

2017

*Community Resiliency Group*

# Partner Toolkit



*A community effort supported by:*



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# Community Resiliency Group Partner Toolkit

## Chapter 1 Introduction

Emergencies can happen anytime, anywhere. The negative impact of any emergency on individuals, families, and communities can be significantly reduced when communities are prepared for these adverse events. The most critical part of neighborhood & community preparedness is ensuring individual and family preparedness, which includes making an emergency plan, making an emergency kit and staying informed. Beyond individual and family preparedness community businesses, organizations, and faith-based groups can also take steps to prepare before a disaster strikes.

### How to use this toolkit

This toolkit builds on the CRG handbook as a practical approach to engaging your community in preparedness activities. It includes information about family and organization business preparedness in addition to CRG activities and recruiting ideas.

You can edit any of the surveys or flyers located in the appendices and customize them for your CRG. The information on individual and business preparedness are limited to a single page so you can easily print and share that information without printing the entire toolkit.

## Chapter 2 Steps to Involve Your Community<sup>1</sup>

The next building block in community resiliency is ensuring general neighborhood preparedness. The following are steps that can be used to engage members of your community in conversations and activities to prepare your neighborhood for future disasters.

### 1. **Organize a Neighborhood Emergency Team** – Create a team with your friends and neighbors

If there is an existing block, neighborhood or civic association, work with current partners to form a disaster preparedness committee. If you do not have an existing group to work with talk to your neighbors, local religious leaders, merchants, etc., and ask for their involvement. It only takes a handful of volunteers to get started!

Survey your neighborhood: Whether you are working with an existing neighborhood group or starting a brand new disaster preparedness team, distributing a simple one-or-two-page confidential survey to generate interest and recruit volunteers.

### 2. **Research**

**What geographic area can you realistically cover?** Start small – one building or block at a time, depending on how many volunteers your team has and how many you think you can recruit. Keep in mind that the area your group covers should be kept within walking distance in the event of disaster.

**What, if anything, is already being done in your neighborhood regarding disaster preparedness and who is doing it?**

**Who are key local players and who could potentially help?** Think about individual leaders and residents, with particular skills and key neighborhood institutions, such as police and firehouses, medical centers, churches/synagogues/mosques/temples, businesses, and social services agencies.

**Organize and write** the results of your research, including responses if you conducted a survey, for use at your team meeting.

### 3. **Outreach**

**If you are working with an existing neighborhood group:**

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<sup>1</sup> “Preparing Your Neighborhoods for Disasters,” Unified Valisburg Services Organization Newsletter, <http://www.uvso.org/Services/disaster%20newsletter.pdf>

Outreach and recruitment should be easy in an existing group. Discuss at your general membership meeting the urgency of individual, family and neighborhood preparedness and purpose creating a disaster preparedness committee. Take names, phone and e-mail numbers of interested partners.

**If you are not working with an existing neighborhood group:**

Pick a date, time and convenient location, such as a house of worship, library, or community center. Consider inviting a guest speaker as a “hook” to generate interest from your neighbors, but make sure the date works for your speaker before you begin publicizing the meeting. Possible speakers include a representative from your local police precinct or fire department.

Put together a simple but eye-catching flyer announcing the meeting and distribute the notice throughout the neighborhood in stores, community buildings and school bulletin boards, etc. Make sure you included the basic details including date, time, location, purpose of meeting, guest speaker (if you are having one), and a phone number for more information.

**4. Create a Structure for Your Team**

Most groups are started by a handful of concerned residents who identify a problem and are motivated to do something about it. Use your initial core group of volunteers to get your neighborhood’s disaster preparedness efforts up-and-running. Decide on a regular meeting schedule for this leadership body and divide up key responsibilities. The point is not to do every single task yourself, but to make sure it happens through recruiting volunteers and delegating responsibilities.

**Tips for meetings:**

To ensure a successful meeting, preparation is essential! Your core group will be your temporary steering committee or leadership body until more volunteers get involved, and a more formal structure can be put in place. The core group should create a meeting agenda and divide up who will prepare and lead a discussion on each agenda item. Designate times for each item, and prepare any material you plan to distribute, including a copy of the agenda for each participant. (Put the date and your contact information on the agenda, so everyone has the same information when they leave). Don’t forget to include some social time after the meeting – it’s a great way to get to know your neighbors and learn about their skills, experience and interests. Lastly, food always helps to increase attendance! You can organize a potluck or have a volunteer(s) provide light refreshments.

