**Community Organizing Tips**

The following topics and tips are aimed to support community members who want to serve as leaders and organize their neighborhood as it relates to disaster preparedness.

**Planning for Organizing:**

* **Determine how you want to structure your community organizing efforts –** do you want to gather input from others before creating your plan to organize? Do you want a team of people to serve as the group leading the organizing? What type of structure do you envision your community to have?
* **Understand your community interests/needs/concerns –** how will you gauge what your community may need out of this type of organizing?
* **Determine scope –** what is the overarching purpose that your community organizing will achieve? How are you determining this purpose? What is it that community organizers will do? What will they not do?
  + For example, is your group focused on communicating/alerting one another of disasters? Inventorying households for needs, skills, and resources as part of your preparedness efforts? Preparedness education for community members? Mitigation? Other?
* **Determine goals** **and strategies** – what are the intended outcomes of organizing? How will you achieve these?
* **Determine how you want to share out information and communicate** – what methods will you use to share information and communicate with your community?
* **Determine how you’ll conduct outreach and create touch points** – what methods do you want to use to touch in with people, and how often do you want to have touchpoints?

**Outreach**

* Engage with community members to gather input, and share out information.
* Gather contact information and figure out community expectations around sharing this information.
* Welcome new neighbors to the community.
* Set and advertise your touch point methods for your community (meetings, newsletters, posting boards, webpages, etc).
* Consider how you will make sure you’re able to make outreach accessible.

**Information Sharing and Communications**

* Consider what other information your community may be interested in sharing with one another, and how you would plan to share this info – this could be things like support needs or skills and resources that people are willing to offer to one another.
  + Examples could include things like:
    - Children
    - Pets
    - Access and functional needs
    - Individuals with specialized skills who are willing to use them support others
    - Personally owned resources individuals are willing to share/support others with
* If you want to share additional information between community members, consider how you will do this – you could do so by writing on a map, creating a personalized neighborhood map (info on one way to do so can be found [here](https://www.howtogeek.com/664890/how-to-create-a-custom-map-in-google-maps/)), creating a spreadsheet, etc.
  + For an example map/types of info you may want to include, click [here](https://www.google.com/maps/d/u/0/edit?mid=1xJO6RDowSlF39p6I6guJc-_ebHUYA6c&usp=sharing).
* Determine how you’ll structure communications with one another in the event of a disaster. Will you use a contact tree? A buddy system? Pick a method that will work well for your community.
* Think about how you’ll onboard new people/ensure community members who have bought in to the idea understand their role/what to expect.
* Think about how you can ensure that communication is accessible.

**Maintenance**

* Think about how you will maintain your community organization efforts – consider how often touch points are needed, what information or efforts that need to adjust as you go to fit your community’s needs, etc.
* Consider attending one of the Disaster Strong preparedness trainings offered by Boulder Office of Disaster Management (Boulder ODM) to increase your preparedness knowledge. Upcoming workshops can be found here: <https://boulderodm.gov/category/event/>
  + \*To schedule a training specifically for your community on disaster preparedness, contact Boulder ODM Coordinator Monika Weber at [mweber@bouldercounty.gov](mailto:mweber@bouldercounty.gov) to inquire about availability. We ask that all groups making requests have a minimum of 10 people who will be in attendance.