

Organizational Tabletop Exercises

Customizable Hazard-Specific Scenarios

Earthquake | Winter Storms | Flood | Wildfire | Tornado | Hurricane


Slide Instructions

- ★ The following slides include sample tabletop exercises for the following six hazards: earthquakes, winter storms, floods, wildfires, tornadoes, and hurricanes.
- ★ The Objectives slide (slide #3) and the General Ground Rules slide (slide #4) are relevant for all hazards.
- ★ Once you have chosen your hazard and before you begin your exercise, delete the other hazard-specific slides.
- ★ To assist you in the exercise, you will find questions and prompts in the notes section of this slide deck.

PDF Form Instructions

- ★ Throughout the document, there will be drop-down menus and fillable form fields for you to customize your own presentation.
- ★ The description for each form field can be found by hovering over the field in question.



- ★ When you save your PDF, it will retain the information in the filled form fields, but they may be edited in future if needed.
- ★ The “notes” pages from the PowerPoint can be read by clicking on the transparent callout logo [] in the upper right-hand corner of the page.

Objectives

- ★ Discuss a hazard-specific scenario to determine how our organization would respond during a/an _____, paying special attention to our emergency response plan, capabilities, and staff responsibilities.
Make selection from drop-down menu
- ★ Identify any weaknesses in our plan, consider the best ways to respond to our employees' and customers' needs, and ensure our facility is operational as soon as possible after the event.
- ★ Debrief after the scenario to improve our response to emergencies and disasters and trouble shoot any other unresolved questions.

General Ground Rules

- ★ This is a training exercise, not a test, so let's keep it fun and positive.
- ★ We've identified who is a participant and who is an observer. Observers are asked to hold all comments and questions until after the scenario, at which point we'll open the discussion to the whole team. Please speak up if you're unclear about your role.
- ★ A scenario will be presented followed by related questions.
- ★ All participants' thoughts and ideas are encouraged ... please speak up!



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Organizational Tabletop Exercise

Earthquake Scenario

Date

Scenario Location

Earthquake Scenario

Tuesday, 10:30 a.m.: Residents in _____ and the surrounding area experience a magnitude 6.5 earthquake along the _____.

Initial reports estimate the quake to have been felt for a 60-mile radius around the epicenter. The quake causes several ruptures of major highways and numerous bridges, and overpasses suffer damage. The strong shaking also sends landslides across rails and along roads, stranding motorists. Upwards of 60 percent of local residents are without power, and a water main break near the center of town causes localized flooding. Several residents report serious injuries, mostly from car accidents, and crush or puncture wounds from falling debris. Homes, schools, hospitals, and other buildings sustain structural damage across the area with some people trapped in the debris. At 11:28 am, an aftershock occurs 7 miles north of _____ causing additional transportation infrastructure damage and panic among residents. Our facility(ies) appear to have suffered structural damage and at least five _____ are reported missing.

Make selection from drop-down menu

Gather Information

Key Themes:

- ★ Employee safety and accountability
- ★ Employee notification and communication plan
- ★ Assessing potentially affected operational components
- ★ Decision-making and decision makers

Earthquake Scenario Update #1

Wednesday, 8:00 a.m.: Search and rescue efforts are ongoing as reports of people trapped in the debris continue. Utility companies are working around the clock to restore services, but most people lack electricity, natural gas, and water. American Red Cross shelters open at public schools and undamaged recreation centers, where food, water, and personal items are available. The Department of Public Works is clearing main roadways. Law enforcement is managing checkpoints at the most heavily damaged areas. The fire chief is asking people to leave heavily affected areas and stay out of all buildings within a 5-mile radius of the epicenter until structural engineers can assess the damage and clear the buildings for occupancy.

Take Action

Key Themes:

- ★ The next 12-24 hours: decision-making and decision makers
- ★ Employee notifications and communications
- ★ Initial damage assessment

Earthquake Scenario Update #2

Monday, 8:00 a.m.: More than 6,500 homes and businesses suffered moderate to major damage. Parts of major highways and roadways, and dozens of bridges and overpasses require major repairs and debris removal. Many households are still without potable water and power. Approximately 5,000 families are displaced from households and shelter. Most schools and public buildings remain closed at this time. You are able to access your facility(ies) for an initial damage assessment. There is significant damage to the structure of the building(s) and based on the initial inspection, your facility will not be operational in any capacity for at least 3 months.

