

November 7, 2022 EPO Meeting Summary

Solving EPO Challenges Together

The following is a summary of the Comments and Chat remarks from our last meeting for 2022:

Bring Your Resident and EPO Team Challenges and Let's Solve Them Together

Greatest Challenges

How do you deal with disengaged resident neighbors?

Most thoughts on this challenge were related continuing to make contact by organizing events, meetings, and drills and most importantly give them information they didn't have before.

Suggestions for making contact:

- Make personal contact with all new entry residents with a welcome letter and information about EPO
- Flyers
- Emails
- Plan entry social events that include helpful preparedness information and facts
- Organize a drill that also includes residents getting to know one another
- Have residents share information about their experiences in a disaster situation so others can begin to relate and understand the importance of being prepared

Do you have a 'buddy' system for neighbors with special needs?

Overwhelmingly, this appeared to be a big issue with some very common solutions:

Entry coordinators should try to know which neighbors are going to need help evacuating or sheltering in place. Knowing who needs help is key to finding neighbors who will be willing to help those that need it. In a major disaster situation, GRF is not going to be present or available to provide help so knowing who needs help and asking others to buddy up will be key to safely helping everyone.

It's critical that the family and caregivers of those with mobility or other disabilities have their own plan for helping those residents in the event of a disaster. Get those families together and help them build a plan.

Those with special needs can reach out to building neighbors and ask for help.

Do you have updated resident information forms for all your residents?

This challenge requires that the Entry Coordinator (and Building coordinators in bigger entries) continue to be aware of adds, moves, and changes to resident status.

The “New Resident Introduction Letter” on the Coordinator Resources page on the EPO website is a great way to gather the information you will need for each of your entry residents. Many Coordinators provide other helpful documents:

- Trash Tips
- Mutual Map
- An “OK/HELP” window sign (with HELP on one side and OK on the other)
- Evacuation Notice to post on your door if you evacuate
- Any other items that seem useful for making it an EPO Welcome Package
- Have a dedicated team to monitor new residents coming in.

Some mutuals will provide information on new neighbors in an entry.

Do you have a neighborhood gathering place following a disaster or emergency?

Approximately 15% of attendees responded that, yes, they did have a gathering place and have communicated that to their residents.

They were typically:

- Carports
- Laundry rooms
- Open spaces within the entry
- Garden areas

If any of these are damaged, residents can collect in a safe outdoor area after a disaster event to report status

Do your neighbors know their Evacuation Zone number?

30+% of attendees were confident that their residents knew their Evacuation zone number.

Anyone who does not know their zone number can find it by looking for the bottom of the sign on their entry sign. The evacuation zone is listed as “WCR-00X” (where X varies from 1 through 8).

Evacuation zones are also listed in the front section of the Rossmoor phone directory.

Residents can get a zone map at the Public Safety office in the Creekside complex. You can call them at Security/Public Safety Office: (925) 988-7841.

Are your neighbors all opted into the three major emergency alert systems?

The group was not clear about which are the three major alert systems. The following is a list of many:

- Rossmoor Nixle: Go the bottom of the EPO home page for the Nixle link OR visit: <http://local.nixle.com/signup/widget/g/2818>.
- Contra Costa County Community Warning System: <https://cwsalerts.com>
- City of Walnut Creek Emergency Alert System: WCAAlerts website: <https://member.everbridge.net/index/892807736723919#/signup>
- Walnut Creek Nixle: Text your zip code to 888777 or visit <http://local.nixle.com/zipcode/94595>
- MYShakes Application for Earthquake warnings. The app is available on both Androids and iPhones.

All of these and more will be in the Public Safety Residents Guide to Wildfire Preparedness and Evacuation. This document is being produced by Tom Cashion and will be delivered to every manor in early Spring 2023.

There are several other ways to get information in the case of a disaster: TV, phone alerts and radio. If the event is widespread enough you might not have cell service or electricity so it was suggested that having a small battery operated transistor radio with you emergency supplies is helpful to stay connected. Some favorite all news channels are:

- NPR 88.5 AM
- KCBS 740 AM and 106.9 FM.

Many residents have FRS (Family Radio Systems) radios – they work like a walkie talkie. Using channels 8 you can communicate with other neighbors and using channels 12 and 13 you can communicate with Rossmoor Area CERT if they have been activated. CB and Ham radios, for those who have them, will allow great communication and information opportunities. If CERT is activated they will be setting up communications with the City of Walnut Creek and using HAM radios to supply information about what our status is to first responders.

How do you re-energize a local EPO team that may be struggling?

There were several excellent ideas about how to re-energize:

Organize a drill and use it to get to know new neighbors

Plan a demonstration of some sort: Invite the Fire Department to demonstrate how to use a fire extinguisher, have a show and tell about what to have in your evacuation Go Bag, review the contents for Shelter in Place supplies, plan a ‘themed’ social get together like a holiday celebration at your gathering place and make it a pot luck, summer picnic potluck-style.

How do you promote social cohesion in your entry or street without an entry?

A few areas in Rossmoor: Eagle Ridge, Lakeshire Drive, Valley Oaks and parts of Rossmoor Parkway and Tice Creek Drive have sections or are completely without specified entries. In those areas the Entry coordinators have divided them in to areas and have drills, meetings and social events so their residents are aware of which manors and homes are part of a specific area. Eagle Ridge has done a particularly good job of this and have their own website to communicate with residents.

What is the greatest challenge you and your team face?

All of these challenges that were discussed impact each team in varied ways. Some common themes:

- Be Social
- Always have a reason to gather
- Rely on the EPO website where there is a fantastic amount of information regarding all things related to emergency preparedness
- Keep contact information up to date

If you are interested in more details than this summary provides, please go to the meeting zoom on YouTube (around 55 minutes after the Zoom meeting started) for a full and complete viewing of this part of the meeting. You can find it on the EPO website.

BE SAFE AND HAVE A WONDERFUL HOLIDAY SEASON AND BE PREPARED FOR 2023!