



# Lesson 3. Communicating In an Emergency



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# Video: Communicating in an Emergency

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**Click on the image to view the video.**



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# Lesson 3 Objectives

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- **Indicate how day-to-day communication differs from communication during an incident.**
- **Identify strategies for communicating effectively in an emergency situation.**
- **Select the most appropriate form of communication for a given situation.**
- **Indicate how social media and other communications technology can be used to communicate with members of the community.**



# Delivering Effective Emergency Communications

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**This lesson presents information about three aspects of communicating in an emergency:**



**Emergency  
Communication  
Challenges**



**Emergency  
Communication  
Tools**



**Creating Effective  
Emergency  
Communications**



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# Importance of Emergency Communication

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**In an emergency, information is as critical to people as food and water.**



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Visual 3.5  
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# Key Functions of Emergency Information

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- **Save lives and reduce injury.**
- **Protect property and the environment.**
- **Facilitate the tactical response.**
- **Educate, inform, and change behavior and attitudes.**
- **Seek the public's cooperation.**
- **Instill public confidence.**
- **Provide information to help families reunite.**



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# Characteristics of Emergency Communications

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**Emergency communications differ from routine communications in several ways:**

- **Barriers**
- **Timeliness**
- **Required response**



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# Factors That Affect Response

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- Individual characteristics
- Perceptions
- Message source
- The message itself



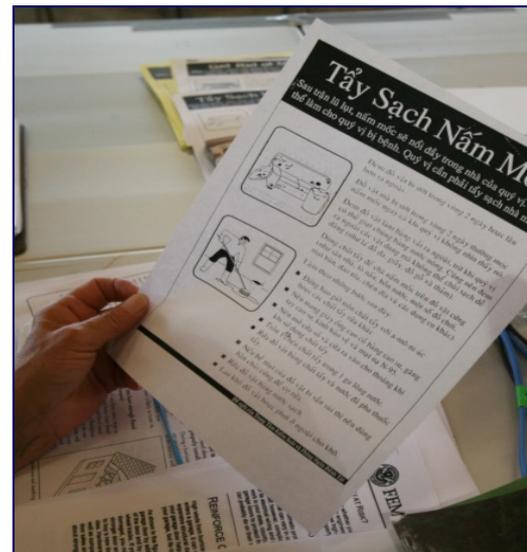
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# The Medium and the Message

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How you will get the message to the audience is influenced by:

- The audience itself.
- Urgency of the message.
- Reliability of the medium.
- Appropriateness of the medium.
- Resources.



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# Activity: Communication Challenges

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## Instructions: Entire group:

- Your instructor will read each statement in the Student Manual and ask if it is true or false.
- Be prepared to explain your answers.



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# Emergency Communication Tools

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**The most effective communication tool is the one that:**

- **Reaches the target audience.**
- **Gets information to the audience when they need it, for as long as they need it.**
- **Can be expected to deliver the message reliably.**
- **Enhances comprehension of the message content.**
- **Can be accessed within resource limitations.**

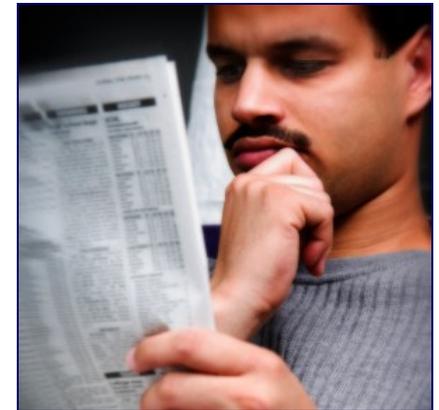


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# Communication Tools and Methods



- In-person events
- Print media
- Broadcast media
- Internet and social media



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# In-Person Events

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## Advantages:

- **Interactive.**
- **Can target specific populations.**

## Limitations:

- **Must have ability to stay on message.**
- **May expose you to difficult questions.**



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# Print Media

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## Advantages:

- Allow for detail.
- Can use a variety of approaches.

## Limitations:

- Take longer to get the message out.
- May be filtered through another spokesperson.



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# Broadcast Media

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## Advantages:

- Immediate broadcast.
- Varied programming.
- Reaches a wide audience.



## Disadvantages:

- May be less detailed.
- Messages may be filtered or edited.
- Listeners/viewers must turn on the device.



# Internet and Social Media

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## Advantages:

- Can be updated quickly.
- Can incorporate varied media.
- Flexible.

## Limitations:

- Updates may only be at certain times.
- Limited message control after sending.



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# Activity: Social Media Self-Assessment

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## **Instructions:** Working individually:

- Review the list of social media in the Student Manual.
- Assess your comfort level with each type of media.



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# Activity: Communication Tools

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## Instructions:

- Review the list of communication tools/methods in the Student Manual.
- Match each communication tool/method by entering the number beside the description.



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# Creating Effective Emergency Communications

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**Successful emergency communications should:**

- **Present the information in sequence.**
- **Be worded precisely.**
- **Avoid jargon, code, and acronyms.**
- **Use common terminology.**
- **Omit unnecessary details.**
- **Speak in sync with other related authorities.**
- **Keep messages consistent across various media.**



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# Creating Alerts and Warnings

- Alerts and warnings are products or messages intended to get the attention of the public and to prompt some type of action.
- In practical usage, there is little distinction between the two.



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# Alert and Warning Message Content

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**Successful messages should include:**

- **Specific hazard**
- **Location**
- **Timeframes**
- **Warning source**
- **Magnitude**
- **Likelihood**
- **Protective behavior**



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Effective Communication (IS-242.b)

# Accessible Alert and Warning Systems

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- **Ensure messages are accessible to all audiences by using clear and simple language.**
- **Provide information in multiple languages.**
- **Be aware of text-to-speech technology requirements.**
- **Ensure audio is consistent with text.**
- **Explain images and maps.**
- **Use multiple delivery channels.**



# Using Warning Message Templates

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Using templates tailored to threats and hazards likely in your warning area, that incorporate pre-approved language, can:

- Help prevent errors or omissions.
- Reduce delays in issuing alerts and warnings.
- Allow for language translation in advance.



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# Activity: Developing a Warning Message

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**Instructions:** Working in your table group:

- Review the scenario in the Student Manual.
- Imagine this scenario occurring in your jurisdiction. You may add additional facts and details not contained in the scenario.
- Develop a warning message to address the scenario.
- Be prepared to follow up with a group discussion.



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# Preparing for Briefings and Public Meetings

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- **Identify objectives.**
- **Prepare officials and experts in advance.**
- **Prepare a statement and handout materials.**
- **Anticipate difficult or sensitive questions.**
- **Make provisions to comply with all legal requirements.**



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# Activity: Creating Effective Emergency Communications

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## **Instructions:** Entire group:

- Your instructor will read each statement in the Student Manual and ask if that action is recommended or not recommended.
- Be prepared to explain your answers.



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# Summary and Transition

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- **Lesson 3 presented strategies for communicating effectively in an emergency situation.**
- **Lesson 4 will present strategies for improving your oral presentation skills.**



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