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Developing Your Emergency Plan

By TACDA Staff Writers

How many times in just the past couple of years have we as American citizens been told to "get prepared" for another terrorist attack here at home? How many times have we been advised to develop an emergency response plan for our families, our businesses, and our communities? How many hours have we spent searching, and looking, and searching again for relevant and practical preparedness information that we could actually use to develop a working emergency plan, just to finally give up in utter frustration?

Today, there is a plethora of safety and preparedness information available to the public, from multiple sources. So much, in fact, that finding the information that matters or applies to you and your particular situation can be difficult, if not virtually impossible. What's more is that even if you do manage to obtain the necessary preparedness and safety information required to develop an effective emergency plan, the process of compiling that information into a viable working emergency plan can be even more frustrating, especially to those of us that know very little about how to plan for emergencies.

Well, no longer is this a problem, thanks to a brand-new online resource that is designed, in short, to assist families, schools, communities and businesses in developing, managing and sharing a complete emergency response plan, tailored to their specific needs and practices.

The American Civil Defense Association (TACDA) is pleased to announce its new partnership with HomelandPlans.com, responsible for putting together this resource and making it available to the public.

Over two years and many man hours have been invested into the development of this invaluable set of tools, and you can tell it, simply by observing the wealth of information that has been compiled into this one set of resources.

HomelandPLANS.com provides families, schools, businesses and any one seeking to develop a working emergency plan with a complete set of online tools that greatly simplify the task of creating a safety plan, and also provide secure sharing features which allow you and your constituents to link selected portions of a given plan together, ensuring that everyone can get to the information they need, when they need it.

The American Civil Defense Association (TACDA)
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(cont'd)

Disasters occur every day, some more relevant to individuals than others. Until now, there has not been a tool to help citizens develop custom safety, security, and emergency response plans. With the HomelandPLANS.com Home Matrix, every American can prepare today for a safer tomorrow.

Share Your Plan with Friends and Family

You and your family may not be together when disaster strikes, make sure everyone knows how to keep in touch and get back together.

Security Blanket

The Security Blanket provides a single communication center for you, your family, and your friends. Professional web-based tools give you on-demand access to the contacts and information you need for both day-to-day events and unexpected emergencies. Through secure sharing, you can extend this access selectively to other people you trust, whether they are members or not. Features include:

- * Information Sharing and Permissions Management.
- * Easy-to-Use Online Calendar—Supports planning for one-time and recurring events.
- * Lists and groups for managing important contacts and the information you share with them.
- * Alert Broadcaster—Enables you to send instant email notifications to selected groups.
- * Auto Tracking of Date-Sensitive Best Practices.

With features like secure sharing, contacts, groups, calendars, and alerts, the Security Blanket is your communication center to manage day-to-day needs or the unexpected emergency.

Do You Have a Plan? The Home Matrix offers expert advice and resources to prepare for natural and man-made disasters, and includes some of the following tools to help:

Assessment Matrix

HomelandPlans.com's proprietary matrix design provides uncommon ease of use in identifying concerns most relevant to you. Simply select the cross section of a hazard and a consideration, and then rate your current state of preparedness.

Features include:

- * Household and Environmental Hazards: Hurricane, earthquake, wildfire, flood/flash flood, heat wave, landslide, thunderstorm, tornado, tsunamis, volcano, winter storm, biological events, radiation exposure, hazardous materials, gases, nuclear, structural building

collapses, fire/explosions, social disease outbreak, and terrorism.

- * Household and Environmental Considerations: Transportation, communications, family/personal care, disabled people, senior citizens, mental health, home Interior, home exterior, home periphery, access points, community, water supply, power sources, pets, insurance, and Emergency tools.
- * Proprietary Matrix Engine.
- * Customizable Matrix.
- * Glossary of Terms.

Best Practices

Best practices, each authored by the National Disaster Education Coalition, are generated and presented according to your assessment ratings. Assigned ratings are displayed in the upper left corner of each best practice. Personalization fields help you tailor each best practice to your individual needs. Features include:

- * Expert Analyses, Explanations, and Guidelines.
- * Personalization and Note Fields.
- * Supporting Resources and Reference Links.
- * Flash-Card Design for Quick Reference.
- * Glossary of Terms.

Experts

The only thing better than knowing the right thing to do in the midst of a disaster is knowing the right thing to do before it strikes. Preparedness is the easiest and most effective form of disaster mitigation available to the public. Homeland Plans Corporation has joined in partnership with the National Disaster Education Coalition to develop the best practices contained in the Home Matrix. This is the best information available today on the subject of home and environmental safety.