NOTE: For purposes of this exercise, if you have more than one facility, it is the primary center of operations that will be down for three or more months.

Key Themes:

- ★ Continuity of operations; back-up systems
- ★ Critical operations
- ★ Property damage
- ★ Employee communications
- ★ Employee work status and key personnel
- ★ Critical community services
- ★ Vital business documents
- ★ Community support

Hotwash

- ★ Ask both Participants and Observers to help identify organizational strengths and weaknesses, priorities, and ideas to make improvements.
- ★ Suggested prompts:
 1. What strengths in your workplace's emergency plans did this exercise identify?
 2. What weaknesses in your workplace's emergency plans did this exercise expose?
 3. What unanticipated issues arose during the exercise?
 4. What gaps were identified?
 5. What are some high-priority issues that should be addressed?
 6. What are some new ideas and recommendations for improvement?

Next Steps

- ★ Now that you have completed your Tabletop Exercise (TTX) for an Earthquake Scenario, consider these additional action items:
 - Draft a report on results from TTX;
 - Assign leads within the organization to address gaps;
 - Communicate the steps you are taking to your entire organization.

- ★ For more information, log on to www.ready.gov/prepare.



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Organizational Tabletop Exercise

Winter Storm Scenario

_____ | _____
Date

Scenario Location

Winter Storm Scenario

Sunday, 5:00 p.m.: The National Weather Service (NWS) detects a cold front moving toward _____
Name of Community. Weather officials urge citizens to prepare for a large storm that will likely begin in the next 24 hours. A winter storm warning is issued by the NWS for _____
Name of Community as well as all surrounding areas within 100 miles. The NWS predicts light snow that will likely mix with or change to sleet or freezing rain with significant icing possible by tomorrow afternoon. Ice accumulation will likely be between 1/2 and 1 inch, with highest icing potential near downtown _____
Name of Community. The public is advised to expect widespread power outages, damaged trees, and treacherous road conditions because of the ice storm. Local schools are beginning to announce closures for Monday.

Gather Information

Key Themes:

- ★ Monitoring of weather conditions
- ★ Employee notification and communication plan
- ★ Assessing potentially affected operational components
- ★ Decision-making and decision makers



Winter Storm Scenario Update #1

Monday, 1:00 p.m.: Precipitation begins as wet snow for several hours, changes to freezing drizzle, and then freezing rain. Ice up to 1 inch thick accumulates on roads, sidewalks, trees, power lines, and houses. Wind gusts up to 40 miles per hour are reported in the area. Authorities are attempting to clear the major roadways, but the dangerous conditions make it nearly impossible to keep even the largest vehicles on the road. Nearly all roads are impassable. Emergency response vehicles are unable to respond to calls for assistance. Heavy accumulation of ice and wet snow causes dozens of trees to fall, taking down power lines. Power outages are widespread. Your school district has extended closures until Thursday; all local government buildings are closed.

Prepare

Key Themes:

- ★ Contingency planning based on weather updates
- ★ Employee notifications and communications
- ★ Employee work status and key personnel
- ★ Protocol for early closure
- ★ Process for accounting for employees & visitors
- ★ The next 24-36 hours: decision-making and decision makers

Winter Storm Scenario Update #2

Tuesday, 8:00 a.m.: As the day begins, 1 inch of ice remains underneath the snow covering. Several major roads have been cleared, but most secondary roads remain impassable. Most businesses remain closed, including many gas stations, banks, and grocery stores. Many cell towers were damaged during the storm and phone service remains spotty. _____ is still overwhelmed; so much of the infrastructure—power lines and poles—is damaged that they estimate it may take a week or more to completely restore power to all affected areas. You are not able to access your facility to determine if there has been any damage.

Name of Local Utility

Take Action

Key Themes:

- ★ Priorities and actions
- ★ Employee notifications and communications
- ★ Continuity of operations; back-up systems
- ★ Property damage

Winter Storm Scenario Update #3

Saturday, 8:00 a.m.: Across the area, ice and snow are beginning to melt. Temperatures have remained in the 40s for the past several days. Utility crews from across the country are working around the clock to restore electricity to the area but there was so much damage, they estimate it could take an additional week or more to fully restore power. Many schools remain closed and many streets are still littered with debris. You are finally able to check on your facility and find serious water damage to your lower level from flooding due to frozen pipes. Your storage area for records has flooded, as well as the area your IT and communications hardware is housed.