The regularity of meetings should be determined by your team. So be sure to discuss meeting frequency (weekly, monthly, quarterly, etc.) at the first team meeting.

#### SAMPLE AGENDA FOR FIRST DISASTER PREPAREDNESS TEAM MEETING:

- Welcome, introductions, purpose of meeting, review agenda
- Guest speaker or presentation (Sample Topic: “How to Prepare Your Family for a Disaster” Speaker: local first responder, Office of Emergency Management, Red Cross, etc.).
- Brainstorm and prioritize initial disaster preparedness project ideas
- Discuss initial goals, structure and functioning of team
- Identify next steps and sign-up volunteers for specific tasks
- Set next meeting date (Make sure everyone has signed in so you have their contact information).

As you organize and get more residents involved, a more formal structure and process for functioning will become necessary. What follows are the essential building blocks you will need to ensure your team’s success. By having them in place, you will be able to recruit new volunteers, carry out crucial disaster preparedness projects and manage the inevitable challenges that come your way.

**Leadership:** As your team grows, it is important that new partners feel that they have ownership and a voice in the disaster preparedness plans that are developed for your neighborhood. Your leadership body needs to be representative of the community – ethnically, culturally and politically, and should be democratically elected. This allows for trust and respect between partners and leaders and helps ensure overall accountability for your team’s efforts.

**Committees:** Small groups are the most effective way to get work done. It allows volunteers to utilize their skills and experiences and plug into their interests. It fosters positive team attitude and it is a great way to get to know your partners and develop new leadership.

**By-Laws:** By-laws are the way to establish and maintain a democratically elected leadership body and a strong committee structure. A good set of by-laws include the following: your mission; roles/responsibilities/rights of officers and members; decision-making process; partnership eligibility; and how committees are established. The by-laws should be written clearly and concisely so everyone can understand them, and each new partner should receive a copy.

Remember: people get involved for many reasons – concerns about their own safety and the safety of friends and family; their neighborhood is important to them; they believe they have the skills to help; they believe the team can make a difference. But ultimately, they will stay

involved if they see that the group is effective and gets things done. Having a solid structure in place is an important way to help make that happen! Every CRG partner group can play a critical and contributory role only if it has its own Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP) in place.

## **5. Neighborhood disaster preparedness activities**

There is a lot of work to be done to create a disaster preparedness plan for your neighborhood, but don't get discouraged! There are some simple, immediate activities a small team can begin to implement right now to help prepare your neighborhood while you create a track record and recruit additional volunteers.

**Education** – *Critical to any neighborhood preparedness is individual and family preparedness.*

Basic knowledge can save lives. A great way to raise public awareness, help get your team off the ground and build neighborhood support for your effort is to pair-up volunteers and distribute flyers to neighbors and local businesses. Start small, focus on a building or block. Set up an informational table on a busy corner. Use the opportunity to talk about your efforts and ask for support. Have a clipboard on hand for them to sign your mailing list if they are interested in getting involved. Make sure you stamp your contact information on the guide and hand out fliers with information about your team and next general meeting.

**Create Registries** – This includes neighbors with special skills, translators, mental health providers and special needs. Survey neighborhood residents and create your own “Emergency Skills Registry” of neighbors. Also include a list of emergency contacts for the registry. These registries can be stored on shared access portals such as Google Drive or Facebook private groups, so that team members can easily access and update the documents. Be sure to also have hard copies of these registries just in case it cannot be accessed online.

**Create a Directory of Local Response Agencies and Organizations** – If a list is not already available, make a list of locations and contact numbers of your local precincts, firehouses, hospitals, and social service agencies. Like the registries, this directory can be stored on a shared access portal. Remember to make hard copies for team members.

**Develop an Emergency Communication System for Your Team** – The more informed your neighbors are during a disaster, the less likely they will panic. Start with your team. Set-up telephone, cell phone and e-mail communication systems, where each person calls others on the team to make sure everyone is reached. Identify local landline telephones in the community centers, libraries or other public locations or have handheld radios that can be used if cell phones do not work. Establish a common out-of-state telephone number to call in the event local telephone service is disrupted as well as a local place to meet in the event all phone service fails. Once your communications plan is set for your team, begin to recruit other volunteers to be part of the communications system. For example, you could recruit floor captains in large buildings or block captains in areas you are organizing.

**Team Training and Development** – Maintaining your team is vital! Discuss with your members what skills they are interested in learning. Take advantage of training opportunities offered voluntary organizations, community agencies, and other first responders. Another great idea is to participate in national preparedness events like national PrepareAthons.



