

## **8. PUBLIC INFORMATION AWARENESS AND EDUCATION**

## 8.1 Public Information

The OA Coordinator along with the agency/jurisdiction will work collaboratively to coordinate a unified public information process. This process will include public awareness and education, and communication plans and protocols.

The Emergency Public Information (EPI) Annex describes the process for the OA to work collectively to disseminate information and instructions to the public.

For additional information please see Section 10, Functional Annexes-EPI Plan

## 8.2 Public Awareness and Education

Agencies/jurisdictions within the OA are responsible for providing pre-incident awareness and education programs, and community outreach programs. These programs must be viewed as equal in importance to all other preparation for emergencies and receive an adequate level of planning. OEM is responsible to coordinate and support agencies/jurisdictions within the OA to achieve this goal.

### 8.2.1 Pre-Incident Awareness and Education

These are some of the pre-incident awareness and education programs, communication plans and protocols conducted within the OA:

- **OA Preparedness Expos:** Participate and host emergency preparedness expos as part of an ongoing community outreach program
- **Public Service Announcements on Preparedness/Alerts/Warnings:** Provide Public Service announcements to the community through the media
- **Community meetings:** Brings together government and the community by providing all-hazards emergency preparedness and awareness programs and addresses community concerns and questions
- **Community Emergency Response Team (CERT):** Provide CERT training to communities to equip them to better prepare and respond to emergency situations. When emergencies happen, CERT members can give critical support to first responders, provide immediate assistance to victims, and organize spontaneous volunteers at a disaster site. CERT members can also help with non-emergency projects that help improve the safety of the community.

**Emergency Survival Program (ESP):** Conduct public education campaigns for all hazards through the ESP program and other materials such as Emergency Survival Guides

## 8.2.2 Post-Incident Awareness

The following are examples of post-incident awareness programs and services used by agencies/jurisdictions available to the public immediately following an emergency and during a sustained response.

- **Use of 2-1-1 Information and Referral Services:** 2-1-1 supplements the public information programs. 2-1-1 is an information and referral service to increase the public's access to vital emergency-related information, including evacuation routes, shelter locations, road closures, referrals to essential health and social services. The 2-1-1 program improves access to government and non-profit community services for people who are most at risk, including older adults, people with disabilities, and other access and functional needs, non-English speaking, those incapacitated by the disaster and people new to their communities.
- **Non-Governmental Organizations Assistance (NGO):** Many NGOs, such as the ARC, the Mennonite Disaster Services and the Salvation Army, provide recovery assistance to individuals, families and community organizations. This may include assistance for shelter, food, clothing, and housing reconstruction.
- **Local Assistance Centers (LAC):** The LAC provides a single facility at which individuals, families and businesses can access available disaster assistance programs and services.

To undertake these tasks, all OA PIO's must work together and with media representatives to disseminate information and instructions to the public when emergencies occur.

See Section 10, Functional Annexes-EPI Plan