There are also additional matrices available that cover areas such as terrorism, travel, public health, and natural and man-made disasters.

If you are looking for a convenient and comprehensive tool to assist you in developing a complete emergency plan and enabling you to customize and share it with others, then HomelandPlans.com is just what you need.

In addition, if you order now, using the special promotional code provided on the TACDA web site, HomelandPlans.com will donate 10 percent to TACDA, in an effort to help us continue our mission.

For more information, please visit www.tacda.org.

CIVIL DEFENSE NEWS & OPINIONS

CDC Plans Bio-Defense Testing Source

Health officials are developing scenarios to test regional smallpox defenses and bio-terrorism preparations by late 2004, a senior official at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention said.

The "federal standards-based exercise scenarios," will be used to measure how state and regional public health and emergency departments have adopted CDC guidelines and how they would respond to a biological terrorist attack, including one involving smallpox, according to CDC Associate Director for Terrorism Preparedness and Response, Joseph Henderson.

The tests are part of the CDC's 2004 action plan for boosting smallpox defenses, Henderson said during a speech to a Health and Human Services Department advisory council. CDC officials also are planning a campaign to raise awareness of the smallpox threat and assuage fears about the vaccine.

Those fears, and the perceived lack of a legitimate smallpox threat, undermined the CDC's nationwide smallpox immunization campaign last year. When President Bush announced the campaign in December 2002, health officials said that they wanted to immunize hundreds of thousands - if not millions - of health care and emergency workers within a year. More than a year later, however, fewer than 40,000 civilian emergency workers have received the vaccine.

The program has essentially ground to a halt. Only 305 people have been immunized since the end of November 2003.

While the immunization program has not been abandoned, CDC officials are now emphasizing smallpox "readiness" and the ability to vaccinate the entire United States in 10 days in the event of an attack. CDC Director Julie Gerberding has repeatedly cited the 10-day vaccination benchmark as a public preparedness goal.

During recent visits, Henderson said he was "extremely impressed" by the biological defense preparations of New York and Washington states. He said, however, that officials must conduct testing to ensure that the emergency planning would stand up in a stressful situation. Henderson also acknowledged that not all states have made such progress, and he said that CDC officials are examining ways for the federal government

to assist states that "just can't seem to get their arms around" the smallpox preparation. That problem could soon become exacerbated as CDC smallpox funding runs dry.

CDC funneled \$100 million for smallpox preparedness to states in fiscal 2003, but that was a one-time budget allocation. Henderson said that money had produced "a good return," but states could now potentially struggle with their biological defenses.

www.govexec.com/dailyfed/0104/012304d2.html

Terrorist Threats to Destroy US City Posted on Internet Source

US and British intelligence services are investigating a series of alleged al Qaeda internet warnings predicting a terror attack which would "destroy an entire American city".

The messages, posted on a number of Islamic websites over the last week, say the countdown to attack has already begun.

They claimed it would be "an even stronger strike than nuclear weapons". They also warn that unless the US and its allies withdraw immediately from Iraq, Afghanistan, and all other Muslim countries, the terror network has ordered the elimination of American leaders and their supporters.

The post of most concern to Western intelligence has appeared three times in three days on a radical Islamic internet forum called the Mujahideen Network. It claimed to be "from the Islamic nation to the American people" and boasted that its forces now had the ability to wipe out an entire city.

A security source said last night: "There is no way of determining whether these warnings are genuine or wishful thinking on the part of extremists. "But there are disturbing parallels with the background threat-level chatter which preceded the September 11 attacks in 2001."

The investigation came as the UN said almost 100 countries should be "named and shamed" for failing to enforce international sanctions against known members of al Qaeda and its Taliban allies and to block the flow of money and arms to the groups.

www.theherald.co.uk/news/8031.html

FOCUS ON EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT & PUBLIC SAFETY

MARS - Military Affiliate Radio System *By Lloyd Colston (Mayes County CEM)*

Either the fourth planet from the Sun or a candy bar is the first thing that comes to mind with the word MARS.

However, for the Emergency Manager, MARS should produce a thought of communications experts available through military channels. MARS stands for the Military Affiliate Radio System.

In fact, MARS members have been used during a number of recent events such as the Montana wildfires and the Utah Olympics. For the Emergency Manager, the use of MARS is most beneficial when military units are deployed to the local area during a disaster.