## Appendix A Emergency Preparedness & Information Resources

### 1. Preparedness and Emergency Plan:

- [www.Ready.gov](http://www.Ready.gov)
- [www.ReadyVirginia.gov](http://www.ReadyVirginia.gov)
- [www.ReadyNOVA.org](http://www.ReadyNOVA.org)

### 2. Fairfax County Alerts and Emergency Information:

- [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/alerts/](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/alerts/)
- [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/emergency](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/emergency)
- [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/emergency/blog](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/emergency/blog)

### 3. Fairfax County Emergency Health and Recovery Steps Information:

- [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/hd/alert/emerg/](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/hd/alert/emerg/)
- [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/emergency/recover/](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/emergency/recover/)

### 4. Individuals with Disabilities and Others with Access and Functional Needs:

- [www.readygov/individual-access-functional-needs](http://www.readygov/individual-access-functional-needs)

### 5. Other resources:

- CDC Emergency Preparedness and Response: <http://emergency.cdc.gov/preparedness/index.asp>
- Fairfax County Neighborhood and Community Services: <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/ncs/cic/emergency.htm#ReadyPackGo>
- Fairfax County Office of Emergency Management: <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/oem/>
- FEMA Plan & Prepare: <http://www.fema.gov/plan-prepare>
- FEMA Region 3: <http://www.fema.gov/region-iii-dc-de-md-pa-va-wv>
- Ready.gov – Department of Homeland Security: <https://www.ready.gov/>
- National Seasonal Preparedness Messaging Calendar: <https://ready.gov/calendar>
- Homeland Security and Emergency Management: <http://hsema.dc.gov/>
- Virginia Department of Emergency Management: <http://www.vaemergency.gov/>
- Volunteer Fairfax: <http://www.volunteerfairfax.org/>

## Appendix B Individual and Family Preparedness Flyer

The most critical part of neighborhood/community preparedness is ensuring individual and family preparedness. Individual and family preparedness requires three steps, making an emergency plan, making an emergency supply kit and staying informed. The next page has an easily printable flyer to share with your CRG partners and community to help educate everyone on preparedness.

## ***Are you and your family prepared for an emergency or disaster?***

### **1. Have a plan**

Prepare a written plan by talking with your family, children, friends, neighbors and others about what may happen and what to do in various emergency scenarios. Some things to consider are evacuation situations, shelter-in-place, and even for a house fire. List emergency phone numbers and include an out-of-town friend or relative to be your family's point of contact. Other important contact information may include workplace and school contacts, doctor or medical contacts, and utilities contact numbers. Other important information may include. Keep information in an easily accessible place and a copy with your emergency kit at home.

### **2. Make a kit**

You should have an emergency kit at home that has enough emergency supplies to last each person in the household at least three days. In addition to a home emergency kit, it is recommended you have one at work and in each vehicle. Some examples of items to put in your emergency kit can be found at [www.ready.gov](http://www.ready.gov).

Talk to your health care providers about preparing for emergencies and having an extra supply of prescription medications, contact lenses/glasses, monitoring equipment, etc. Depending on individual needs, there may be other essential items needed for infants, the elderly and/or disabled family members. If appropriate, prepare a pet/service animal emergency kit.

In addition to your emergency supplies, have copies of important records and documentation to include identification, proof of residency, and insurance information for example.

To keep your kit ready, make sure to rotate food and water every six months. An easy way to remember is to include your emergency kit check as part of daylight savings – spring forward, fall back, and check your kits! You should also check batteries and test any equipment in your kit like flashlights or radios to ensure they are operational.

### **3. Stay informed**

Register for Fairfax Alerts to receive important emergency alerts via email, cellphone or text. A NOAA weather radio will receive weather warnings directly from the weather service and is a good way to stay informed during weather related emergencies. Make sure you know where to find service status information of your utility providers, whether on the internet or via phone.

For more information about preparedness or how you can get involved, contact:

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## Appendix C Business or Organization Preparedness Flyer

The next page has an easily printable flyer to share with your CRG partners and community to help educate businesses and organizations on preparedness.

## ***Is your business or organization prepared for an emergency or disaster?***

Business and organization emergency preparedness is just as important as individual and family preparedness. A disaster preparedness plan enables business in continuing their operations after a disaster. It provides stability to employees, customers, suppliers, and members by reassuring them that the business or organization has a plan in place for continuity. Information on business preparedness can be found at [www.ready.gov](http://www.ready.gov).

### **1. Have emergency plans**

An emergency operations plan (EOP) valuable to have and may include information on evacuation, sheltering-in-place, fire safety, and even what to do in medical emergencies. With any plan you have, make sure to review them annually and practice them with your staff.

