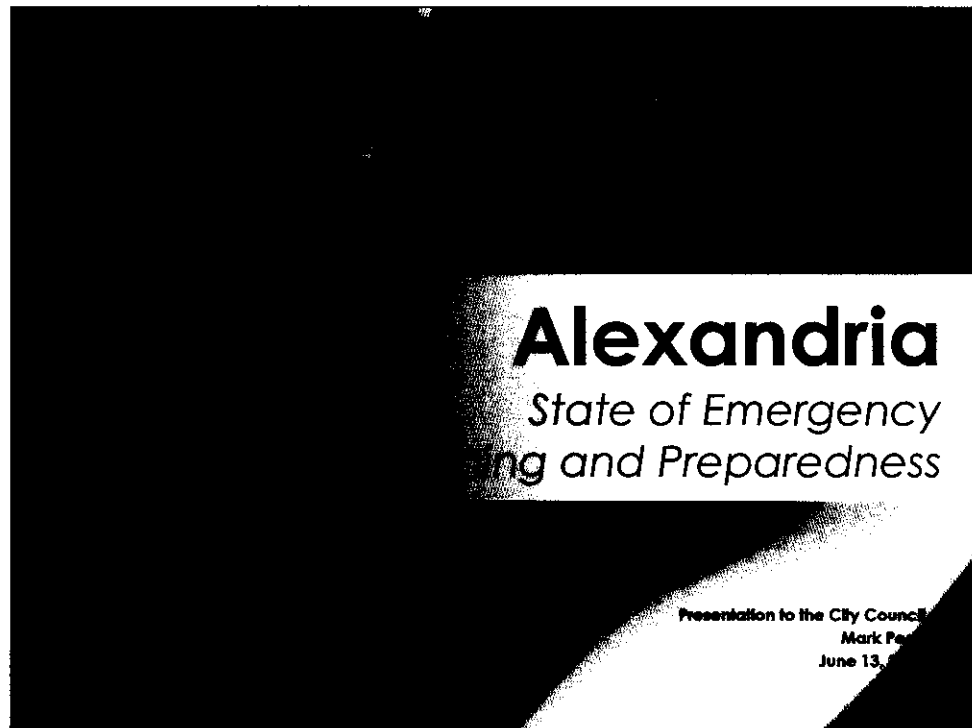


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submitted by
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Mr. Mayor, members of the City Council... thank you for the opportunity to present to you this report on the "State of Emergency Planning and Preparedness" here in the City of Alexandria

Presentation Overview

- Where is Alexandria Since 9/11
- Who is in Charge?
- Evacuation/Shelter
- Special Populations
- Communications
- Action Plan

I will be addressing six major areas relating to the City's emergency preparedness and planning:

- The progress the City has made since September 11, 2001.
- A clear overview of the City's emergency management response and who is in charge during an incident.
- Evacuation plans, especially in light of the visuals everyone has seen from Hurricanes Katrina and Rita in New Orleans and Texas.
- The needs and responses by the City to special populations.
- The ways the City communicates with its residents.
- And finally, I will outline a future action plan for continued efforts the City can undertake in this important area.

Introduction

- We utilize the "all-hazards" approach to address all phases of emergency management.
- Our proximity to the nation's capital poses a high risk for many different types of emergencies.
- We utilize a decentralized approach to emergency management according to the activation of our Emergency Operations Plan located at the Lee Center. Roles and responsibilities in emergencies are assigned to City Departments and our external partners.

The phases of emergency management are: Mitigation, response, recovery and preparedness.

Mitigation: Taking steps to avoid or minimize the impacts of a disaster through effective building codes, planning, zoning, and flood insurance programs. Involves such actions as the installation of security devices or raising buildings in flood zones.

Response: Personnel and equipment to respond, includes City agencies and others including contractors such as those used for snow removal.

Recovery: Making the community whole both economically and psychologically.

Preparedness: Planning, training, education and outreach to prepare for an emergency.

All hazards include natural and man made disasters as well as technology disasters.

Where are we since 9/11, Hurricane Isaac and Hurricane Katrina?

