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NON-COMPETITIVE DIVISION

Community Preparedness: More Than a Leisurely Hobby but Rather a Purposeful Service

While FEMA and state emergency management agencies can interact with the general public, local emergency managers are usually the most closely connected to the public in their respective communities. As such, local emergency managers should consider the development of community preparedness programs that provide a return on investment and also help community members take tangible action to improve their own personal preparedness by 1) considering non-traditional options; 2) offering a variety of courses on a rotating basis specific to the jurisdictional hazards identified in the hazard mitigation plan (HMP); 3) taking advantage of prescheduled events and gatherings to secure captive audiences; and 4) including emergency alert system registration information in every aspect of a community preparedness program.

Maintaining a viable community preparedness program that offers practical emergency preparedness info aimed at helping community members recognize their specific hazards and then taking proactive steps to lower their vulnerabilities and risks will yield great value not only to the individual

community members but also to an emergency manager's jurisdiction. If building a culture of preparedness is truly one of the primary outcomes of effective emergency management efforts, then community preparedness engagement is surely one of the greatest tools we have at our disposal to strive toward achieving that outcome.

Presentation Theme: Emergency managers can create greater levels of community resilience by developing community preparedness programs using innovative approaches, risk applicable content, and encouraging the public to register with their local emergency notification provider. By engaging with partners, providing relevant mitigation information, and empowering individual action, emergency managers will observe increased preparedness actions across the whole community.

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