportation incident. Members consist of volunteer representatives from the chemical manufacturing, transportation, distribution, and emergency response industries, as well as the government.

[Volunteers in Police Service](#)

Initiated by the [Citizen Corps](#) program and implemented by the [International Association of Chiefs of Police](#), Volunteers in Police Service (VIPS) works to enhance the presence of volunteers in state and local law enforcement. VIPS meets a volunteer's desire to serve and an agency's need for support.

[National Emergency Response Team \(NERT\)](#)

NERT is committed to the establishment of independent and joint ventures to conceive, develop, and implement disaster response services and education programs that coordinate publicly available resources during a crisis situation.

[Office for Domestic Preparedness \(ODP\)](#)

ODP (formerly the Office for State & Local Domestic Preparedness) is the program office within the U.S. Department of Homeland Security responsible for enhancing the capacity of state and local jurisdictions to respond to, and mitigate the consequences of, incidents of domestic terrorism.

[U.S. Department of Health and Human Services \(HHS\): Disasters and Emergencies](#)

HHS' Disasters and Emergencies web site provides terrorism-related information on topics such as anthrax, small pox, and dirty bombs.

[Citizens' Emergency Response Guide](http://www.fema.gov/areyouready/preface.shtm) <http://www.fema.gov/areyouready/preface.shtm>

[Department of Defense Support to Domestic Incidents](#) provides information on how to request Department of Defense support during a domestic incident.

[National Infrastructure Protection Plan \(NIPP\)](#) and supporting Sector-Specific Plans (SSPs) provide a coordinated approach to critical infrastructure and key resources (CIKR) protection roles and responsibilities for Federal, State, local, tribal, and private-sector security partners. The NIPP sets national priorities, goals, and requirements for effective distribution of funding and resources which will help ensure that our government, economy, and public services continue in the event of a terrorist attack or other disaster.

[National Preparedness Guidelines](#) establish a vision for national preparedness and provide a systematic approach for prioritizing preparedness efforts across the Nation. These Guidelines focus policy, planning and investments at all levels of government and the private sector. The Guidelines replace the Interim National Preparedness Goal and integrate recent lessons learned.

Community Emergency Response <http://www.thehorizonfoundation.org/ht/d/sp/i/1149/pid/1149>

Be Prepared Be Ready <http://www.bepreparedbeready.org/>

Interested in Emergency Communications? Columbia Amateur Radio Association will be holding a 2 day license class: <http://goo.gl/y0WlIQ> #HoCo

HHS launches site for disaster medical volunteers: <http://bit.ly/a8mKGZ>

Collaborating with Neighbors During an Emergency <http://bepreparedbeready.org/ht/a/GetDocumentAction/i/6189>

Small Spaces Small Budgets <http://www.bepreparedbeready.org/sites/cern/ht/a/GetDocumentAction/i/2588>

Community Emergency Response Network Strategic Plan

<http://www.bepreparedbeready.org/ht/a/GetDocumentAction/i/4712>

A general guide for preparing a shelter in place plan in the workplace may be found at *National Institute for Chemical Studies* <http://www.nicsinfo.org/SIP%20plan%20for%20offices%20NICS%20feb2003.pdf>

Emergency Planning: Improve Community Preparedness <http://www.emergencymgmt.com/disaster/Emergency-Planning-Improve-Community.html>

Community Emergency Preparedness <http://www.americanfamilysafety.com/emergency-preparedness/community-emergency-preparedness.html>

Disaster Emergency Planning http://dgs.stanford.edu/SCOPE/SCOPE_40/SCOPE_40_1.5_Disaster%20Emergency_75-80.pdf

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Designing a community disaster preparedness plan <http://www.nationalserviceresources.org/practices/17608>

Community Based Disaster Management Empowering Communities to Cope with Disaster Risks

<http://unpan1.un.org/intradoc/groups/public/documents/un/unpan020698.pdf>

COMMUNITY ANALYSIS SOME CONSIDERATIONS FOR DISASTER PREPAREDNESS AND RESPONSE

http://www.umaryland.edu/healthsecurity/mtf_conference/Documents/Additional%20Reading/Session%205/Community_analysis_some_considerations_for_disaster_preparedness_and_response.pdf

Give Your Community the Gift of Emergency Preparedness <http://www.houselogic.com/articles/give-your-community-gift-emergency-preparedness/>

