



## Public Health Preparedness in Massachusetts

Inclusive Planning: Enhancing Preparedness &  
Response for Individuals with Access and Functional  
Needs

June 7, 2011

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## Overview

- National Preparedness Strategy
- Massachusetts
- Health & medical needs in a disaster
- Lessons from recent events
- Best practice
- What you can do

## National Preparedness: Presidential Policy Directive 8

- National preparedness is shared responsibility
  - all levels of government
  - private & nonprofit sectors
  - individual citizens
- Integrated, all-of-Nation, capabilities-based approach to preparedness.

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## Precepts of Planning

- The process of planning is just as important as the resulting document.
- Planning engages the whole community & represents the actual population in the community
- Planning should be based on analysis of risk
- Plans are not scripts followed to the letter, but are flexible and adaptable to the actual situation.
- Effective plans are coordinated & integrated across all levels of government, NGOs, private sector, & individuals & families.

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## MA Public Health Environment

- Decentralized Public Health System
  - ✓ DPH
  - ✓ 351 towns & cities/351 Local Health Authorities
  - ✓ 2 Tribal Nations
- 16 PH EP Planning Jurisdictions
- 75 Acute Care Hospitals
- 60+ Community Health Centers
- 500+ Long-term Care Facilities

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## Massachusetts By the Numbers

- 6.5 million residents (2009)
  - ✓ 5.9% < 5 years old
  - ✓ 13.6% ≥ 65 years old
  - ✓ 17% report living with disability (2000)
  - ✓ 18% language other than English (2000)

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## DPH & EPB Role in Preparedness

- DPH coordinates planning for health & medical response to emergencies that put public health at risk
- Works with state agencies, local health & public safety, American Red Cross, CBOs serving individuals with access & functional needs
- Emergency Preparedness Bureau
  - ✓ Coordinates planning within DPH & with local health & healthcare system partners
  - ✓ Staffs health & medical desk during emergencies
  - ✓ Supports operations of 2 health & medical volunteer programs: MA Responds & MRC

## During an Emergency

- DPH, through ESF8:
  - ✓ Coordinates state effort to meet health & medical needs, including PH, mental & behavioral health, health care services, mortuary services, ambulance services, & health/medical care for individuals with disabilities or functional needs
  - ✓ Assists local & regional entities in identifying & meeting medical needs of individuals affected by a disaster
  - ✓ Works to ensure access to care, medical/behavioral health support for individuals in shelters, safety of health care facilities, food safety, monitoring disease outbreaks, public information & warnings about health issues, etc

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## June 1 Western & Central MA



## June 1 Western & Central MA

- 3 tornadoes with multiple touchdowns from Westfield & Springfield traveling east through Douglas & Uxbridge
  - ✓ State EOC activated since June 1
  - ✓ 9 communities with extensive damage
  - ✓ 20 communities with medium to minor damage
  - ✓ 4 confirmed deaths; > 200 injuries reported
  - ✓ At peak, 70,000 w/o power; now ≈1200
  - ✓ 4 shelters open as of 6/6/11 - > 300 residents
  - ✓ 3 Social Service Centers opened June 4

## Best Practice

- Western MA Preparedness Project for Individuals Requiring Additional Assistance
  - ✓ Enhancing communication between local CBOs & EMD, police, fire, EMT
  - ✓ Advisory Councils including consumers, CBO, public health & public safety
  - ✓ Working with MA 211 to provide accessible database of contact information on CBOs & government agency staff
  - ✓ Developing evacuation & sheltering strategy
  - ✓ Organizing EP conferences, educational workshops, tabletop exercises, & opportunities for dialogue
  - ✓ <http://www.WesternMassREADY.org/IRAA>.

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## What You Can Do

- Make a plan
- Put together your emergency kit
- Stay informed
- Get involved
- Volunteer!

## To Volunteer



[www.maresponds.org](http://www.maresponds.org)



[www.mamedicalreservecorps.org](http://www.mamedicalreservecorps.org)



[www.mass.gov/MSAR](http://www.mass.gov/MSAR)

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