

ANNEX C

EMERGENCY PUBLIC INFORMATION

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ANNEX C

EMERGENCY PUBLIC INFORMATION

I. PURPOSE

To establish procedures for distributing emergency and non-emergency information to the public as efficiently and as accurately as possible. This annex also provides procedures for coordinating public information with the media and other departments that could become involved.

II. SITUATION AND ASSUMPTIONS

A. Situation

1. The Citizens of Frye Island speak English as a primary language. With over 400 cottages on the Island, the all season population is approximately 200 but may increase to 3000 during peak summer weekends. A survey is needed to determine categories and number of handicapped residents in need of assistance in an evacuation.
2. Frye Island has no local TV or radio broadcast stations, but is in the broadcast area of the Portland, Maine Stations. FINS (Frye Island News Service) is the local newspaper, which is printed weekly. Many residents subscribe to the Portland Daily Papers.
3. Radio communications can occur between the Frye Island EOC and the County EOC and messages can be relayed to the Emergency Alert System (EAS)

B. Assumptions

1. During emergencies, the public will demand and will need information about the situation, including instructions on proper survival or response actions as outlined in Annex B, Communications and Warning.
2. The Media may demand information about the status of events, public safety measures etc, which could be overwhelming if procedures are not in place to deal with requests. The media can play an important role in keeping the public informed before, during and after an emergency. If interested reporters are not keep informed, there is a possibility that rumors and or panic could spread. This plan is written on the assumption that the media will be willing and able to help keep the public informed.
3. This Annex assumes that telephone communications will remain open during an emergency, since the Emergency Alert Station (WTHT-FM

107.5, Portland) requires a phone call (207-797-0780) to request activation of the Emergency Alert System (EAS).

4. It is assumed that the citizens of Frye Island will have the capability to tune in to an EAS station.

III. CONCEPT OF OPERATION

A. General

During an Emergency, public information will generally be specific to the event. Information should be instructional in nature, although efforts may also be made to keep people informed of the progress of events. At Attachment 1, is a Media Release Form. See also Tab C EPRB.

Information should be presented as accurately and as positively as possible with efforts to control the spread of rumors.

B. Phases of Management

Mitigation:

As much as possible, ongoing efforts should be made to keep the public informed of possible emergencies, and how to respond to them. An informed public will be better able to take action during an emergency.

Preparedness:

1. The Town Public Information Spokesperson (PIS) is responsible to draft and maintain a Town of Frye Island Public Information Emergency Plan as outlined in Attachment 2. (A complete draft PIO Plan is at Tab B EPRB).
2. Capabilities exist to provide immediate emergency information to as much of the public as possible. Options include:
 - Service announcements on Portland TV and radio stations.
 - Use of the Emergency Alert System through the County EOC.
 - Instructions may be printed and passed out to the public prior to an emergency either by police or emergency management.
3. During an emergency of longer duration, local and county newspapers may be available to print emergency instructions.
4. Frye Island's Public Information Spokesperson (PIS) is appointed by the Selectmen and should be familiar with media operations and should develop a working relationship with local reporters.

Response:

1. In the event of a public emergency, local officials and the Town Emergency Director will determine the best methods to notify citizens of Frye Island in Accordance with Annex B, Communications and Warning.

Possible options are:

- Island Siren notification system.
 - Radio and TV Broadcasts, including EAS
 - Town Web Site.
 - Mobile Public Address
 - Door to Door notification
 - Pre-printed instructions
 - Handouts distributed at traffic control points and at the Ferry Landings, during an evacuation and/or when evacuees return home.
2. The Town PIO is designated to distribute information and instructions to the Public and to work with any reporters covering the incident/
 3. Public information should be given according to priority:
 - Lifesaving and safety instructions.
 - Emergency Status information.
 - Other useful information, either from the government or in response to media requests.
 4. A media center may be established at the EOC or at the scene of the incident. This should be the point of contact for all reporters.
 5. The Emergency Alert System should be used only in very large scale disasters. In most cases public service announcements are a better option. The decision to activate the EAS must be made by the Town's Emergency Director or the County Emergency Director.

Recovery

1. Following an emergency, public information should include information on restoration of essential services, return to evacuated areas and available assistance programs.
2. When time allows a review of the Emergency Public Information System should be conducted and the Public Information Emergency Plan (including Annexes) updated.

IV. ORGANIZATION AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- A. The ultimate responsibility for emergency information belongs to the Board of Selectmen who sets policies and directs the Town Manager in carrying them out.