Crime Prevention and Community Preparedness www.ncpc.org/.../crime-prevention-and-community-preparedness.ppt

COMMUNITY PREPAREDNESS AND PARTICIPATION

http://www.ema.ohio.gov/documents/pdfs/Target_Capabilities/TCL_Community_Preparedness_May_2008.pdf

National Neighborhood Watch Institute <http://www.nnwi.org/>



United States Militia <https://www.unitedstatesmilitia.com/forum/showthread.php?t=4270>



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Mission

We are a community devoted to the foundations of Liberty, to lawfully rebuilding a culture of civic responsibility, and to the preservation of a prosperous and free America.

“...Militia or Civil Defense Group

What's in a name? A rose by another name would still smell sweet.

In TN I started an group called a Citizens readiness group. Since the militia had an image problem linked to the extreme rhetoric of past organizations who espoused a violent anti government agenda as well as media spin and just pure ignorance, we decided to just call it something else. Perhaps we could change this image problem here in Cali by presenting a new face to the public as a **Citizens Readiness Group**.

CERT is a good place to start. If your community has something like this get involved, infiltrate and learn how they organize, how they educate and train, how they raise money for supplies etc. Learn from them.

One issue I kept running into is- My wife don't want me involved with no militia. We gave the ladies something to do and kept the military aspects to a minimum. If momma aint happy ain't nobody happy. A different type of organization was called for.

Since a militia is without logistical support and without the hearts and minds of your community it's going to be a hard road for you. With a CRG in place you have a good foundation and support of your community.

I suggested **4 key principles for a CRG organization**- Preparedness, Involvement, Security and Citizenship. A CRG

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should not be a subversive group trying to overthrow the country for what ever reason. A CRG should not become a political organization but a public service provided by everyday citizens who are ready willing and able to pitch in when the need is greatest.

Civilian Readiness Group is a volunteer community organization whose mission is to assist Emergency Services, before, during and after times of extreme emergency or natural disasters. Also provides training, education and open forums for local community issues. (hearts and minds)

CRG's are composed of a Headquarters Element and 4 operational elements- Technical section, Logistic section, Medical section, and Security/ Rescue section.

Headquarters is tasked with the Management, Deployment, Staging, Training, Public Affairs, Logistics and Overall operations

Technical sections mission is to assist in the establishment, operation, maintenance and security of an communication and computer networks during an emergency. Helps provide technical expertise on electrical power, water resources, construction, demolition and other areas of technical expertise.

Logistics mission is to assist in the distribution, preparation, and collection of Food, Shelter and Clothing in times of Crisis.

Medical sections mission is to assist in providing Emergency and Patient care in a time of Crisis. Also to help provide Field sanitation and Water treatment

Security and Rescue Sections mission is to assist in Perimeter & Area Security, Welfare Calls, Reconnaissance, Search, Rescue and Extraction. Also to assist with the Processing Detainees.

Basic Training could consist of-*Emergency First Aid*(START)*Disaster Preparedness, Basic Urban and wilderness Search and Rescue Techniques, Radio Communications Fundamentals, Basic Construction skills,*Wilderness Survival,*Basic Rifle and pistol Marksmanship, Firefighting Fundamentals, Elements of Gardening and*Animal Husbandry, American History and Civics.

*

Basic Gear could consist of an Individual 72 hour "Bug out" bag, Individual*First Aid kit, Portable Transceiver. Additional equipment would be mission and section specific.***

Things you could do- Welfare checks on seniors and families after a disaster, Neighborhood watches. BP pressure and health checks, Fire safety inspections and smoke alarms. Neighborhood cleanup, Voter registration drives, Self defense training, Food banks, Civics and constitutional meetings. Letter writing campaigns to support political initiatives,community gardens.

Perhaps taking direct action that benefits your community will win the hearts and minds and hopefully wake the sedated masses to the nature of our cause.

The point is- Organize, Educate and Prepare.

Just some ideas. Keep up the fire! ... "Militia" cannot be used when talking to about 99% of social folks. A new word or presentation is necessary to get around the brainwashing that has been done. ... Yep! The M word scares the hell out of them. A tea party sounds so lame. Biscuit anyone? I like the Citizens readiness group, sounds like CERT but even less scary. Glad you're here JB. Keep up the fire! ..."



TNTCrazyLady

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