

Resiliency Framework

5/1/25

This document identifies some key steps and learnings for a community council to establish a functioning resiliency committee. The primary type of disaster here is a wildfire, but the same tools could support other events.

The fundamental building blocks of a wildfire plan include the following:

1. Resilience Committee through your Community Council

A resiliency committee is a resource for the community providing residents with the information they need to prepare for, survive, and recover from a disaster. Suggest requesting a group of people from the community to take the lead.

2. An emergency evacuation plan

The emergency evacuation plan is probably specific to your community council. It is likely based upon special features or your area like single road egress. The easiest way to develop the response plan is to take an existing plan from another area to your local fire station and discuss it with the station captain. Together you should customize the plan for your area. This plan should be a written document and communicated with residents frequently. The document is living and will be modified as things change like response responsibilities, systems, communities, and technology (tool set). Essential pieces of the plan include:

- A. Where can residents find resources on how to prepare for disaster?

Things like links to MOA websites on firewise, Ready-Set-Go, Make Go Bags, putting Smart911 and PulsePoint on your cell phones...

- B. During the disaster what should residents expect responders are doing?

Consider things like AFD responsibilities, APD responsibilities, DoF... What is approximate timing of their activities? How will responder activities affect evacuation and access to resident's homes?

- C. How will residents receive information? Smart911, people with bull horns?

- D. How should residents evacuate? When to leave, what to take, include your pets...

- E. Where should residents muster after evacuating and how will they know it is safe to return home.

3. Drills for the plan

After the plan is written, it should be communicated and drilled. It should be presented at the community council meetings or with email distributions. It is a common playbook for the community.

Our community has an annual review and/or drill of the response plan with our local station. As fire season approaches, we meet at the local fire station with residents and talk through the plan. This is a great way for the community to meet the fire station team and understand the responsibilities and concerns of the first responders. We also provide a mechanism for residents with special needs or hazards at their property to make the firefighters aware of specific situations at certain properties.

4. Communication methods between the residents

Something that became obvious for our area, was that once the single access was closed, we became very reliant on each other during emergency. To support helping each other, we established a phone tree. This can be as formal or informal as you like, but it should at least provide residents with the names and contact information for close by neighbors. A single person needs to own and maintain the contact list. However, once it is developed, it should be shared back to the residents on the list. We have some rules to keep the list confidential within the group, and to not use it for any means of solicitation or political lobbying.

5. Other potential functions of a Community Resiliency Committee

- a. Coordinate projects to reduce the hazard. Examples could include fuel break projects, chipper projects to reduce fuel loads, signage to support evacuation...
- b. Provide a newsletter or method to share information. Newsletters can be simple, but should include things like upcoming events, access to resources about how to prepare for the emergency, lessons learned by other communities that experienced the disaster...
- c. Several people in the community to share the load. This can not be done by one person. More people bring ideas, assistance and energy to the group.
- d. Consider making a GoogleGroup or similar for your community. We made a group after the NextDoor App went so commercial and uncontrolled outside of our area. Our GoogleGroup include only residents of the community. We have rules of confidentiality, no-bullying or berating individuals, and open for all types of information of interest to the community. People share

information about hazards affecting our roads, about unusual circumstances, or even block parties. Participation is strictly voluntary but the group supports resident interaction. To post, residents simply send an email to "groupname"@googlegroups.com.