From a beginning in 1925 when the United States Army established a group of volunteer amateur radio operators to now, MARS has grown to a volunteer group of over 6000 members Nationwide designed to support the Federal Response Plan with emergency communications. The secondary mission of MARS, but the one MARS is best known for completing, is morale and welfare messages.

The members are in three service umbrella groups. Navy-Marine Corp has over 1700 members. Army has

the largest number at over 2700. Air Force MARS members total over 1900.

While the numbers may appear to be small, the training MARS members must complete in order to be active is excellent. Using a combination of both on-air and text training, the members must complete the training successfully or they are not afforded membership in the program.

In order to join MARS, the operator must have High Frequency radio equipment, i.e. 180 Military Channel assignments in the HF Spectrum between 2.0 and 30 Mhz assigned by Department of Defense rather than the Federal Communications Commission.

The volunteer must agree to certain time commitments to the program. The volunteer must also agree to complete the required training.

Operations are not confined to HF, however. MARS operations are also on VHF and UHF channels. Many of the MARS members are already serving the local areas in the Amateur Radio Emergency Service, the Radio Amateur Civil Emergency Service, and Skywarn.

Emergency Managers desiring more information about MARS may go to <http://www.navymars.org> where there are links to the other two services.

THE SAFETY ZONE

Putting Together a Disaster Supplies Kit *Source - The American Red Cross*

There are six basics you should stock for your home: water, food, first aid supplies, clothing and bedding, tools and emergency supplies, and special items. Keep the items that you would most likely need during an evacuation in an easy-to carry container-suggested items are marked with an asterisk(*). Possible containers include a large, covered trash container, a camping backpack, or a duffle bag.

Water

- Store water in plastic containers such as soft drink bottles. Avoid using containers that will decompose or break, such as milk cartons or glass bottles. A normally active person needs to drink at least two quarts of water

each day. Hot environments and intense physical activity can double that amount. Children, nursing mothers, and ill people will need more.

- Store one gallon of water per person per day.
- Keep at least a three-day supply of water per person (two quarts for drinking, two quarts for each person in your household for food preparation/sanitation). *

Food

- Store at least a three-day supply of non-perishable food. Select foods that require no refrigeration, preparation or cooking, and little or no water. If you must heat food, pack a can of sterno. Select food items that are compact and lightweight. Include a selection of the following foods in your Disaster Supplies Kit:
 - Ready-to-eat canned meats, fruits, and vegetables
 - Canned juices

- Staples (salt, sugar, pepper, spices, etc.)
- High-energy foods
- Vitamins
- Food for infants
- Comfort/stress foods

First Aid Kit

Assemble a first aid kit for your home and one for each car.

- (20) adhesive bandages, various sizes
- (1) 5" x 9" sterile dressing
- (1) conforming roller gauze bandage
- (2) triangular bandages
- (2) 3 x 3 sterile gauze pads
- (2) 4 x 4 sterile gauze pads
- (1) roll 3" cohesive bandage
- (2) germicidal hand wipes or waterless alcohol-based hand sanitizer
- (6) antiseptic wipes
- (2) pair large medical grade non-latex gloves
- Adhesive tape, 2" width
- Anti-bacterial ointment
- Cold pack
- Scissors (small, personal)
- Tweezers
- CPR breathing barrier, such as a face shield

Non-Prescription Drugs

- Aspirin or non-aspirin pain reliever
- Anti-diarrhea medication
- Antacid (for stomach upset)
- Syrup of Ipecac (use to induce vomiting if advised by the Poison Control Center)
- Laxative
- Activated charcoal (use if advised by the Poison Control Center)

Tools and Supplies

- Mess kits, or paper cups, plates, and plastic utensils*
- Emergency preparedness manual*
- Battery-operated radio and extra batteries*
- Flashlight and extra batteries*
- Cash or traveler's checks, change*
- Non-electric can opener, utility knife*
- Fire extinguisher: small canister ABC type
- Tube tent
- Pliers
- Tape
- Compass
- Matches in a waterproof container
- Aluminum foil
- Plastic storage containers
- Signal flare
- Paper, pencil
- Needles, thread
- Medicine dropper
- Shut-off wrench, to turn off household gas and water

- Whistle
- Plastic sheeting
- Map of the area (for locating shelters)

Sanitation

- Toilet paper, towelettes*
- Soap, liquid detergent*
- Feminine supplies*
- Personal hygiene items*
- Plastic garbage bags, ties (for personal sanitation uses)
- Plastic bucket with tight lid
- Disinfectant
- Household chlorine bleach

Clothing and Bedding

*Include at least one complete change of clothing and footwear per person.

