

State Partnership-Colorado Emergency Preparedness Partnership

Summary

Colorado Emergency Preparedness Partnership (CEPP) is an organization aimed at bringing the private and public sector together for information sharing and to aid in emergency preparedness and homeland security planning. By increasing the lines of communication between and across the public, private, and philanthropic sectors, we will build a more resilient community.

Background

Businesses and governments alike understand the value of planning for continuity of operations. Too often, however, that planning is done in isolation – within a company, by industry sector, or by government alone. The very best business continuity planning by an individual company is for naught if the community around that business cannot function after a disaster. Likewise, government faces an impossible task in effectively providing all phases of disaster management alone since the private sector controls 85-90 percent of the nation's critical infrastructure. In recognition of this inter-dependency across organizations and between public and private sectors, the Colorado partnership's work reflects the importance of joint planning, practice, and ongoing collaboration to ensure continuity of community.

This partnership began as Denver prepared for the Democratic National Convention in 2008. A partnership was formed to share information across the sectors to aid the first responders and the emergency management officials in their preparation efforts, as well as to provide timely and valuable information to businesses about any disruption to their commercial activities. This partnership proved invaluable as Denver hosted a very successful and peaceful large scale event.

Goals and Objectives

The partnership will facilitate the organization of resources and expertise of the business community to improve security and response capability in Denver and throughout the state. By working together, public, private and non-profit leaders will strengthen Colorado's ability to mitigate the impact of catastrophic events and will help ensure the safety of Colorado citizens and the resiliency of its economy. This partnership will provide a two way line of communication and information sharing with the private and public sectors, and will develop and maintain a private sector resource asset registry to catalogue private sector assets to be used in the time of a disaster or special event. These resources will be protected, voluntary and, if it is a declared disaster, reimbursable.

Description

CEPP is a continually growing and expanding group of businesses, public sector first responders, emergency management officials, and the philanthropic and educational community. This partnership consists of several critical elements:

State Partnership-Colorado Emergency Preparedness Partnership

1. Quarterly meetings which concentrate on topics of interest to the community such as; cyber security, work place violence, and the H1N1 threat.
2. An information sharing system that offers a list serve for routine information as well as a sophisticated information exchange tool that includes social media such as posting video feeds, blogs and tweets. This information sharing tool, called the Situational Awareness Tool (SATool) can host documents, message boards, and chat groups. Along with its information sharing capabilities, the system can act as a virtual operations center during a disaster or special event.
3. A private sector resource registry, called CONNECT Colorado, is a protected, voluntary and reimbursable registry of private sector assets, resources and subject matter experts that can be called up by the emergency management professionals during the time of a declared disaster.

Requirements for Success

A public private partnership cannot exist on good intentions alone. Funding must be obtained to pay for operations, supplies, marketing material, information sharing systems and any other special services that the partnership can offer. CEPP uses a combination of funding sources. We have been fortunate to have the continued and generous support of the philanthropic community. Secondly, we have great support from individuals and companies who provide in-kind support. Thirdly, we solicit funds and contributions from our private sector company partners. And lastly, we have received and will continue to request the support of public sector grants.

A successful partnership must also have a demonstrated interest from the community, both public and private, who recognize the need for such a partnership to exist. Preparing for large scale events clearly demonstrates the need for a better prepared and educated community so that information can be shared and resources combined to address unforeseen problems or situations.

Resources

CEPP has the following resources available through its partnership- A seat in the Emergency Operations Center; resources to help prepare form respond to, and recover from disasters; grants; and tools and templates.

The CEPP website: www.thecepp.org, is currently under renovation as we are changing web masters. We also share information with a tool called the Situation Awareness Tool (SATool) where we can receive information, post documents, video feeds, chat rooms and message boards, as well as tweets and blogs.

Training and Exercises

CEPP hosts and participates in joint training and exercises with the public and private sectors.

State Partnership-Colorado Emergency Preparedness Partnership

CEPP recently hosted both public and private sector participants in a two hour cyber tabletop exercise created and administered by a CEPP member.

The State recently held a tabletop exercise with private sector participation focusing on response to a tornado.

Communication Tools

CEPP uses the following methods of communication with their public/private sectors; email alerts; in-person meetings; conferences and other events; website.

In-person meetings are held quarterly and hosted by CEPP in private and public sector venues.

CEPP routinely co-hosts major events and speakers with another non-profit, the CELL.

Links

www.thecepp.org

Contact Information

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