- Created an Emergency Management Division in the Fire Department
- Updated our Emergency Operations Center
- Added emergency generators to several buildings
- Added additional public health staff to help detect disease or biological threats to the community
- Purchased a telephone notification system
- Placed water level monitors in the river to help detect flooding.
- Created an intelligence unit and a special operations unit "Group C" in the Police Department to perform homeland security related duties.

•Added staff to perform outreach to help citizens prepare for emergencies, develop plans and procedures, to procure needed equipment and supplies and to coordinate City-wide emergency management efforts. The division although located in the Fire Department works closely with all of the City Departments.

•Provided a generator for the EOC and added technology upgrades that make the EOC faster to set-up and easier to track incidents. We have improved our set up time from 4 hours to minutes.

•Purchased systems to notify our residents during an emergency

•The Police intelligence unit helps to provide effective response to local organized crime and terrorist related crime in the City.

Where are we since 9/11, Hurricane Isaac, and Hurricane Katrina? continued

- Trained first responders and other City of New Orleans specialized subjects related to the response to mass casualty events.
- Conducted threat assessments of our energy and water infrastructure.
- Implemented cyber security measures for our information technology systems.
- Invested in a new radio system to ensure that emergency communications are available.
- Added Public Health Staff
- Purchased special response vehicles

The training included response to weapons of mass destruction and specialized training for handling hazardous materials.

Through the Commonwealth we have added an emergency planner and epidemiologists to prepares for and detect diseases or biological threats to our community.

Where are we since 9/11, Hurricane Isaac Hurricane Katrina? continued

- Purchased specialized personal protection for first responders.
- Purchased traffic management tools including message sign boards and portable generators at intersections
- Tested our plans and procedures during numerous exercise sessions
- Updated our emergency plans.
- Increased public preparedness through "Be Ready" campaign and other outreach efforts.
- Worked regionally with the Red Cross to coordinate our responses to major events.

We have tested our plans numerous times including a Northern Virginia Regional exercise that was held in January of 2006 and the upcoming TOPOFF exercise on June 19th through June 21st.

The Police Department has delivered many terrorist awareness programs to civic associations and other community groups.

Where are we since 9/11, Hurricane Isaac Hurricane Katrina? continued

- Purchased monitors and detectors for chemical, radiological and biological agents.
- Conducted a baseline radiological assessment.
- Worked regionally with Dominion Power to obtain outage information.
- Worked regionally to ensure reliable water supply. Added generators at the major pumping stations for quality monitoring.
- Established the Community Emergency Response Teams (CERT) program and the Medical Reserve Corps (MRC)
- Established the Citizens Corps Council

- Purchased protective equipment for Police, Fire Sheriff, Public Health and others
- Purchased many small generator that can be attached to traffic signals at key intersection if needed during a large power outage.
- The Fairfax Water Authority added emergency power to the water pumps and began monitoring the water supply for possible contaminants.
- CERT has trained over 300 residents many of whom volunteer at special events and are ready to assist if needed.
- The MRC developed and managed by the Health Dept. involves volunteers assisting the health department with the dispensing of medications and other activities during a disaster.
- The CCC was established “ To make Alexandria Safer Through Citizens Participation”.

Who is on charge?

- The City Manager is the Director of Emergency Management.
- The Emergency Management Coordinator oversees all emergency preparedness efforts.
- The City's Emergency Operations Plan outlines the responsibility for each agency.
- We have many partner organizations during an emergency. The Red Cross, Salvation Army and others.
- Everyone has a role to play in an emergency. All residents have an obligation to prepare themselves for an emergency.
- All emergencies begin locally. During emergencies we rely on our local government resources then our metropolitan area, then the Commonwealth and finally the Federal Government for assistance.
- The City Manager has the authority to declare a local state of emergency and order an evacuation of the City if necessary.

- The Emergency management Coordinator advises the City Manager and the Department Heads during an emergency.
- The Emergency Operations Plan establishes the legal authorities necessary to operate the City during a disaster.
- Local emergency management programs are built on the premise that we should not expect Federal resources to assist in the first 72 hours after an event occurs. We are fortunate to live in the National Capital Region, the home of the Federal Government and their assets already in this area.