Key Themes:

- ★ Continuity of Operations
- ★ Critical community services
- ★ Employee communications
- ★ Employee work status
- ★ Vital business documents
- ★ Community support

Hotwash

- ★ Ask both Participants and Observers to help identify organizational strengths and weaknesses, priorities, and ideas to make improvements.
- ★ Suggested prompts:
 1. What strengths in your workplace's emergency plans did this exercise identify?
 2. What weaknesses in your workplace's emergency plans did this exercise expose?
 3. What unanticipated issues arose during the exercise?
 4. What gaps were identified?
 5. What are some high-priority issues that should be addressed?
 6. What are some new ideas and recommendations for improvement?

Next Steps

- ★ Now that you have completed your Tabletop Exercise (TTX) for a Winter Weather Scenario, consider these additional action items:
 - Draft a report on results from TTX;
 - Assign leads within the organization to address gaps;
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Organizational Tabletop Exercise

Flood Scenario

Date

Scenario Location

Flood Scenario

Tuesday, 10:00 a.m.: Heavy rains over the past several days have saturated the ground, leaving waterways in the area at dangerously high levels. The National Weather Service issues a Flood Watch for _____ . The forecast calls for additional heavy rainfall, perhaps as much as 4–6 inches during the next 72 hours. The primary road used to access the facility is flooded and detoured.

Name of Community



Gather Information

Key Themes:

- ★ Monitoring of weather conditions
- ★ Employee notification and communication plan
- ★ Assessing potentially affected operational components
- ★ Decision-making and decision makers

Flood Scenario Update # 1

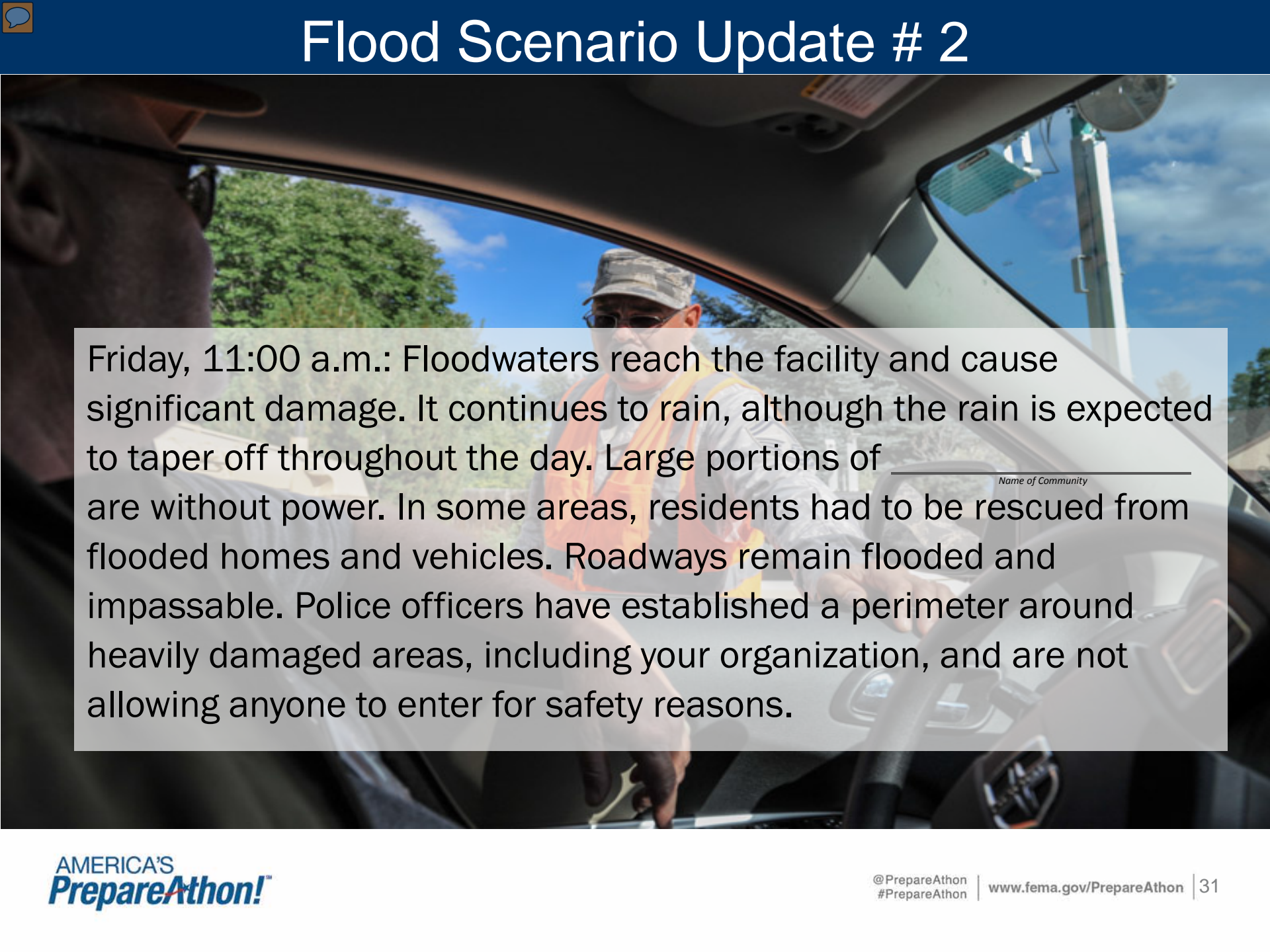
Thursday, 12:00 p.m.: As the rain continues to fall, the National Weather Service issues a Flood Warning for _____ and estimates that major flooding will occur within 12 hours. Areas around the facility are experiencing minor flooding, including the parking lot/garage and main entrance. There are reports from maintenance staff of water in the lower level. The mayor has issued a voluntary evacuation for _____ and, as a result, many employees and volunteers are asking to return home or are not coming to work at all. In addition, many local schools and child care facilities are closing early today. Delivery drivers are unable to access your facility and, as such, you are not receiving critical shipments.

