



Emergency Planning doesn't Freeze in the Winter!

It's February and cold outside. What to do? While training may be continuous, who wants to exercise or drill in this weather? It's time to review your community's emergency plan¹. Some key components to an effective community-based emergency management plan are outlined below. Stay warm and review, critique and improve your plan today. Map out your community's incident response strategies associated with releases of hazardous materials.

- 1. Does your plan properly define your community as it looks today?**
- 2. Do the preparedness and response goals of your plan provide for the protection of human health, property and the environment?**
- 3. Use the all-hazards approach. Determine the risks and hazards your community faces. Consider historic natural and man-made incidents. A vulnerability assessment will help you with your prioritization².**
- 4. Insure that the emergency management preparedness personnel and emergency response teams identified in your plan are current and accurate³. Insure all mutual aid agreements are up-to-date.**
- 5. Does your plan address the chemicals that you might have to deal with? Use your tier 2 data, commodity flow & critical infrastructure information and community demographic to determine if your plan address your community's needs. Ensure that you plan thoroughly attends to all preparedness issues related to vulnerable populations.**
- 6. Account for the current capacities and capabilities available to your community. Are business and industry response groups and special equipment included in your plan? Make a commitment to communicate with all agencies that might be involved in a hazmat response in your community to promote teamwork.**
- 7. Review and update all maps, call down lists, SOPs and checklists, ICS & ESF listings and organizational charts.**
- 8. Ensure that your plan integrates with other applicable plans such as regional and state plans. Describe your plan's relationship to other regional emergency plans and state Hazardous Material Plan. How do the plans tie together, what triggers use of larger plan and how is this done?**

Remember, your plan serves important secondary functions including: defining critical training needs, improving decision making, clarifying roles and responsibilities, identifying areas where mitigation efforts are warranted, establishing and communicating technical-based standards which address the public concerns associated with hazardous materials, reducing uncertainty and operating risks, and minimizing liability. It's the planning process that counts!

¹ Check with your SERC and EMA to see if funding is available to support your review process. Checklists and other guides will also assist you during the review process.

² In order for your plan to be an effective management tool, it is imperative that specific credible incident scenarios be assessed proactively. Information gained during this assessment can then be used to classify precise emergency response resource needs such as manpower, material and equipment.

³ Your plan should clearly identify all agencies that might be involved in a hazmat response in your community.