

Rosemary Humphrey, Chris Sharpe, and Cheryl Stiles

# Emergency preparedness

## Online resources

**A**fter the April 2007 mass shooting at Virginia Tech, universities across the country realized the need to take a much more proactive role in promoting emergency preparedness across all constituencies on their campuses. Emergency awareness, preparation, and response could no longer remain solely the responsibility of first responders. As a direct result of the Virginia Tech tragedy, many universities across the country launched efforts to train their students, faculty, and staff in multiple aspects of preparedness—from responding to medical emergencies to preparing for severe weather events, from extinguishing small fires to responding to an active shooter.

Our university is no exception. Kennesaw State University launched its Crisis Coordinator (CC) program in 2008. The program is active across two campuses and at multiple off-site campus facilities, with 200 trained volunteers who can provide immediate assistance to their buildings and departments during an emergency situation. We serve as lead CCs in our library buildings as well as participate and encourage others to attend training and contribute to preparedness efforts on their campuses and in the community.

To help support emergency management programs and efforts, a multitude of resources are available online to create disaster plans, offer training workshops, connect with partners, conduct risk assessments, and implement preventative and recovery techniques. In addition to securing collections and other valuable items during

disasters, libraries may serve as a key shelter location. Personnel must be prepared for a variety of emergencies and think beyond the building by considering the role the library plays on the campus and in the community. Personal safety and preparedness also impact the availability and readiness of the library to respond. We considered all these factors when compiling the following recommended Internet resources.

### Comprehensive sites

The following resources cover a wide variety of topics that include individual, community, and library emergency awareness, preparation, and response.

- **Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.** Not everyone immediately thinks of the possible health concerns related to disasters, even if you are not injured. The Center for Disease Control's (CDC) Center for Preparedness and Response has many resources related to public health. Their "Prepare Your Health" information is great for individuals looking to protect themselves and their family's health after a disaster. From doctor's contact information and current prescription lists to an extra pair of contacts, this

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source helps individuals analyze what they would need in their emergency kits. Since it is through the CDC, there are links throughout that lead to more detailed information on why certain items are important or the best ways to store them. The CDC website also has an extensive subsection on workplace safety and health. The site does not have navigation at the end of each page to go to the next, so remember to click through all subsites listed on the side panel to access all the information. *Access:* <https://www.cdc.gov>.

- **Emergency Management Institute (EMI).** According to FEMA, EMI's home agency, EMI "provides training to federal, state, local, tribal, volunteer, public, and private sector officials to strengthen emergency management core competencies for professional, career-long training." EMI offers both onsite and online independent study courses. Any members of the general public who qualify may enroll in the free online courses. Course titles include: Emergency Planning, Animals in Disasters, Planning for the Needs of Children in Disasters, and An Introduction to Emergency Planning in Higher Education. In order to take the final exam for each course and receive a certificate of completion and continuing education credit, individuals must apply for a free FEMA student identification number). *Access:* <https://training.fema.gov/emi.aspx>.

- **Ready.gov.** The official website of the Department of Homeland Security, this site is the premier resource for disaster and emergency preparedness applicable to multiple settings, including individuals and families, businesses, and campuses. From severe weather to house fires to hazardous materials incidents, information on what to do before, during, and after more than 25 types of emergencies are provided in easy-to-understand language and graphics. A wealth of information for families is available on how to plan ahead for emergencies, including financial preparedness, pets, evacuations, and making an emergency kit. The site also includes a robust section for kids of all ages, their parents, and educators to explain preparedness

and safety in age-appropriate ways, including interactive web games. The business section includes an extensive step-by-step toolkit that leaders can use to promote preparedness in various work settings. The campus section advises on staying informed, helping students recover from events, and reporting incidents. Numerous planning documents are available for download including "Building a Disaster Resistant University," "Emergency Plan Guide for People with Disabilities," and more. *Access:* <https://www.ready.gov/>.

### **Individual and family preparedness**

Safety truly begins at home. If one is not prepared and secure at home, they cannot focus on the efforts in the community or workplace. The following resources cover disaster planning and preparedness at home focusing on individual, families, and even pets.

- **American Heart Association.** The American Heart Association is the world leader in CPR and Emergency Cardiovascular Care training and education. Their CPR & First Aid website allows users to find training opportunities, learn the science of resuscitation, and review AHA guidelines. Easy to understand fact sheets and infographics are located throughout the sections. *Access:* <https://cpr.heart.org/>.

- **Ready Marine Corps.** The Marine Corps Emergency Management Team website is designed for Marines and their families, but it has universal information that is helpful for all. After using this site, all visitors will understand and be able to implement the three steps to readiness: "stay informed, make a plan, and build a kit." Activity sheets for kids to help them understand safety concepts is the highlight of the Kid's section. *Access:* <https://www.ready.marines.mil/>.

- **Red Cross.** Part of the Red Cross mission is to help people prepare for disasters. Their "How to Prepare for Emergencies" does just that. Learn how to "Be Red Cross Ready" by creating a survival kit, making a plan, and learning what disasters are likely in your area. Their Emergency Resource Library contains in-

formation on what to do before, during, and after specific events. *Access:* <https://www.redcross.org/get-help/how-to-prepare-for-emergencies.html>.

- **See Something, Say Something.**

Public safety is everyone's responsibility. Do you know the signs of suspicious activity? Do you know what you need to report? While the site is a little light on content, it provides good information on types of suspicious activities and what to report if you see it. Under the Play a Role section, the visitor can view videos to see how observant they really are. *Access:* <https://www.dhs.gov/see-something-say-something>.