Another plan that is important is a continuity of operations plan (COOP), which is a collection of resources, procedures, and information to use in the event of a disruption of operations. This disruption could be a disaster or emergency, or it could be due to routine issues like an extended power loss that would prevent operations. A COOP is focused on maintaining essential functions only and helps to facilitate a successful reopening after a disaster. The first step in planning is to assess how your business or organization functions internally and externally. From there, you can determine the minimum staff, materials, procedures, and equipment that are absolutely necessary to keep operating.

### **2. Have emergency supplies**

Many of the emergency supplies you need in your office space are the same as you might find in an individual disaster emergency kit as well: hand-powered or battery-powered radios and flashlights, water, food, first aid kit, sanitation supplies, plastic sheeting and duct tape for shelter-in-place situations. Other important information to keep with your emergency kit are building plans and site maps.

### **3. Stay informed**

Sign up for notification systems like Fairfax Alerts. Ensure you have communications with your community and other local businesses to share information.

### **4. Support employee preparedness**

One of the most important parts of preparedness for your business or organization is to ensure your employees or organization members and their families are prepared as well. Ensure that your employees are familiar with your emergency and disaster plans. Involve them in the planning as much as possible and ensure they are part of your annual training.

For more information about preparedness or how you can get involved, contact:

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## Appendix D CRG Volunteer Skills and Abilities Sample Survey

During an emergency, it's important for Volunteer Fairfax to know who in the CRG possesses various skills or tools so they can be utilized during appropriate emergencies. For example, after a heavy snow fall CRG partners who own a snow blower may be contacted by Volunteer Fairfax and asked if they would be willing to contribute their snow blower to help dig out neighborhoods that have not yet been plowed. Volunteer Fairfax would also contact partners who are willing and able to transport the snow blower to the snowed in neighborhood, and call upon partners who self-identify as being physically capable of using a snow blower.

The following page shows a sample volunteer skills and abilities assessment. You can use this form or customize it for your community. Keep in mind that it does contain personal information so make sure you have a plan for how these documents will be collected and managed to ensure the best management of personal information for your team.

# Community Resiliency Group Volunteer Skills and Capabilities Assessment

**Contact Info**

Your first and last name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone number: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Organization you are connected to (if any): \_\_\_\_\_

**Resources** Please indicate if you own/have and would be willing to contribute any of the following resources in the event of a local emergency.

<input type="checkbox"/> Snow blower	<input type="checkbox"/> Chainsaw
<input type="checkbox"/> Shovel	<input type="checkbox"/> Tents/cots
<input type="checkbox"/> Four wheel drive vehicle	<input type="checkbox"/> Food pantry
<input type="checkbox"/> Electric generator	<input type="checkbox"/> Volunteer Teams
<input type="checkbox"/> Large facilities such as kitchen, parking lot, office space, etc. (please describe):	

**Training and Experience** Have you had any of the following?

<input type="checkbox"/> CPR training	<input type="checkbox"/> Search and rescue experience	<input type="checkbox"/> Construction experience
<input type="checkbox"/> First Aid training	<input type="checkbox"/> Law enforcement experience	<input type="checkbox"/> Auto repair
<input type="checkbox"/> Medical certification	<input type="checkbox"/> Firefighting experience	<input type="checkbox"/> Spiritual counselling
<input type="checkbox"/> Childcare certification	<input type="checkbox"/> Administrative experience	<input type="checkbox"/> Crisis/Hotline
<input type="checkbox"/> Language skills (please specify):	<input type="checkbox"/> IT experience (please describe):	<input type="checkbox"/> CDL license

**Personal Ability Assessment**

Do you have claustrophobia or difficulty being in tight spaces? \_\_\_\_\_

Are you able to lift up to 50lbs unassisted? \_\_\_\_\_

Do you have any potential difficulties breathing? \_\_\_\_\_

Are you allergic or react to mold? \_\_\_\_\_

Do you have any physical condition(s) that would put you at risk in a disaster area? If so, please explain briefly \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix E CRG Partnership Form

Organizations interested in becoming partners of a CRG must complete a partnership form. This form can be completed online by visiting the Volunteer Fairfax CRG webpage. For your convenience, the form is included as a printable version in this toolkit.

For any organization that completes a paper recruitment form, the information ***must be*** returned to Volunteer Fairfax either via email or mail.



