

ANNEX I

PUBLIC INFORMATION

August 2020

**Brazos County Interjurisdictional
Emergency Management**

IV. SITUATION & ASSUMPTIONS

A. Situation

1. Brazos County faces a number of hazards which may cause emergency situations; see Section IV of the Basic Plan for a summary of those hazards and their possible impact.
2. During emergencies, the public needs timely, accurate information on the emergency situation and appropriate instructions regarding protective actions that should be taken to minimize injuries, loss of life and damage to property.
3. For some slowly developing emergency situations (such as river flooding or hurricanes), there may be several days for local government and the media to provide detailed information about the hazard and what citizens should do.
4. For other emergency situations, there may be no warning, leaving the public information system unable to react rapidly enough to properly inform the public about the hazard and what to do about it. For this reason, it is important that the public be advised of likely hazards and what protective measures should be taken to lessen the effect of an emergency and/or disaster.

B. Assumptions

1. An effective program combining both education and emergency information can significantly reduce loss of life and property. However, many people are unconcerned about hazards until they may be affected and will not participate in or retain pre-emergency education; therefore, special emphasis must be placed on the delivery of emergency information during emergencies and disasters.
2. Local media will cooperate in disseminating warning and emergency public information during emergency situations and may participate in pre-disaster awareness programs and other disaster education activities.
3. Some emergency situations may generate substantial media interest and draw both local media and media from outside the local area, overwhelming the available emergency public information staff.

V. CONCEPT OF OPERATIONS

A. General

1. Pursuant to the National Incident Management System (NIMS) operating principles and protocols, public information efforts should generally focus on specific event-related information. This information will generally be of an instructional nature focusing on such things as warning, evacuation, and shelter. Appendix 2 describes some basic emergency information needs.

4. Once the EOC has been activated for an emergency situation, the EOC Manager will normally determine the need for additional warning and instructions. The PIO staff will formulate additional warning messages and public instructions, using the sample messages contained in Annex A as a basis, where appropriate. The LWP will normally execute such warnings by activating the warning system, including transmitting EAS messages to broadcasters. The PIO staff will disseminate Special News Advisories and other emergency public information materials to the media directly using its contact list.
5. In the case of large-scale emergencies or disasters where there are substantial external responders from other jurisdictions and/or state or federal agencies and the response and recovery effort may continue for an extended period, a Joint Information Center (JIC) may be established. The JIC, an element of the Joint Information System (JIS) developed to provide information to the public during an emergency, is either a working facility or virtual where the emergency public efforts of all participating jurisdictions, agencies, volunteer organizations, and other responders can be coordinated to ensure consistency and accuracy. In federally declared incidents, a JIC will typically be set up as part of the Joint Field Office (JFO).
6. The following means will be used to provide emergency information and instructions to the public:
 - a. EAS broadcasts by radio, television, and cable companies.
 - b. Special news broadcasts by radio, television, and cable companies.
 - c. Local newspapers.
 - d. Cable local government access channel.
 - e. Telephone warning/information system.
 - f. Mobile units with public address systems, such as police and fire units.
 - g. Bryan/College Station 2-1-1 Texas system.
 - h. The local government Internet site(s) and social media platforms.

C. Providing Emergency Information to Special Populations

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

1. Visually-impaired: EAS messages and news advisories on radio, NOAA Weather Radio, or by door-to-door notification.
2. Hearing-impaired: Captioned EAS messages and news advisories on television, print media.
3. Non-English Speakers: Warning messages and news advisories in Spanish on radio, in print or by door-to-door notification.

D. Resources

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

- e. Train public information staff.
- f. Brief local officials and emergency responders on working with the media. See Appendix 3.
- g. Maintain this annex.
- h. Identify suitable physical and virtual environments for a Joint Information Center.

3. Response

- a. Develop, obtain authorization, and release public information on the emergency situation.
- b. Conduct media monitoring to determine the need to clarify issues and distribute updated public instructions.
- c. Manage rumor control.
- d. Conduct news conferences and arrange interviews as needed.

4. Recovery

- a. Provide public information relating to recovery process and programs.
- b. Compile a record of events.
- c. Assess effectiveness of public information and education program.

VI. ORGANIZATION & ASSIGNMENT OF RESPONSIBILITIES
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A. General

1. The overall responsibility for providing emergency information and instructions to the public rests with the County Judge and/or Mayor(s).
2. The County Judge and/or Mayor(s) shall provide general guidance for Public Information (PI) programs and appoint a Public Information Officer (PIO) or ensure one is appointed.
3. The PIO will manage and coordinate all emergency public information related activities and direct such staff as may be assigned or recruited to assist in those activities.
4. Trained public information specialists will staff PIO positions at the Incident Command Post and in the EOC.

