

Partnerships-Washoe County, Nevada

Summary

The vision of PREPARE-Washoe (PREparedness PARTnership committee) is to have open communication between businesses and local government and to provide preparedness training opportunities to ensure that every business is properly equipped to sustain an emergency and help the community recover. The sectors included are about 45 different: government, private, non-profit, and volunteer organizations.

Background

The PREPARE Washoe initiative sprung from the success of the Lifeline Utilities group in the region, the Associated General Contractor's Emergency Services Committee, the Volunteer Organizations Active in Disaster (VOAD), and Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) efforts. Regional public safety officials wanted a group that would encompass additional sectors. After the flood of 2005, local businesses expressed a desire to be better informed and partner with government on behalf of the community. The local emergency manager expressed a desire to have a member of the business community actually participate in the Regional Emergency Operations Center (REOC). In 2008, the Michigan State University Critical Incident Protocol training served as a starting point for the initiative.

Goals and Objectives

The objectives for PREPARE-Washoe are split into principle objectives for local businesses and government.

The objectives for local businesses are:

- (1) Be informed in a timely manner of potential hazardous events that could affect business.
- (2) Assist in planning, training, responding, and recovering to community disasters.
- (3) Provide opportunities to share resources during a disaster.

The objectives for local government are:

- (1) To have the private sector involved at the Regional Emergency Operations Center.
- (2) To assist in helping businesses prepare for disasters so impacts are minimal and they are able to recover quickly.
- (3) To assist businesses with the development of Continuity of Operations Planning documents.

Description

The PREPARE Washoe initiative is co-sponsored by the Reno-Sparks Chamber of Commerce, the Economic Development Council of Northern Nevada, and the Washoe County Office of Emergency Management and Homeland Security. The group has a simple charter specifying at least four meetings per year focused exclusively on ensuring a partnership between business and local government. The group is co-chaired by two

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business representatives and the County Emergency Manager. Meeting topics are solicited through annual surveys of the membership and coordinated by the co-chairs. Meeting attendance varies between 35-75 attendees depending on the time of year and subjects being discussed.

Requirements for Success

In order for PREPARE-Washoe to be successful we rely on business volunteers. Due to the current economic situation we do not have a dedicated budget for this effort. However, business partners are invited and encouraged to attend all regional emergency management training and exercises at no cost other than the time involved.

Resources

PREPARE-Washoe has the following resources available through its partnership- A seat in the Emergency Operations Center; web resources; and tools and templates.

For more information, please visit: www.readywashoe.com/

Training and Exercises

PREPARE-Washoe hosts and participates in joint training and exercises with the public and private sectors.

A PREPARE-Washoe representative has a seat at the Logistics section table. Private sector representatives may participate or observe any training, planning, or exercise event.

Communication Tools

PREPARE-Washoe uses the following methods of communication with their public/private sectors; email alerts; in-person meetings; media outreach; and public service announcements.

Links

www.readywashoe.com/

Contact Information

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