

Suggested priorities for EP Coordinator

A recent article in the CSDA newsletter emphasized the importance of a communications strategy for special districts, and nowhere is that more important than Kensington. Improvement in mass communications will get the word out faster, cheaper, and more effectively to more residents than other important actions can. Some options:

Complete overhaul of the District website (substance, not style)

-- At present the "Announcements" section of "News & Events" is populated by a very few, mostly self-serving notices of district awards and new firetrucks, most greatly outdated. This should be replaced by announcements related to what the District is doing to improve the safety of residents, including new advances, instructions about new modifications especially related to evacuations, new and upcoming initiatives, coordination with the Police, and where else to go on the website for important information.

-- "Resources" currently features "Links" and "Reports." The "Links" provide only names of sites with no guidance on what one would find there or why it would be valuable; there is also no organization or hierarchy of importance to the listing. This needs to be more user-friendly and expanded to truly useful sites. "Reports" currently contains only the documents relevant to the Traffic Evacuation Study. The Board has been presented with other analyses of the hazards of spreading fires and the somewhat perilous prospect of evacuating the streets. These and other reports should be included.

"Resources" is too vague a category. We recommend to retitle it "Emergency Preparedness" with subsections that contain information on earthquake preparedness, wildfire preparedness, evacuation, and so on. "Links" can be largely subsumed within these subsections. "Reports" can contain traffic reports, various publications from the County, EC, CalFire, etc. There is a wealth of information on the website but it is so poorly organized that it is impossible to find.

-- Much more has to be provided about topics such as (1) neighborhood organization in preparation for evacuation and earthquake; (2) vegetation management and mitigation; (3) house hardening; (4) procurement of emergency supplies from go-bags to radios; (5) planning for evacuation routes, assembly points, emergency contact people; (6) emergency contacts in the area and how to report incidents or find out about them; (7) monitoring real-time conditions during DWEs and other hazards; etc. (Much of this can be lifted from the brochure distributed to Kensington residents in about 2019.)

-- Advice about emergency supplies for residents to acquire: radios, go-bag supplies, water and food, electric storage batteries, headlamps, etc.

-- There needs to be a main section that contains all the relevant District documents that are fundamental to District business: the Policies and Procedures Manual (in fully updated form), the latest version of the Fire Contract with EC; the Traffic Evacuation Report; etc. This should not be for generic preparedness documents imported from elsewhere.

Developing messages through media

- Print: *The Outlook* and other venues
- NextDoor, District email, Twitter, FaceBook
- "Community Programs" really needs an overhaul

Organizing neighborhoods

Obviously this can't be done until some COVID-19 restrictions are lifted.

- CERT training is not part of this job; residents can be encouraged to take CERT training in EC. Can encourage the "one-day boot camp" if a full course is impracticable for people.
- It is not part of the Coordinator's job to organize evacuation drills; that responsibility is with the Police and Fire Departments. The Coordinator can help, like EPC members, with implementation as requested.
- Same with any planned "tabletop exercises" regarding public safety, evacuation, etc.

What the Coordinator encourages in neighborhoods:

- Get to know your neighbors and the limitations of some; make plans to evacuate them
- Make sure you have supplies in your home, an evacuation plan, an assembly point, etc.
- Educate about off-street parking during DWEs and Fire Season in general
- Provide information about house-hardening, FireSafe neighborhoods, etc.