Evacuation/Sheltering

- Consistent with our regional partners, the City has an evacuation plan that is designed based on the assumption that we may have a sudden evacuation of the entire City.
- The City is also participating regionally in evacuation efforts as they relate to the special needs population.
- Current plans call for residents to stay in place unless instructed to leave.
- The City has shelter plans which will utilize the City Recreation Center to house evacuees. The City will determine where and when it is deemed necessary, and will coordinate supplies in the entire region.
- The City partners with the Red Cross to provide additional sheltering.
- The Animal shelter has plans to accept pets and care for them. We are working on updating our plans to increase our capacity to shelter pets.

Our plans call for neighborhood level evacuations predicated by hazardous materials spills or other local events.

We are working to establish plans to expand our abilities to provide mass care and food distribution.

We need to continue to look at the transportation needs for those without transportation.

The animal shelters in the National Capital Region have a mutual aid agreement to expand their capacity during a disaster.

State law currently requires nursing homes, hospitals and licensed day care centers to have their own evacuation plans.

Special Populations

- There are many people that need assistance during an emergency because they have a special need.
- The City has plans to provide transportation during an emergency utilizing both the School buses and the City's fleet.
- City staff is working with special needs organizations to identify those that will need special assistance.
- The region is working to stockpile supplies for those that are unable to prepare for an emergency. There are enough supplies for approximately 100,000 people for three days available to Alexandria.
- Some of our outreach materials, such as the regional preparedness guide are available in multiple languages.

- Special needs include: People with disabilities, people who do not communicate in English, people who are economically disadvantaged, people who do not have transportation, people who are in medical facilities, people who are affected by the digital divide, and others.
- Staff has worked with local and regional groups in planning to assist those with special needs. We need to continue this work to further prepare to assist those who will need specialized care.
- The regional preparedness guide was produced in seven languages, Arabic, Chinese, Farsi, Korean, Spanish, and Vietnamese.
- The City uses a language line service during emergencies.

Communications

- The City has many ways to send messages to our residents during an emergency
 - E-News emergency messages
 - Telephone Emergency Notification
 - NOAA Weather Alert Radios
 - Emergency Alert System
 - City's cable channel
 - City's Website
 - Fliers and posters
 - Public Address Systems on City vehicles
 - Door-to-door
 - Media releases

- The Emergency Alert System is broadcasted on radio and TV in the National capital Region.
- The TENS system can dial any house or business in the City.
- NOAA weather alert radios broadcast emergency messages of all types they are not limited to weather events. We have direct access to the system to send Alexandria specific messages out via this system.
- We use all of the communications tools available in order to reach as many people as possible.
- All of our internal communications systems including our radio systems are interoperable. We have also purchased a number of satellite phones in case of a failure of the phone networks.
- We have linked our fiber networks with Arlington County and Fairfax County.

Next Steps

- Update our Emergency Operations Plan
 - Changing our emergency management structure to mirror the Federal and State plans
 - Developing continuity of operations for essential government functions
- Creating a regional mitigation plan
- Developing a Metropolitan Medical Response System
- Completing a study on flooding of the Washington Street
- Creating a pandemic influenza plan

During our EOP update we will be incorporating lessons learned from recent events and exercises.

The MMRS is designed to respond to a chemical emergency involving 1000 patients and a biological emergency involving 10,000 patients

Next Steps

- Evaluating outdoor warning devices
- Continue Citizens preparedness training including CERT
- Obtain a new expanded Emergency Center
- Add generators to buildings used during renovation projects



Next Steps continued

- Continuing the updating of our emergency operations center
- Updating our flood response plan
- Continue to provide training to the rest of the response system
- Develop a volunteer management system
- Updating our shelter plans to include

We will be looking to install new telephone technology in the EOC and expand our usable space in the Lee Center.

Summary

- Lessons Learned
 - Hurricanes Katrina and Rita have shown how important it is for us to be prepared
 - We all need to have our kit
 - Have a plan for our household
 - Tune in
- Hurricane preparedness
- For more information contact the Emergency Management at 703-520-6600

•Kit

•Food, water, flashlight, battery operated radio, prescription medicine, first aid kit, cash, important documents, and sanitation supplies.

•Plan

- Communications plan
- Evacuation plan

•Tune in

- NOAA Radio
- E-news

•Hurricane preparedness

- All of the above
- Keep trees trimmed and healthy
- Secure loose items
- See website for more information