In Case of Emergency ...

Top Ten Tips for State Arts Agencies

NASAA Assembly 2008
Chattanooga TN
Sphere of Impact

- Your agency may be affected
- An area of your state may be affected
Emergency Preparedness

☐ Key Concept: 
Think about redundancy
Sphere of Impact

☐ Your agency may be affected

☐ An area of your state may be affected
# 1 - Office Safety Plan in place

- Use a professional from state emergency office or fire marshal for a staff training/office assessment
- Have a designated safety officer in your office to keep information/training/drilling current
- Have staff trained in first aid and CPR
- Have a building evacuation plan and drill it. Designate person to handle evacuation of any guests or people with disabilities.
- Have laminated emergency contact cards for all staff in a place they’re easy to grab
- Have working, battery operated flashlights & radios in strategic spots
- Make sure everyone knows how to dial 911 through the state phone system
- Assign Accountability partners – backup staff
#2 - Crisis communications team in place

- Someone designates that the agency is in emergency status (e.g. deciding the office will be closed due to hazardous conditions)
- Someone leads communications (has contact lists prepared, prepares and releases statements, uses media to help get word to constituents)
- Someone is “hub” for the field, to ensure that a clear ascertainment of the field’s status is known, and to get consistent information back out to constituents
#3 - Communications/Notifications

- Have current contact lists offsite (paper and Web based) and a process for contacting them
- State government – know ahead of time who you should contact (Lt. Gov., cabinet director, fire marshal, insurance dept., human resources, etc.)
- Emergency designator triggers staff communications – use a phone/email tree
- Commission/council contacts – get them in the loop early, they can let their area know what’s going on if your office is not operational
- Have updated grantee contact lists if you need to let them know status of grant payments etc.
#4 - Data Protection

- Have two people who can restart/restore your system (with passwords, admin privileges, and training)
- Have regular (at least weekly) data backups, securely stored offsite, with 2 people trained to recover/restore data
#5 - Insurance Review

- Document all agency assets regularly (on paper and photos/images)
- Ensure that art collections, artwork on loan and traveling exhibits are covered
Sphere of Impact

☐ Your agency may be affected

☐ An area of your state may be affected
#6 - Have a hub person designated for the field

☐ Centralized staffer to field community requests and assess the emergency status
#7 - State Partnerships

- Know what other state agencies offer emergency assistance; get to know them before an emergency so they are familiar with arts issues (e.g. self-employed artists don’t fit the normal “small business” paradigm)
- Emergency Management Agency
- Dept of Labor
- Development districts/workforce areas or other special divisions of your state
- Align with other cultural state agencies in an effort to battle redundancy in support and assistance. Communicate with them regularly (a la Culture Club).
#8 - Web site resources

- Designate a portion of your site for info/updates
- Collect and use existing links
- Post any NEA, state government, etc. designated emergency funds
#9 - Consider Readiness training and tools

Readiness/Business Continuity planning can help limit the effects of an emergency. Find good examples in your state/area and share them. Start asking grant applicants about their readiness.
#10 - Check in on the first nine steps annually
Sallye Killebrew, Arts Recovery Coordinator, Mississippi Arts Commission, skillebrew@arts.state.ms.us, (601) 359-6075

Mollie Lakin-Hayes, Deputy Director, Southern Arts Federation, mlakinhayes@southarts.org, (404) 874-7244 x 31