

## COMMUNITY SPOKESPERSON – INCIDENT/EVENT CHECKLIST

- Confirm the safety of you and your family
- Complete the ***All Personnel - EOC Activation Checklist in Appendix 4 of Emergency Plan***
- Prior to any interviews receive a briefing from the Incident Commander, EOC Director and/or Emergency Program Coordinator and confirm:
  - Accuracy of information
  - Type of event and location
  - Who the lead agency is
  - Known and potential impacts; ensure only factual information is released to public
  - Current responder agency activities
  - What community leadership and the EOC are doing to support the event
  - Instructions required to give the general public:
    - Identify geographic areas under the alert
    - Location or reception centre and preferred routes
    - Where they can go to get more information including public phone numbers, online sources, poster board locations and/or any town hall sessions that are planned
    - When the next public incident update will be, and how it will be delivered
    - What to do when an evacuation occurs (personal preparedness)
    - Any other messaging that is appropriate
- Identify any information that is confidential and/or sensitive to any official investigations surrounding the event and ensure it does not get released
- Ensure that all staff, EOC personnel and responders know that all media inquiries are to be directed to the EOC Information Officer for follow up
- To better prepare yourself for the interview(s), confirm:
  - Which traditional media will be attending the interview and what social media platforms are being used officially by the EOC or community leadership
  - Ask the interview(s) ahead of time:
    - What their questions will be and what their intended storyline is
    - When and how it will be broadcast
  - What other agencies may be required to participate in the interview; consider lead agency, responder agencies, and other support organizations

## COMMUNITY SPOKESPERSON INCIDENT/EVENT CHECKLIST cont'd

- During the interview(s):
  - Follow the “CAC” principle: *Concern, Action, Commitment*
  - Ensure messaging conveys empathy, addresses what is being done to respond to the situation and expresses that all efforts are focused on supporting those affected
  - Only speak to factual information that has been approved by the EOC Director (this is especially critical in situations that involve injuries or fatalities or if property has been damaged or destroyed)
  - Where questions are asked and you cannot answer, avoid the phrase “No comment” and instead, refer them to a subject matter expert if one is available or use one of the following responses:
    - “I’m not the best person to address that, but I will connect you with someone who can.”
    - “We’re not yet at a stage where we have that information. When we do, we will share it.”
    - “At this time, we are focussed on responding to the situation at hand. Once things have stabilized, I would be happy to get you some information on that.”
  - Remain calm and confident in order to reassure the impacted public
- A primary consideration is to set the tone / expectation for the public by striking a balance between providing awareness and not causing unnecessary panic
- Avoid jargon – plain language should be utilized whenever possible
- Understand that you may become the “face” of the emergency and will likely remain so through the recovery process. This may be taxing on you and your loved ones, especially if the Community Leadership’s actions come under scrutiny or criticism
- Incorporate self-care and manage fatigue to avoid coming across as tired, stressed, or combative. Otherwise, public perception on Community leadership and their ability to deal with the event may be negatively impacted

### **Before Leaving:**

- Ensure all paperwork is complete, and logs are closed and sent to the Documentation Unit in the Planning Section
- Ensure that any open actions are assigned to the appropriate agency and/or EOC staff as appropriate
- Follow the ***All Personnel - EOC Demobilization Checklist in Appendix 4 of Emergency Plan***