

## **Sustain Community Commitment**

In Step Five, you developed a public education plan that included ways to inform the community about key components of the emergency plan. This plan is part of the key to sustaining community commitment to being a ReadyCommunity.

The ability to sustain this effort will require:

- Communications network among businesses, agencies and groups
- Organizational commitment from businesses, agencies and other groups
- Visibility within the community

An active and open communications network between EMA, local government, businesses and groups in the community underlies organizational commitment and good visibility. As you implement the public education plan, update email and telephone lists to include new contacts. Contacts within these groups can help educate employees about the emergency plan and their role in preparing for and responding to disaster.

Organizational commitment to a ReadyCommunity will include engaged leaders who support preparedness practices within their organizations, such as:

- Continuity of Operations Plans
- Evacuation Plans
- Employees trained in first aid and work-related emergency operations
- CERT teams

Engaged leaders will also support preparedness practices/exercises with the community.

The exercise plan developed as part of the emergency plan maintenance should incorporate community participation. In addition to these exercises, work with VOAD, Red Cross, and Extension to develop capacity building activities for the community. These might include disaster preparedness fairs, workshops, and community forums.

Provide the Chamber of Commerce, Welcome Wagon, Newcomer's Club, and Real Estate agencies with supplies of your informational brochure. Recruit individuals to host neighborhood socials (potluck, chat session, etc.). During that time, talk about what it means to be a resilient and ready community.

Use media outlets to keep the community informed. Consider writing a regular column in the local paper or become a regular guest on local radio or television stations.

Establish a permanent community group to support and advise the Emergency Management Agency Director or other official designated to maintain the Emergency Operations Plan.