- **Sesame Street Let's Get Ready: Planning Together for Emergencies.** By engaging children with familiar characters, this multimedia resource helps families, especially those with young children, to plan and prepare together for emergencies. Short videos explain the importance of knowing their full name, their parent's names, how to create an emergency kit, and who in the community helps in an emergency. The site, videos, and printable materials are available in both English and Spanish. *Access:* <https://www.sesamestreet.org/toolkits/ready>.

- **The Humane Society of the United States.** Humans are not the only ones who need help in an emergency. The Humane Society's Disaster Relief site has information on how to be prepared for your pets in a disaster by making a disaster plan. A Disaster FAQ section has general information as well as FAQs for specific disasters. *Access:* <https://www.humanesociety.org/disaster-relief>.

## **Community and workplace preparedness**

Many workplace sites are organized according to the traditional four phase cycle of emergency management (mitigation, preparation, response, recovery) and may contain sample operational continuity plans and business continuity plans.

- **Disaster Recovery.** The website offers free templates for creating a Business Continuity Plan and a Disaster Recovery Plan, as well as selected links to case studies about the automotive, banking, and electric company industries. Other services from this organization are available for a fee. *Access:* <http://www.disasterrecovery.org>.

- **Disaster Recovery Institute International (DRI).** DRI, a nonprofit organization, provides leadership, education, and training to the worldwide business community in the areas of emergency preparedness and disaster recovery. Although their multiple courses and certification options are available for a fee, DRI does offer a series of webinars, many of which are available for free. *Access:* <https://drii.org/>.

- **National Center for Disaster Preparedness (NCDP).** Based out of Columbia University's Earth Institute, NCDP "works to improve the nation's capacity to prepare for, respond to, and recover from disasters." Their extensive website is divided into the sections of research, policy, and a resource library. Users can sign up for a free newsletter. *Access:* <https://ncdp.columbia.edu/>.

- **National Safety Council (NSC).** Best known for their flagship defensive driving programs, NSC works to prevent accidents and deaths on the roadways, in workplaces, and in homes. In the Home Safety section, NSC specifically addresses the issues of child safety, poison control, avoiding falls, dealing with choking and suffocation, and opioids, and includes information on how to prepare for problems and deal effectively with them if they occur. For the workplace, NSC offers several toolkits for safe driving, avoiding fatigue, and prescription drugs. The website offers extensive sections of best practices prevention and preparedness. Workplaces can download for posters, informational materials, and infographics for free. NSC offers (for a fee) an Emergency Preparedness Online Certificate Program for employees. The course features eight modules: evacuation, weather and natural disasters, sheltering in place, first aid and

CPR, workplace violence, active shooter, terrorism, and communicating before and after emergencies. *Access:* <http://www.nsc.org>.

### **Emergency preparedness in the academic library**

A large number of academic libraries have LibGuides or webpages devoted to their emergency preparedness or disaster response. There are numerous resources on creating plans, recommendations for disaster kits, links to training opportunities, and guides on salvage techniques.

- **American Institute for Conservation and the Foundation for Advancement in Conservation.** These two organizations maintain a website of resources that includes guides and tip sheets. There is a toolkit to help plan network events and engagement activities. A list of city and state networks with their contact information helps people find partners and support. Under the “Risk Evaluation and Planning Program” there are worksheets and checklists. Some resources are only available to members. *Access:* <https://www.culturalheritage.org/resources/emergencies>.

- **American Library Association (ALA) Library Disaster Preparedness and Response.** ALA hosts a LibGuide on library disaster preparedness and response. It has links to ALA, government, and nonprofit organizations’ resources, as well as a bibliography of recommended books for planning, responding, and recovering. *Access:* <https://libguides.ala.org/disaster/home>.

- **Nova Southeastern University (NSU) Library Disaster and Emergency Management LibGuide.** The NSU Health Professions Division Library has a LibGuide to support the institution’s M.S. in Disaster and Emergency Management program. It includes books and articles relevant to the program. It also has an extensive list of websites on disasters, weapons of mass destruction, threats, hazardous materials, online publications, and agencies and organizations. *Access:* <https://nsufl.libguides.com/Disaster>.

- **Online Disaster-Planning Tool for Cultural and Civic Institutions.** The dPlan is an Online Disaster-Planning Tool for Cultural and Civic Institutions. This is a free tool with fill-in-the-blank templates to create a disaster plan. It includes checklists, contact information, and salvage techniques. There is a demo version to try out and PDFs of the information needed to enter online. Users will need to create an account, which is then approved by the Northeast Document Conservation Center. Plans can be downloaded, printed, and revised. *Access:* <http://www.dplan.org/>.

- **Tulane University Matas Library Disaster and Public Health LibGuide.** Tulane University’s Rudolph Matas Library of the Health Sciences has a good example of one of the many LibGuides on disasters and/or emergency management. There are sections on management, preparedness, and response to disasters. It includes a selection of journals and database recommendations. The tab on non-governmental organizations has numerous links to worldwide organizations. There are also resources on specific disasters, such as the 2010 BP Gulf Oil disaster or and the 2014 chemical spill in West Virginia. *Access:* <https://libguides.tulane.edu/disasters/disasters>.

- **U.S. National Library of Medicine (NLM).** NLM has a dedicated website about disasters with, appropriately, a focus on health issues. In addition to a database of emergency public health Internet resources, Disaster Lit, the website also has a bibliography of library-related publications organized by year. The natural and man-made section includes descriptions of various disasters and a selection of resources on specific topics of each disaster. Other features include sections on infectious diseases and various special topics, such as children and animals. The NLM Disaster Information Specialist Program has training opportunities and ways to connect to others about disaster health information. *Access:* <https://disasterinfo.nlm.nih.gov/>. 