- j. Develop methods for distribution of Emergency Public Information materials to the public, to include materials for non-English speaking groups, if appropriate.
 - k. In cooperation with the EMC, coordinate with broadcasters (radio and television stations and cable television companies) to develop procedures for local government to disseminate warning messages and emergency information through the broadcast media.
 - l. Authenticate sources of information, verify for accuracy, and obtain authorization before issuing news releases.
 - m. Provide authorized news releases to the media while keeping the Emergency Management Director, the EMC(s) and other appropriate officials informed of message content.
 - n. Monitor media coverage of emergency operations for accuracy of reports and issue corrections where necessary.
 - o. Take action to control rumors.
 - p. Brief potential Incident Commanders, department heads and key staff, and the EOC staff on basic public information needs, working with the media, and media access during emergency operations. See Appendices 2, 3 and 4 for further information on these subjects.
 - q. Maintain a media briefing area as designated by the Incident Commander or EOC Manager.
 - r. Periodically brief the media on local warning systems and warning procedures.
 - s. Maintain a Media Contact Roster. See Appendix 1 for a sample.
 - t. Compile text and photographic documentation of the emergency/disaster.
 - u. Develop public information emergency checklists for known hazards. See Appendix 6.
 - v. Anticipate and be prepared to handle unscheduled inquiries from the media and the public.
 - w. Train a group of government employees and/or volunteers to staff PIO positions at the Incident Command Post and in the EOC.
3. The EMC will:
- a. Advise the County Judge and/or Mayor(s) when to disseminate emergency instructions to the public.
 - b. Coordinate with the PIO in the development of pre-scripted emergency messages.
 - c. Work with the PIO in public education activities relating to emergency management.

2. Brazos County
 - a. Public Communications Officer
 - b. County Judge
 - c. Emergency Management Coordinator
 - d. Department-specific Public Information Officer (Sheriff's Office, Health District, etc.)

3. City of College Station
 - a. Public Communications and Marketing Director
 - b. Communications Manager
 - c. City Manager or Assistant
 - d. Department PIO(s) appropriate to the situation

4. Texas A&M University
 - a. Marketing and Communications PIO
 - b. Marketing and Communications Assistant PIO
 - c. University Police PIO

5. City of Wixon Valley
 - a. Mayor
 - b. Mayor Pro-tem

6. City of Kurten
 - a. Mayor
 - b. Mayor Pro-tem

VIII. READINESS LEVELS

A. Readiness Level 4 - Normal Conditions

See the mitigation and preparedness activities in Section V.E, Emergency Management Activities by Phase.

B. Readiness Level 3 - Increased Readiness

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

C. Readiness Level 2 - High Readiness

1. Monitor the situation.
2. Review pre-scripted warning messages and public instruction messages; draft updated versions or additional messages tailored for the impending threat.

2. The PIO and/or the EMC(s) shall obtain and maintain materials for disaster-related public education. A wide variety of educational materials dealing with emergency management and disaster preparedness are available including emergency preparedness information of general interest and specialized preparedness publications for school children, the elderly, and people with various disabilities. Public education materials relating to emergency management are available in a variety of languages.
3. The principle providers of disaster-related educational materials are the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), the American Red Cross (ARC), and the Texas Division of Emergency Management (TDEM); many agencies and volunteer organizations also published specialized disaster-related educational materials. FEMA publishes a catalog of their publications and both FEMA and the ARC include educational materials on their web sites; see Section XI, References, for their addresses. The TDEM also distributes hazard-specific awareness materials periodically throughout the year to local EMCs as part of state awareness campaigns.

D. Training

Members of the public information staff, for whom public information is not their primary daily work should attend public information training, preferably training focusing on emergency public information activities. TDEM and FEMA offer Public Information Officer training.

X. ANNEX DEVELOPMENT & MAINTENANCE

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

XI. REFERENCES

- A. FEMA, *FEMA Publications Catalog*
- B. FEMA, *Comprehensive Preparedness Guide (CPG-101)*
- C. FEMA web site: www.fema.gov
- D. American Red Cross web site: www.redcross.org
- E. Department of Homeland Security, *National Incident Management System*