The Emergency Director has responsibilities for the EOC and Emergency Communications. Initial public warning is addressed in the Annex B, Communications and Warning.

- B. The Town PIO will be designated by the Selectmen of the Town of Frye Island and will act under their supervision in coordination with the Town's Emergency Director. The PIO is responsible for the activities of the town's emergency public information system, but may delegate responsibilities with approval of the Selectmen.
- C. During an emergency, the PIO will follow Attachment 3, SOP, Town Public Information Spokesperson with emphasis on:
- Establishing an information center as the point of contact for reporters during an emergency. This may be at the EOC or on the scene of the incident (Off Island might be better in some instances).
 - Collect, evaluate and relay information on instructions to the public.
 - Work with reporters as necessary.
 - Coordinate emergency information between different agencies who have information to distribute.
 - Distribute printed emergency information materials which may be obtained through County EOC.
 - Verify incoming information before releasing it to the public or to the media.
 - Inform the public about places for contact of missing relatives, continued emergency services available, restricted areas etc.
 - Monitor media broadcasts for accuracy and when appropriate correct any inaccurate statements and prevent the spread of rumor.
 - Keep records of all actions taken (for future reference). A permanent file should be maintained at the EOC.

During non-emergency periods, the local PIO should coordinate on-going public education with the County PIO. Programs are available through County to address public safety in a variety of emergencies.

- D. Coordination of Emergency Public Information
1. Town on Scene Spokesperson will follow Attachment 4, SOP, Town On Scene Public Information Spokesperson and coordinate with other agency PIO's so as to release emergency information from a single source/scene. Representatives from the Red Cross, Salvation Army, utility companies and other response organizations should be available at this location.

2. If the County or State Emergency Management Agency activates a Joint Information Center, or if the Governor's Press Secretary acts in that capacity, the spokesperson(s) from Frye Island should coordinate emergency information before releasing it. In an emergency with statewide impact the Governor's Press Secretary may establish a State Information Center which must coordinate information from the Local Information Centers.
3. The State Public Information Officer will summarize the disaster situation and report on state agency response activities. The State PIO will also coordinate with EMA and provide support to local spokespersons on request.
4. The FEMA PIO will provide information on Federal Response efforts and will coordinate with State and Local PIO's.

V. ADMINISTRATION AND LOGISTICS

A. Lines of Succession

In the event that the designated emergency information spokesperson cannot perform the assigned duties, the position would be assumed by the Town's First Selectman, or an alternate designated by the Selectmen.

B. Policies

It is the policy of Frye Island to cooperate fully with the media by providing complete and accurate information.

All information released must be verified by at least one appropriate source (On-scene Commander, Fire Chief, Town Manager etc) and cleared through the Local Emergency Director or the Board of Selectmen.

Media relations and emergency information for local incidents will be the responsibility of the local spokesperson until assistance from the County PIO is requested or accepted.

Emergency Information will be presented as positively, yet as accurately as possible.

C. Sites of Operation:

The local spokesperson should coordinate emergency information from one location. An information center may be established on the scene of the incident, at the EOC, or in another location determined suitable. This information center should be the one place where the media can be briefed and can gather information. In emergencies media contacts with Local Departments should be referred to the Town Spokesperson.

Preservation of Records:

The local spokesperson should log all media contact, save copies of any press releases and should keep a record of any information released to either the press or the public.

VI. PLAN DEVELOPMENT AND MAINTENANCE

This Annex was developed by the Frye Island Emergency Director and will be maintained by the Frye Island EMA. It should be reviewed, exercised and updated annually by the Emergency Director in coordination with the Town Manager or designated Town Spokesperson. Any revisions will be distributed to all those who have a copy of the Towns Emergency Plan. Changes/Revisions will be noted on the Change Log at the front of this plan.

Attachment 1, ANNEX C
(Copy also at Tab C, EPRB)

Sample Media Release Form

Nature of Incident: _____

Current Status: _____

_____ Injuries

_____ Fatalities

Response Actions Taken:

Areas Affected:

Evacuation Recommended: _____ By Whom _____

Public Shelters Opened at:

Evacuation Routes: _____

Evacuation procedures are outlined in the Citizens Instructions of the Public Information- EOP.

Other Public Information and Recommendations can be found in the Public Information
Emergency Plan Under **Citizens Instructions and Announcements**.

