

# KEY LOCAL GOVERNMENT PERSONNEL YOU NEED ON YOUR CRISIS COMMUNICATIONS TEAM

Well before a crisis, it's important to identify key staff members to serve as your crisis communication team. Because people of diverse points of view and ways of thinking are needed on a crisis management team, it is important to provide communication, team building, and conflict resolution training for your team to ensure they will work together effectively before, during, and after a crisis. Below are eight local government roles and responsibilities that should be represented on your crisis team.



Local Government Manager

Shapes how citizens and media perceive the local government's crisis management activities; usually delivers major crisis update messages to citizens and elected officials.<sup>1</sup>



Emergency Manager/Director

- Responsible for ensuring that all resources are in place during all phases of emergency management: mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery. The common goal of emergency managers is to create and sustain a disaster-resilient community, whose residents feel confident that their jurisdiction is prepared to cope with disaster, no matter what its origin.<sup>2</sup>



Communications Director

- The point of contact with all media outlets and responsible for the team disseminating the message on social media. This individual has extensive communication training.<sup>1</sup>



Director of Information Services

- This person is best able to communicate with businesses affected by a major telecommunications malfunction.<sup>1</sup>



Public Health Manager/Director

This person provides information that allows individuals, stakeholders, and entire communities to make the best possible decisions for their well-being during a crisis or emergency.<sup>3</sup>



Director of Public Works

- Working closely with police and fire personnel, as well as the public health manager/director, the Director of Public Works assesses the damage and develops and implements responses; transportation/access and water supply are two areas of focus for public works personnel in major events.<sup>4</sup>



Fire and Police Chiefs

- Each is responsible for informing the community of this crisis and work cooperatively with the news media to ensure consistent and factual information is relayed in a timely manner.



Director of Planning

- Planners understand plan development and the scientific bases of hazards, and are accustomed to solving problems and undertaking mitigation efforts in a multidisciplinary environment.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Effective Crisis Communication. Accessed at <http://bit.ly/2e0id13>.

<sup>2</sup> Emergency Management: Principles and Practices for Local Government, Second Edition. Accessed at <http://bit.ly/2ejDIOR>.

<sup>3</sup> Crisis Emergency and Risk Communication. Accessed at [https://emergency.cdc.gov/cerc/resources/pdf/cerc\\_2014edition.pdf](https://emergency.cdc.gov/cerc/resources/pdf/cerc_2014edition.pdf)

<sup>4</sup> The Role of Public Works in Emergencies. Accessed at <http://www.westerncity.com/Western-City/February-2011/The-Role-of-Public-Works-in-Emergencies/>