MEDIA CONTACT ROSTER

1. Radio

- A. Station Name: KAMU-FM
- 1) Address: TAMU, MS 4244, College Station, Texas 77843
 - 2) Frequency & Operating Hours: 90.0 FM, 24 hours
 - 3) Contact Name: Doug Walker
 - 4) Telephone Number: 979-845-5611, Fax: 979-845-1643
 - 5) E-mail Address: dougwalker@tamu.edu
- B. Station Name: KBXT-FM, KORA-FM, KJXJ-FM, KAPN-FM, KTAM-AM
- 1) Address: 1240 E. Villa Maria Rd, Bryan, Texas 77802
 - 2) Frequency & Operating Hours: 101.9 FM, 98.3 FM, 103.9 FM, 107.3 FM, 1240 AM, 24 hours
 - 3) Contact Name: John Seigler, cell: 979-450-2250
 - 4) Telephone Number: 979-820-3468 Fax: 979-776-0123
 - 5) E-mail Address: john.seigler@brazosradio.com or psa@brazosradio.com
- C. Station Name: KEOS-FM
- 1) Address: P.O. Box 78, College Station, Texas 77841
 - 2) Frequency & Operating Hours: 89.1 FM, 24 hours (no one on-site from 1am – 6am)
 - 3) Contact Name: Lance Parr, Chief Eng.
 - 4) Telephone Number: 979-779-5367, Fax: 979-779-7259
 - 5) E-mail Address: parr.lance@gmail.com
- D. Station Name: KKYS-FM, KAGG-FM, KNFX-FM, KVJM-FM
- 1) Address: 1716 Briarcrest Dr., Ste 150, Bryan, Texas 77802
 - 2) Frequency & Operating Hours: 104.7 FM, 96.1 FM, 99.5 FM, 103.1 FM, 24 hours
 - 3) Contact Name: K.C. Wheeler
 - 4) Telephone Number: 979-846-5597, Fax: 979-268-9090
 - 5) E-mail Address: KCWheeler@iHeartRadio.com
- E. Station Name: KLTR-FM
- 1) Address: 530 W. Main Street, Brenham, Texas 77833
 - 2) Frequency & Operating Hours: 94.1 FM, 24 hours
 - 3) Contact Name: Lori Henderson, Gen. Manager, cell: 979-732-0275
 - 4) Telephone Number: 979-836-9411, Fax: 979-836-9435
 - 5) E-mail Address: lorihenderson01@hotmail.com
- F. Station Name: KNDE-FM, KMKV-FM, WTAW-AM, KZNE-AM, KAGC-AM, KWBC-AM
- 1) Address: 2700 Earl Rudder Fwy. South, Ste. 5000, College Station, Texas 77845
 - 2) Frequency & Operating Hours: 95.1 FM, 100.9 FM, 1620 AM, 1150 AM, 1510 AM, 1550 AM, 24 hours
 - 3) Contact Name: Ben Downs, General Manager, cell: 979-777-8008 / 979-229-7774
 - 4) Contact Name: Bill Oliver, News Director, cell: 979-324-1346
 - 5) Telephone Number: 979-695-9595, Fax: 979-695-1933
 - 6) E-mail Address: Ben@BryanBroadcasting.com or oliver@BryanBroadcasting.com

4. Newspapers

Name: The Eagle

- 1) Address: P.O. Box 3000, Bryan, Texas 77805
- 2) Distribution Area: Brazos County and contiguous counties, daily
- 3) Contact Name: Darren Benson, Editor
- 4) Telephone Number: 979-731-4656
- 5) Fax Number: 979-776-0496
- 6) E-mail Address: darren.benson@theeagle.com

Name: The Battalion

- 1) Address: MSC, Ste. L400, 1111 TAMU, College Station, Texas 77843-1111
- 2) Distribution Area: Texas A&M University, daily while school is in session
- 3) Contact Name: Student Editor (changes annually)
- 4) Telephone Number: 979-845-3315
- 5) Fax: 979-845-2647
- 6) E-mail Address: editor@thebatt.com

Name: La Voz Hispana*

- 1) Address: 307 S. Main St., Ste. 197, Bryan, Texas 77803
- 2) Distribution Area: Bryan / College Station, and online (lavozhispana.info)
- 3) Contact Name: Karen Ramos, cell: 979-393-2769
- 4) Telephone Number: 979-822-0503
- 5) No Fax
- 6) E-mail Address: lavozbcs@yahoo.com

Name: Brava Spanish News Website*

- 1) Address: brava.site (no physical address)
- 2) Distribution Area: Brava is an online publication of Brazos Valley news for Spanish Speakers
- 3) Contact Name: Cintya Aguilar
- 4) Telephone Number: 936-414-6821
- 5) Fax: N/A
- 6) E-mail Address: bravabcs@gmail.com

*To have something translated into Spanish, contact Sara Mendez at the Brazos County Health District (979-361-4440 or 979-571-9433, SMendez@brazoscountytexas.gov) . She has some employees who can do the translations (Sonia Rios, 979-361-5744, samador@brazoscountytexas.gov, and Diana Gaytan, 979-361-5767, dgaytan@brazoscountytexas.gov), but Sara has asked that we contact her and let her contact Sonia and Diana.

E. Evacuations

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

F. Shelter & Mass Care

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

G. Status of Utilities

- 1) Electric service
- 2) Telephone system
- 3) Water system
- 4) Sewer system
- 5) Natural gas distribution
- 6) Internet/Fiber Infrastructure

H. Road and Facility Closures

I. Organizations Responding

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

J. Means of contacting evacuees

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

L. For ongoing emergency situations, planned response activities

M. In the recovery phase:

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

3. Collection and Dissemination of Information

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

WORKING WITH THE MEDIA

1. What to do when working with the media:

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

2. When you talk with the media:

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

LIST OF PRE-SCRIPTED EMERGENCY MESSAGES
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The following pre-scripted emergency messages have been prepared and are included in Appendix 5 Tab A –H of Annex A, Warning:

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

Public Information Checklist for Flooding

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

Public Information Checklist for Hazmat Incidents

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

Public Information Checklist for Hurricanes

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