Prepare

Key Themes:

- ★ Contingency planning based on weather updates
- ★ Employee notifications and communications
- ★ Employee work status and key personnel
- ★ Protocol for early closure
- ★ Process for accounting for employees & visitors
- ★ The next 24 hours: decision-making and decision makers

Flood Scenario Update # 2

A person wearing a grey cap, sunglasses, and a high-visibility orange vest is looking out of the driver's side window of a vehicle. The background shows a clear blue sky and green trees. The scene is viewed from inside the vehicle, with the steering wheel and dashboard visible in the foreground.

Friday, 11:00 a.m.: Floodwaters reach the facility and cause significant damage. It continues to rain, although the rain is expected to taper off throughout the day. Large portions of _____ are without power. In some areas, residents had to be rescued from flooded homes and vehicles. Roadways remain flooded and impassable. Police officers have established a perimeter around heavily damaged areas, including your organization, and are not allowing anyone to enter for safety reasons.

Name of Community

Take Action

Key Themes:

- ★ Immediate actions and priorities
- ★ Continuity of operations; back-up systems
- ★ Accounting for employees and visitors
- ★ Critical operations
- ★ Property damage
- ★ Reporting of injuries

Flood Scenario Update # 3

Wednesday, 4 p.m.: Floodwaters are beginning to recede from much of _____ . Several major roadways are open, including those that access your facility. Residents have begun to return home and police have lifted restrictions on travel in damaged areas. Several major schools remain closed, and some areas in the community still do not have power. You are able to access your facility and inspect the damage. There is significant flood damage to the lowest level and much of your IT infrastructure is not functioning. Based on the inspection, it is determined that your facility will not be operational for at least 3 weeks.

Key Themes:

- ★ Immediate actions and priorities
- ★ Critical community services
- ★ Employee communications
- ★ Employee work status
- ★ Vital business documents
- ★ Community support

Hotwash

- ★ Ask both Participants and Observers to help identify organizational strengths and weaknesses, priorities, and ideas to make improvements.
- ★ Suggested prompts:
 1. What strengths in your workplace's emergency plans did this exercise identify?
 2. What weaknesses in your workplace's emergency plans did this exercise expose?
 3. What unanticipated issues arose during the exercise?
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 6. What are some new ideas and recommendations for improvement?

Next Steps

- ★ Now that you have completed your Tabletop Exercise (TTX) for a Flood Scenario, consider these additional action items:
 - Draft a report on results from TTX;
 - Assign leads within the organization to address gaps;
 - Communicate the steps you are taking to your entire organization.

