

Appendix Policy Recommendations

Recommendations for the Department of Emergency Management and Disaster Administration (NMEAD, for its abbreviation in Spanish):

1. Establish standardized protocols for the evaluation of all emergency situations managed by Municipal Emergency Management Offices (MEMOs). Establish procedures to document lessons learned. Include community leaders and organizations in those evaluations.
2. Reformulate emergency policies and plans according to the findings of those evaluations.
3. Create specific directives for a uniform format and design of NMEAD Internet pages and their content, as well as MEMO pages on social media.
4. Establish a uniform format guide for the MEMO emails and their personnel and arrange for a common prefix for all emergency contact numbers to facilitate access and make them easy to memorize or figure out (ex.: 787-123-XXXX).
5. Establish specific directives for the position of MEMO director:
 - ✓ The candidate should have a minimum education or experience in emergency management and/or search and rescue.
 - ✓ The candidate should possess or complete within a specific time frame, a certain number of certifications and training in emergency management and risk communication.
 - ✓ While holding the MEMO director post, he/she should not hold any other position or perform other duties (whether paid or honorary) unrelated to emergency management and/or risk communication.
 - ✓ MEMO directors should vow to comply with NMEAD directives on emergency management and risk communication.
6. Establish specific directives for risk communication management in emergency situations:
 - ✓ Risk communication should be managed from the MEMO, in coordination with the mayor's communication office and not the other way around.
 - ✓ All MEMO personnel, as well as municipal communications personnel should be trained in risk communication.
 - ✓ NMEAD should provide a risk communication plan for all MEMOs.
7. Ask the Governor for an executive order defining Emergency Management as a central government priority and establish an emergency management chain of command from NMEAD to MEMOs.

Recommendations for Municipal Emergency Management Offices (MEMOs):

1. Ensure that and the MEMO's contact information and website links are in a prominent place on the municipality's website (fixed at the top of the page or in a vertical strip, so that people do not have to scroll down the whole page to find emergency information).
2. Take measures to depoliticize MEMOs: Classify the MEMO director post as a professional position with no responsibilities other than those directly connected with emergency management and ensure compliance with central emergency management office directives.
3. Prepare —and keep updated— a list of names, contact numbers and addresses of residents with limited mobility, who are chronically ill, or who have disabilities needs and mobility challenges (in coordination with, but not dependent upon, any other municipal office).
4. Increase emergency management and risk communication budget and personnel.
5. Offer emergency management and risk communication training to all municipal employees. Also train organizations and community leaders in these topics.
6. Designate an appropriately trained communications official to manage risk communication directly from the MEMO and have that person work in coordination with the mayor's communications office.
7. Increase and update sirens and alarm equipment in Coastal municipalities and municipalities with river swells risk. Signs should be displayed in various languages.
8. Educate the public in those communities about potential risks, evacuation protocols, and protective measures in case of floods and other emergencies.
9. Require hotels and short-term rental property owners near coasts and water bodies to keep their guests informed about possible currents, floods, or river swellings, as well as weather conditions.
10. Customize the municipal website. The municipal website should display the following in a prominent place:
 - ✓ Direct telephone numbers accessible 24/7 and not through a switchboard.
 - ✓ Specific 24/7 numbers for people who are hard of hearing.
 - ✓ Information on emergency assistance that can be obtained at MEMOs.
 - ✓ An emergency management assistance directory with easy to remember numbers.
 - ✓ Local and central phone numbers (aside from emergency phone numbers) where the public can call for orientation on specific issues.

- ✓ Links or designated tabs for vulnerable populations, for example, hearing impaired people, older adults, people with special medication or healthcare treatment needs. (These links should be shared with caregivers, community leaders, and other stakeholders).
- ✓ Links to other government agencies and other services.