- Sturdy shoes or work boots*
- Rain gear*
- Blankets or sleeping bags*
- Hat and gloves
- Thermal underwear
- Sunglasses

Special Items

• Remember family members with special requirements, such as infants and elderly or disabled persons.

For Baby*

- Formula
- Diapers
- Bottles
- Powdered milk
- Medications

For Adults*

- Heart and high blood pressure medication
- Insulin
- Prescription drugs
- Denture needs
- Contact lenses and supplies
- Extra eye glasses

Entertainment

- Games and books

Important Family Documents

- Keep these records in a waterproof, portable container: 1) Will, insurance policies, contracts deeds, stocks and bonds; 2) Passports, social security cards, immunization records; 3) Bank account numbers; 4) Credit card account numbers and companies.
- Inventory of valuable household goods, important telephone numbers
- Family records (birth, marriage, death certificates)
- Store your kit in a convenient place known to all family members. Keep a smaller version of the supplies kit in the trunk of your car.

- Keep items in airtight plastic bags. Change your stored water supply every six months so it stays fresh. Replace your stored food every six months. Re-think your kit and

family needs at least once a year. Replace batteries, update clothes, etc.

- Ask your physician or pharmacist about storing prescription medications.

LETTER TO MEMBERS

Dear Member,

Once again, we have entered into a brand-new year, and as always, this New Year will bring new threats and challenges to us as Americans. As we face these new and changing threats together, TACDA remains constant and unchanging in our mission to assist every American family and community in understanding the types of threats that we face (both new and existing), and to provide practical and reasonable preparedness solutions that will enable us to prepare for and respond to their effects.

In our efforts to provide the best services and resources to our members, we pay close attention to your comments, both positive and negative, and try to incorporate change for the better, whenever and wherever we possibly can. So, we hope that you will take a few moments to provide your feedback concerning what TACDA is doing for you, and any ideas or suggestions on how you feel that we can improve our member benefits, services and overall effectiveness. Please, feel free to contact us any time toll-free at 1-800-425-5397 or by sending an email to info@tacda.org. We are looking forward to hearing from you very soon.

Some exciting events, changes and improvements that you can be looking for in the near future are:

- Upcoming TACDA conference in San Diego, with Doctors for Disaster Preparedness, scheduled for June 25-27, 2004 (more information to come).
- Extended product offerings on the TACDA web site as well as an improved user interface.
- Completion of the aforementioned "Members Only" section of the TACDA web site, including exclusive access to more than 35 years of past archives from the Journal of Civil Defense.
- Downloadable audio files and audio streams of past and future TACDA conferences and other events.
- Improvements and more practical and useful resources in the weekly TACDA electronic newsletter.
- Increased preparedness resources, both online, as well as in print, that will better enable members to make informed preparedness decisions and to implement more sound preparedness strategies and techniques.

One additional area that may be of interest is that of TACDA Chapters. As many of you will remember, last year, we proposed the idea of local chapters, after receiving several requests from both members and nonmembers alike for such a program. A number of you even went as far as to complete and submit a Chapter Preregistration form, which even more solidified your interest and approval of such a program. However, due to certain limitations, we were unable to complete the structuring phase of this program. However, after hearing from a few of you recently, we are once again looking into the logistics of establishing a local TACDA chapter network. In short, we, along with many of you, believe that a local chapter program is essential to preparing communities and groups to be ready for and to respond to disasters and emergencies, should they arise. So, we are introducing the idea once again.

Here is our request. We would like to develop a temporary think tank/development team, made up of both TACDA staff as well as TACDA members. What we are looking for in this team are those of you that have strong leadership abilities, experience in working on development of similar projects in the past, expertise in at least one area of civil defense/emergency management, as well as those of you that just want to be a part of the structuring phase and initial ground work. If you are interested in participating, please contact TACDA by sending an email to info@tacda.org or by writing to the address shown on the front page of this newsletter. The potential that exists in the local chapter program is enormous, and its completion and implementation would constitute a giant step forward in both the fulfillment of the TACDA mission as well as the preparedness of this great country.

Once again, we appreciate the support that you provide to TACDA through your TACDA membership and other contributions. We hope to receive many positive responses from those of you wishing to make a difference in your families and communities.

Remember, United We Stand ... Divided We Fall.

Kindest Regards,
Kathy Eiland
 Kathy Eiland
 Executive Director, TACDA