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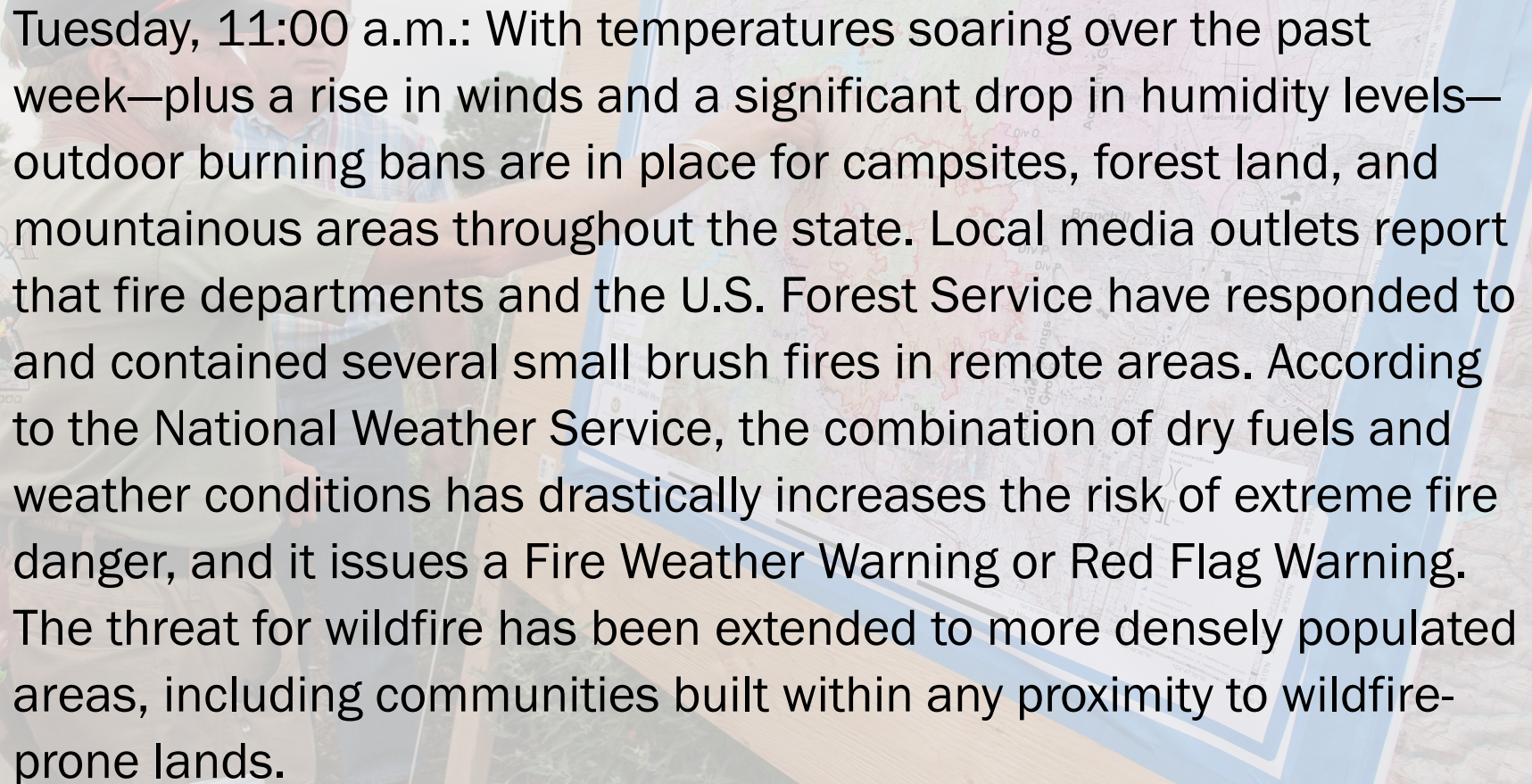
Organizational Tabletop Exercise

Wildfire Scenario (Workplaces)

_____ | _____
Date

Scenario Location

Wildfire Scenario



Tuesday, 11:00 a.m.: With temperatures soaring over the past week—plus a rise in winds and a significant drop in humidity levels—outdoor burning bans are in place for campsites, forest land, and mountainous areas throughout the state. Local media outlets report that fire departments and the U.S. Forest Service have responded to and contained several small brush fires in remote areas. According to the National Weather Service, the combination of dry fuels and weather conditions has drastically increases the risk of extreme fire danger, and it issues a Fire Weather Warning or Red Flag Warning. The threat for wildfire has been extended to more densely populated areas, including communities built within any proximity to wildfire-prone lands.