# Community Resiliency Group (CRG) Partnership Form

*This is a three page document. Please fill out and initial on page 3 in order to become a Partner of your district's CRG.*

## 1. Please enter your organization's contact information as indicated below:

Organization Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Primary Contact First and Last Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Position title within your Organization: \_\_\_\_\_

Primary Contact Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Primary Contact Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Primary Contact Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Organization Email (if applicable): \_\_\_\_\_

Organization Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Organization Address (including zip code): \_\_\_\_\_

Secondary Contact Name and Position title: \_\_\_\_\_

Secondary Contact Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Secondary Contact Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

## 2. What district is your organization physically located in? (Please circle.)

Braddock

Dranesville

Hunter Mill

Lee

Mason

Mount Vernon

Providence

Springfield

Sully

## 3. What type of organization do you represent? (Please circle one.)

Homeowner or Tenant Association

Civic Association

House of Worship

Nonprofit

Community Based Organization

Private Industry

Volunteer Organization

Other (please describe) \_\_\_\_\_

**4. Some organizations provide services or have members in multiple districts.  
(Please circle all districts in which you serve and/or have members.)**

Braddock  
Dranesville  
Hunter Mill  
Lee  
Mason  
Mount Vernon  
Providence  
Springfield  
Sully

**5. Resources and Capabilities:**

**Resources:** *A stock or supply of money, materials, staff, and other assets that can be drawn on by a person or organization in order to function effectively.*

**Capabilities:** *Non tangible assets that can be utilized to assist the community in recovery efforts; services, housing, showers, trained volunteers, communication networks, food/clothing drive management, Chaplain Corps members, etc.*

***\*Please circle all resources your organization currently has, or can acquire within 2 days. If you have available resources/capabilities not included on this list please write them next to "other."***

Transportation (buses, vans, large trucks, etc.)  
Generators  
Financial assistance  
Food and/or donation drives  
Distribution services  
Clothing  
Storage space (extra rooms, warehouse, etc.)  
Tools  
Appliances (refrigerators, washer, dryer, stove, etc.)  
Household/Personal care items  
Volunteers  
Translators (please specify language) \_\_\_\_\_  
Medical Equipment (glasses, hearing aids, wheelchairs, canes, scooters, etc.)  
Food preparation services  
Communication Networks (email, listserv, newsletter, etc.)  
Basic medical services  
Large Parking lot  
Chaplain Corps Members (spiritual counseling)  
Childcare services  
Counseling services

Other \_\_\_\_\_

Thank you for participating in your district's Community Resiliency Group (CRG)! Your responses will be used to create a database for Fairfax County, Volunteer Fairfax, and your fellow Community Resiliency Group partners to use in emergency and disaster recovery situations. Please complete and email to [emergency@volunteerfairfax.org](mailto:emergency@volunteerfairfax.org) or mail to/drop off at Volunteer Fairfax (Attn: CRG Partnership) 10530 Page Avenue Fairfax, VA 22030.

**By initialing here \_\_\_\_\_ my organization elects to become a Partner of the \_\_\_\_\_ District CRG.**


**Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_**

## Appendix F Sample Recruiting Flyers

This appendix provides sample flyers that you can modify to personalize for your district's CRG. Recruiting is important to grow your community network and foundation. There are many ways and ideas to recruit. These flyers are to help you get started!

# Join your **CRG** Local

- \* Is your organization prepared for disasters?
- \* Would your organization like to assist others in crisis during a disaster?

A group of people wearing safety vests and gear are working together to fill sandbags. One person is using a shovel to scoop sand into a bag held by another person.

**Why should you have a plan?**

A photograph showing a river with a dam or barrier in the foreground, with water flowing over it. The background shows a wooded area.

Go to: [volunteerfairfax.org](http://volunteerfairfax.org) for more info

Join your local Community Resilient Group and be a part of the bigger effort!

“Building Communities for a Resilient Nation”



# Hey COMMUNITY!!!

Are you **PROUD** of where you work/live?

Have you **INVESTED** in your **N**eighborhood?

How about making it **RESILIENT!**

We are building a better neighborhood foundation through

**PREPAREDNESS!** As we come together, we will grow in knowledge, resources, strength and members preparing for ,the unexpected,, and responding with **RESILIENCE!**

For more information, take a ticket below.

Community Us  
 Invested members  
 1234 Found St  
 Fairfax, VA 22030

YOUR LOGO  
 HERE

Phone: 555-555-5555  
 Fax: 555-555-5555  
 E-mail: someone@example.com

Community Us  
 Phone: 555-555-5555  
 Fax: 555-555-5555  
 E-mail: someone@example.com

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