Other Information:

Attachment 2, ANNEX C
(Plan at Tab B- EPRB)

Outline, Public Information Emergency Plan

The complete Public Information Plan is “booked” separately at Tab B EPRB as a supplement to the Town Emergency Plan and specifically Annex C, Emergency Public Information. It includes the following:

- ❖ SOP Town Public Information Spokesperson
- ❖ SOP On-scene Public Information Spokesperson
- ❖ Sample Media Release Form
- ❖ Media Contacts to include Contact Log
- ❖ Status Forms:
 - a. Injury/Evacuation Status
 - b. Committed Resources Status
 - c. Transportation Status
 - d. Utilities Status
- ❖ Citizens Instructions and Announcements:
 - a. Evacuation
 - b. Sheltering and In-place Protection
 - c. In-Place Sheltering
 - d. Flood Safety
 - e. Hurricane
 - f. Earthquake (announcement and instructions)
 - g. Winter Storms & Blizzards
 - h. Tornado
 - i. Hazard Materials Incident (SOP & related messages)
 - j. Energy Emergencies & Power Outages
 - k. Threat of Nuclear Attack (Emergency P.I. Instructions on shelter protective posture and fire prevention.
 - 1. Home Shelter
 - 2. Public Shelter
 - 3. Nuclear and Radiological Emergencies
 - 4. Safety Precautions for a Nuclear Attack

Attachment 3, ANNEX C

SOP, Town Public Information Spokesperson

1. Refer to separate **Frye Island Public Information Emergency Plan** (Tab B, EPRB) for more detailed guidance on strategies for emergency information. (See also Attachment 2, this Annex.)
2. Make sure that all information has been confirmed and approved before it is released. It should be brief and easy to understand.
3. Release emergency instructions and information to the public.
4. Make sure that official spokespersons are thoroughly briefed about all aspects of the emergency.
5. Keep the Local Emergency Director informed of the types of information you are making available to the public and the media
6. Coordinate your work with the Public Information Officers or spokespersons of other agencies and departments.
7. Activate the Emergency Alert System if the incident is severe enough. Public service announcements through TV and Radio may be quicker and more appropriate. EAS instructions are in PI Emergency Plan.
8. Recruit additional staff if necessary, to man the phones, collect information etc. If the emergency is a long term one, assign the staff in shifts.
9. Designate someone to monitor TV and Radio broadcasts for accuracy and instruct them to take steps to correct any misinformation (if appropriate).
10. Log all incoming media and public calls and note what type of information was given to them.
11. Dispatch an On-Scene Spokesperson if appropriate to:
 - a. Establish a media control point near the incident site.
 - b. Maintain liaison with the Incident Commander/Emergency Manager.
 - c. Keep the EOC informed of the situation.
 - d. Arrange media interviews (If such action does not hinder response efforts).
12. Arrange media briefings/press conferences on a regular or “as needed” basis. Arrange for an official spokesperson.

13. Produce news release as required.
14. Work with the Red Cross, etc, to provide information on procedures for determining the status of relative and friends in the disaster areas. Also help to distribute information on assistance programs as available.
15. Release general damage assessment figures when they become available.
16. Consider using “returning home” handouts for evacuees to address initial recovery and safety issues. These could be copied and distributed at traffic control points.
17. Maintain records of all information, instructions and advice you release. If appropriate use the log sheets in the PI Emergency Plan. Collect news clippings and TV videos if available.

Attachment 4, ANNEX C

SOP, Town On-scene Public Information Spokesperson

1. Gather supplies and aid that would help make or clarify a point. Suggestions are:
 - a. Maps of the area affected.
 - b. Marking pens.
 - c. Pens and pencils.
 - d. Tape
 - e. Flashlight
 - f. Easel and paper for diagrams etc.
 - g. Emergency Information SOP's and contact lists.
 - h. Prepared emergency information materials.
2. Establish a media control point in the vicinity of (but separated from) the incident site or command post.
3. Request media cooperation with "ground rules" established by the Incident Commander, or Emergency Manager.
4. Brief the media on the incident and response actions underway. DO NOT release named or otherwise identify casualties.
5. Maintain liaison with the Incident Commander and/or Town Emergency Director to obtain the latest information on the situation.
6. Arrange interviews and live camera shots with key personnel when requested by the media and command post. Use one of the two reporters who agree to "share" the information with other reporters from other stations.
7. Coordinate the use of a media pool to minimize traffic in or around the incident scene and command post. Use one of the two reporters who agree to "share" the information with other reporters from other stations.
8. Take steps to control air space if media aircraft interfere with response actions (wind patterns etc). If efforts to contact the craft through the media fail, contact the Portland Jetport to request restricted airspace.