

Notes from sub-committee meeting/ identification of communities with specialized communication needs

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Those with specialized communication needs:

Although we focused on language access/challenges presented by lack of English language knowledge and proficiency, and the fact that nearly 300 languages are spoken in the state, with Hartford Co. and Fairfield Co. having the most ESOL (from ACS), acknowledge that Latino includes languages other than Spanish.

Following discrete populations need specialized modes of communication:

Disabled communities: those with physical/mental disabilities as well as sight impaired or blind, deaf or hard of hearing and those in group homes or other institutional facilities.

Homeless/both sheltered and unsheltered/transitional/drop in

New immigrants and refugees/Undocumented

Home-bound elderly

Low income

Low literacy

Commuters

Transients (tourists/visitors)

Those dependent on Durable Medical Equipment/DME

Transient workers

(Most challenging, those who choose not to self-identify with any group)

Ways to reach (these are preparedness heavy)

Traditional Media/esp. targeted radio and local print

Sirens (public warning systems)

Social media

Faith based organizations

Social services

Portable highway signs

Electronic bill boards

Sirius radio

Libraries

Day labor meeting places

Consulates

Casinos

Local/statewide community organization with outreach workers

Banners at "trident" urban/rural areas

Handouts/postings at community gathering places (esp. if internet/phone is down)
ethnic food stores, supermarkets, doctor's offices, health clinics, drugstores, daycare centers, senior centers, Dunkin Donuts...)

CREATE UNIVERSAL SIGNAGE FOR MOST COMMON EMERGENCIES/WARNINGS.

General:

211 is very useful for general statewide communications, and it does provide access to different languages.

CT Alert is another option that can be translated, but it requires voluntary opt-in, which limits its access to marginalized communities. Encouraging and publicizing that opt-in option to discrete communities would be important. Identify ways to reach them through community leaders. (Brenda talked about reaching out to vendor/Everbridge to discuss translation challenges)

Use identified ethnic media resources to provide warning translation to broader ethnic media outlets. Create network of emergency translation sources.
(New American Media directory)

Emergency Communications System – how to better reach cities and towns, how to help them develop systems to engage and notify their residents. Especially true in rural areas.

Reverse calls centers – talked about discussion with cell phone providers for customer contacts, etc. but aware of privacy issues surrounding that.

In any written notification must be the most simple language

Use outreach workers to reach homeless in cases of severe weather warnings.
Challenge of communicating to any marginalized group in terms of HOW they receive information. (person to person, media, institutional, government, pass along, faith based organizations or places of worship..)

Assuring that screen shots of emergency press conferences include the sign language interpreters.

In case of loss of power, handouts/postings at grocery stores, bodegas, banks, day care centers, senior centers, community centers, rural community meeting places

(granges,etc) , signs in “Trident” areas where major roads and/or streets converge, banners on public buildings or in rural areas.

Use first responders for door-to-door/neighborhoods/ rural areas

The most vulnerable will be easier to reach by local officials, rather than the state. Can state access lists of those signed up for local emergency communications?

Challenge of suspicion and non-engagement with government – we can use this effort to forge relationships with those communities and use this to communicate concern.

List of organizations from APAAC/United Way/CAN/refugee organizations / direct service providers

MAJORITY OF STATE’S POPULATION HAS OR HAS ACCESS TO CELL PHONES.

An-Ming and Emanuela working on top language needs.