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Interested in becoming a Map Your Neighborhood Facilitator?

INTRODUCTION: Map Your Neighborhood (MYN) is a program designed to help neighborhoods prepare for disasters. It is offered through the City of Kirkland Office of Emergency Management. Neighborhoods that are prepared for emergencies and disaster situations save lives, reduce the severity of injuries and trauma, and reduce property damage. In addition, contributing as an individual and working together as a team helps develop stronger communities and improve the quality of life in the community.

PROGRAM SYNOPSIS:

- Learn the first “9 Steps to Take Immediately Following a Disaster” to secure your home and protect your neighborhood. It is hard to think clearly following disaster. These steps will help you to quickly and safely take actions that can minimize damage and protect lives.
- Identify the Skills and Equipment Inventory each neighbor has that are useful in an effective disaster response. Knowing which neighbors have supplies and skills ensures a timely response to a disaster and allows everyone to contribute to the response in a meaningful way.
- Create a Neighborhood Map identifying the locations of natural gas and propane tanks for quick response if needed.
- Create a Neighborhood Contact List that identifies those with specific needs such as the elderly, those with a disability, or homes where children may be alone during certain hours of the day.
- Work together as a team to evaluate your neighborhood after a disaster and take the necessary actions.

GET STARTED: First schedule a MYN Train-the-Facilitator session. This provides you with important information on how to effectively facilitate a neighborhood meeting, details the “9 Steps to Take Immediately Following a Disaster”, and answers any questions you may have.

Once you are trained, you may order the MYN Program materials through Kirkland Emergency Management. These materials include the MYN Neighborhood Handout, MYN Discussion Guide, MYN DVD for use during your meeting. The MYN website, kirklandwa.gov/myn contains forms, resources, and additional information for leaders.

CONTACT: Kirkland Office of Emergency Management.

(425) 587-3691 or KirklandEM@kirklandwa.gov

Remember - in a disaster your most immediate source of help are the neighbors living around you.

MYN Facilitator FAQ

Q: How big should my neighborhood be?

A: We recommend about 15-25 homes. This is a typical block, corner to corner, both sides of the street. We recommend including “line of sight” homes. When disaster strikes, we tend to respond to those things we can see.

Q: What if I live in a condominium or apartment complex?

A: If the complex is larger than 25 homes, consider dividing it into smaller groups.

Q: Why does the number of houses matter?

A: Because we are organizing and preparing for disaster, we want to keep in mind the dynamics of effective response. The most effective response occurs in the first hour following disasters. It is called the “golden 60 minutes” because of its value in saving lives, reducing the severity of injury, and reducing property and environmental damage. If a group is too large, it becomes difficult to complete an effective response in that first hour.

Q: How do I determine who to invite to my meeting?

A: Our goal is to be prepared to care for ourselves and others when fire, medical, police, and utility first responders are inundated with requests for help, severely limiting their ability to get to all who need them in a timely manner. Experience shows that people genuinely want to help each other when these events occur. Imagine a major disaster occurring. Who would you want to help? How far would you naturally extend your reach? That is who you want to include in your group. You also want the size to be manageable, which is why recommend about 15-25 homes.

Q: Why do I need to personally invite my neighbors?

A: Experience is very clear on this one. A personal invitation is what encourages your neighbors to attend. A full house generates lots of enthusiasm and energy. A written reminder left with neighbors can help them remember the date, but to ensure a good turnout, invest the time and extend a personal invitation.

Q: Doesn't it take a lot of time to personally invite everyone?

A: Many groups have found it beneficial to have two or three neighbors help with inviting. That way it will not take any one person as long. Remember, the time invested in inviting is typically rewarded with a good turnout at the meeting.

Q: No one has a house big enough to hold our whole neighborhood – we want to hold the meeting in a school, community building, or church. Is this a good idea?

A: Experience is very clear on this one, too! The answer is generally no. There is a direct correlation between where the meeting is held and the number of neighbors who will attend. Even if the school is in the neighborhood, it creates ‘distance.’ To maximize your turnout, hold the meeting in someone’s home. If people have to sit on the floor, that’s okay! The meeting is dynamic enough that most people don’t mind. If you are concerned about not having enough chairs, ask people to bring a chair or a pillow to sit on when you invite them.

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