Gather Information

Key Themes:

- ★ Monitoring of weather conditions
- ★ Employee notification and communication plan
- ★ Assessing potentially affected operational components
- ★ Decision-making and decision makers

Wildfire Scenario Update # 1

Tuesday, 3:00 p.m.: The U.S. Forest Service spots a fire 40 miles outside of town. The fire is spreading rapidly, threatening numerous acres of forest and moving in the direction of _____
Name of Community. Several buildings have already burned on properties outside of _____
Name of Community; heavy smoke is reducing visibility and air quality, and a major electrical transformer is destroyed, causing widespread power outages. The local fire chief warns that at the fire's current rate of spread, it will reach residential and business areas within 24 hours if not contained. A mandatory evacuation is issued for _____,
Name of Community which includes your workplace. Schools are closed and roads throughout the area are jammed with people trying to leave.

Prepare & Take Action

Key Themes:

- ★ Employee notifications and communications
- ★ Employee work status and key personnel
- ★ Protocol for early closure
- ★ Process for accounting for employees & visitors
- ★ The next 24 hours: decision-making and decision makers

Wildfire Scenario Update # 2

Thursday, 8:00 a.m.: Although the fire continues to burn in remote areas, firefighters have made significant progress in recent days, aided by unexpected rain showers and calmer winds. Evacuation orders have been lifted for _____, but hundreds of people remain in shelters, awaiting permission to return to their homes. Local law enforcement has restricted access to heavily damaged areas and established a curfew in some portions of the community to prevent looting. Power remains out in several major residential areas. You are granted permission to inspect the damage to your facility and discover extensive fire and smoke damage to three-quarters of your space. Equipment, including computers, servers, and telecommunications hardware, is badly damaged. Your records storage area has significant fire damage.

Key Themes:

- ★ Immediate actions and priorities
- ★ Critical community services
- ★ Employee communications
- ★ Employee work status
- ★ Vital business documents
- ★ Community support

Hotwash

- ★ Ask both Participants and Observers to help identify organizational strengths and weaknesses, priorities, and ideas to make improvements.
- ★ Suggested prompts:
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 3. What unanticipated issues arose during the exercise?
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 5. What are some high-priority issues that should be addressed?
 6. What are some new ideas and recommendations for improvement?

Next Steps

- ★ Now that you have completed your Tabletop Exercise (TTX) for a Wildfire Scenario, consider these additional action items:
 - Draft a report on results from TTX;
 - Assign leads within the organization to address gaps;
 - Communicate the steps you are taking to people across your workplace.

- ★ For more information, log on to www.ready.gov/prepare.

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Organizational Tabletop Exercise

Tornado Scenario

Date

Scenario Location

Tornado Scenario

Monday, 12:23 p.m.: The National Weather Service (NWS) has issued a Tornado Watch for your area. A large line of powerful thunderstorms is approaching your area and conditions are favorable for tornadoes to develop.

Gather Information

Key Themes:

- ★ Monitoring of weather conditions
- ★ Employee notification and communication plan
- ★ Assessing potentially affected operational components
- ★ Decision-making and decision makers

Tornado Scenario Update # 1

1:05 p.m.: A large tornado, initially thought to be an Enhanced Fujita (EF) scale EF3, has hit _____, approximately 10 miles southwest of here. The NWS reports that the storm system responsible for this tornado is headed directly toward your area and has issued an immediate Tornado Warning for _____ and the surrounding area.

Name of town Southwest of Community

Name of Community

Prepare

Key Themes:

- ★ Employee notifications and communications
- ★ Shelter-in-place locations & policies
- ★ Supplies
- ★ Family preparedness awareness

Tornado Scenario Update # 2

1:18 p.m.: A large tornado touches down in the outskirts of _____ near a highly populated neighborhood. You hear a loud rumbling noise, the power goes out, and the building begins to vibrate. You hear the sound of breaking glass and flying debris. The sound intensifies and then gradually fades.

Name of Community

Take Action

Key Themes:

- ★ Immediate actions and priorities
- ★ Evacuation or shelter-in-place?
- ★ Supplies and first aid training
- ★ Accounting for employees and visitors
- ★ Critical operations

Tornado Scenario Update # 3

1:38 p.m.: The tornado, determined to be an EF3, has damaged approximately 300 homes and businesses in _____ .
Name of Community

At least 50 people have various injuries, and an unknown number of people are missing. Your facility has suffered extensive damage and at least five employees are injured and two are missing. Search and rescue efforts are ongoing. The mayor and fire chief are asking people to leave the affected areas and not return until the area has been declared safe.

Key Themes:

- ★ Immediate actions and priorities
- ★ Critical community services
- ★ Employee communications
- ★ Employee work status
- ★ Vital business documents
- ★ Community support

Hotwash

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 6. What are some new ideas and recommendations for improvement?

Next Steps

- ★ Now that you have completed your Tabletop Exercise (TTX) for a Tornado Scenario, consider these additional action items:
 - Draft a report on results from TTX;
 - Assign leads within the organization to address gaps;
 - Communicate the steps you are taking to the people across your workplace.

- ★ For more information, log on to www.ready.gov/prepare.

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Organizational Tabletop Exercise

Hurricane Scenario (Workplaces)

Date

Scenario Location

Hurricane Scenario

Monday, 8:00 a.m.: The National Hurricane Center reported that after a week in warm open waters, Hurricane Milo is approximately 200 miles off the coast of _____
Name of Local Shoreline. The local office of the National Hurricane Center issued a hurricane watch for large portions of the coast, including _____
Name of Community. Currently a Category 1 hurricane, Milo continues to gain strength and is projected to make landfall within 72 hours. Forecasters are already warning of the potential for this storm to become an extremely powerful Category 4 hurricane.

Gather Information

Key Themes:

- ★ Monitoring of weather conditions
- ★ Employee notification and communication plan
- ★ Assessing potentially affected operational components
- ★ Decision-making and decision makers

Hurricane Scenario Update # 1

Tuesday, 12:00 p.m.: The storm has strengthened and the National Hurricane Center issues a Hurricane Warning for _____ .
Name of Community

Hurricane Milo is a Category 3 storm, projected to make landfall in our area within the next 36 hours. A storm surge of 13 to 18 feet is forecast near and to the east of where the center will make landfall. The governor has declared a state of emergency and issues an evacuation order for our area. As a result, many employees and volunteers are asking to return home or are not coming to work at all. In addition, many local schools and childcare facilities are closing early today. Several major roadways are impassable due to traffic from the evacuation.

Prepare

Key Themes:

- ★ Contingency planning based on weather updates
- ★ Employee notifications and communications
- ★ Employee work status and key personnel
- ★ Protocol for early closure
- ★ Process for accounting for employees & visitors
- ★ The next 36 hours: decision-making and decision makers

Hurricane Scenario Update # 2

Thursday, 9:00 a.m.: Hurricane Milo has made landfall as a Category 4 storm 10 miles south of _____ with sustained winds of 137 mph. The initial storm surge was recorded at 16 feet, with an additional 5–8 inches of rain falling in the past 24 hours. As a result, local waterways are now 10 feet above flood stage. Damage reported by the media includes flooded homes and businesses across a widespread area, flooded and debris-clogged roadways, and large areas without power.

Take Action

Key Themes:

- ★ Immediate actions and priorities
- ★ Continuity of operations; back-up systems
- ★ Accounting for employees and visitors
- ★ Critical operations
- ★ Property damage
- ★ Reporting of injuries

Hurricane Scenario Update # 3

Saturday, 7 p.m.: As the winds decrease and the rain tapers off, _____ is able to assess the damage from Milo.

Name of Community

Water is slowly receding, allowing at least one lane of traffic on several major roads. Local law enforcement has restricted access to heavily damaged areas and has established a curfew in some portions of the community to prevent looting. Some residents have been permitted to return home, though thousands remain in temporary shelters. Several major schools remain closed, and large areas of the community still do not have power. You are able to access your facility and inspect the damage. There is significant flood damage to the lowest levels and much of your IT infrastructure is not functioning. Several trees have fallen into the main entrance, tearing a large hole in the roof and shattering windows. Based on a preliminary damage assessment, it is expected that your facility will not be operational for at least 3 weeks.

Key Themes:

- ★ Immediate actions and priorities
- ★ Critical community services
- ★ Employee communications
- ★ Employee work status
- ★ Vital business documents
- ★ Community support

Hotwash

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 6. What are some new ideas and recommendations for improvement?

Next Steps

- ★ Now that you have completed your Tabletop Exercise (TTX) for a Hurricane Scenario, consider these additional action items:
 - Draft a report on results from TTX;
 - Assign leads within the organization to address gaps;
 - Communicate the steps you are taking to the people across your workplace.

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