



Be Disaster Safe 6–8

In the Community



Visit the American Red Cross Web site
at www.redcross.org/disaster/masters

LESSON PLAN 5

Emergency Management

Learning that there is a system in place and that agencies cooperate to take care of the community's needs during emergencies and disasters reassures and inspires students.

Key Terms and Concepts

community preparedness	government agencies
community response	health department
Department of Homeland Security (DHS)	Humane Society
emergency medical services	law enforcement
Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)	public works
	utility companies
	volunteer organizations

Purpose

To provide the students an opportunity to experience the community planning and decision making required to prepare for, respond to and recover from an emergency

Objectives

The students will—

- Use *Emergency Operation Center Representatives, Issues for Emergency Management Meeting and Emergency Response-and-Recovery Scenario* to conduct a tabletop response-and-recovery exercise.
- Analyze the ways people and agencies work together and the responses necessary during a local emergency situation.
- File a report on their classroom simulation; invite local responders to critique the report during a roundtable discussion. (Linking Across the Curriculum)
- Set up emergency scenarios and invite representatives from local emergency management to discuss which agencies would work together during such an emergency. (Linking Across the Curriculum)
- Think about and name the economic difficulties for a community after a disaster or emergency and the ways local and federal agencies help to support the community. (Linking Across the Curriculum)
- Use the Internet to research and classify the agencies, divisions and initiatives of the Department of Homeland Security and how they work nationally and locally.



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- Use *Emergency WATCHES and WARNINGS* to help families interpret emergency information for their community. (Home Connection)
- Use the National Weather Service online to read, interpret, plot on maps and announce possible weather emergencies. (Linking Across the Curriculum)

Activities

“What Should We Do First?”

“National and Local Preparedness”



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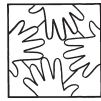
Emergency Management

Materials

- *Emergency Operation Center Representatives*, 1 per student
- *Issues for Emergency Management Meeting*, 1 per student
- *Emergency Response-and-Recovery Scenario*, 1 per group
- Chart paper and markers, 1 set per team
- Card stock or cardboard for nameplates
- *Emergency WATCHES and WARNINGS*, 1 copy per student (Home Connection)



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"What Should We Do First?"

SET UP 10 minutes CONDUCT two 50-minute sessions

Social Studies: Civics; Language Arts: Research and Role Play

TEACHING NOTE For the tabletop exercise to be most effective, the class will need at least 45 minutes without interruption. An option is to use one session to set up the exercise, directing discussion and research on the agency they represent and the job they face. Then, use a second session to run the tabletop exercise based on the ongoing scenario.

This is a student-directed simulation. The educator's role is to facilitate research and help the students formulate and critique responses.

1. In an emergency, whether it is a natural disaster or a human-caused event, a variety of response-and-recovery agencies work together to assist the community. Tell the students they are going to participate in a tabletop exercise, a standard tool for emergency managers, to simulate what would happen in their community if an explosion occurred. They will role-play the responsibilities of those involved in emergency planning and response.
2. Distribute *Emergency Operation Center Representatives* and *Issues for Emergency Management Meeting* to the students. As a class, discuss the community roles, the initial emergency and the questions facing the team. Assign roles to small student groups and distribute to each a cardboard nameplate to designate its assigned role.
3. Allow time for the groups to discuss and take notes on their responsibilities and the actions they might take in a community emergency situation.

TEACHING NOTE Depending on your students' understanding of emergency management, you may want the teams to search through newspaper, magazine and Internet news stories to find examples of the ways their agencies support the community before, during or after an emergency.

4. At the beginning of the second session, bring the groups together in a large circle and have them place their nameplates so that everyone can see them. Tell the groups to identify themselves and explain their responsibilities on the community team.



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5. Distribute *Emergency Response-and-Recovery Scenario* to each group. As the students read about the changing situation, they will discuss and prioritize the problems facing their city and their emergency responses. They will create a status board that indicates the time, the problem, the action taken and the name of the agency that took the action. Keep the discussion flowing, with teams adding their responsibilities to the board at each appropriate juncture. Remind students that they can't take too long at any point because people need help right away.



Wrap-Up

After the simulation, have the students review their notes and analyze their responses.



Guide them to consider and discuss the following questions:

- What areas were the most difficult to handle? Why?
- What decisions were the hardest to make? The easiest to make? Why?
- How did the different agencies work together?
- Were there challenges in making the team work, given the many different agendas and people represented?
- What successes were achieved?
- What actions might they change if they completed the exercise again? Why?



Linking Across the Curriculum

Social Studies: Civics; Language Arts: Writing

How closely do the students believe their simulation resembled the actions of the community's emergency management team? As a class, file a report of the hypothetical incident and their emergency responses based on the status board and discussion. Invite representatives of your community emergency management team to review and critique the simulation in a roundtable discussion that highlights the duties of each agency.

Social Studies: Civics



Have the students conduct research on the Internet to find information about recent emergency situations, natural or human-caused, and then consider the local and national agencies that were involved in the response. In what ways did the agencies work together? What were the successes? What were the problems?



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Social Studies: Economics

If the event in the simulation above had occurred in your community, what kinds of loss would the community and its citizens have sustained? Have the students put together a list of problems and costs, such as the strain on hospital emergency resources, the impact on small businesses and the people left without homes. Points to consider:

- What do local insurers do?
- What is the role of the American Red Cross?
- What are the responsibilities and strategies of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and the Department of Homeland Security (DHS)?
- How can citizens help the recovery process?
- How can rebuilding be affordable for the community?
- What mental health services are available for people who have lost homes or family members?



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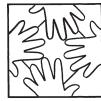
LESSON PLAN 5 Emergency Management

Materials

Internet access



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"National and Local Preparedness"

SET UP 10 minutes **CONDUCT** 30 minutes, plus time for research and presentations

Social Studies: Civics; Language Arts: Research and Analysis;
Mathematics: Classification

1. Write the following acronyms on the chalkboard: DHS, FEMA, NRP, NIMS, SAFECOM and NIPP. Talk with the students about the meaning of these federal acronyms. (The Department of Homeland Security, the Federal Emergency Management Agency, the National Response Plan, the National Incident Management System, Safe Communications for National Responders and the National Infrastructure Protection Plan.) Help the students with the unfamiliar initials. Based on just the name of the agency, division or initiative, lead the students in a discussion of the possible roles and responsibilities in national security and preparedness.

Explain that these acronyms are just the beginning of the system set in place by the federal government to lead, coordinate and respond to emergencies throughout the United States and its territories. In 2003, the Department of Homeland Security was created, linking 22 previously separate agencies.

2.  Divide the class into teams of two or three. Have the teams use the Department of Homeland Security site at <http://www.dhs.gov> to search for information about prevention, protection, preparedness and response and the agencies that support them.
 - Teams might report on specific agencies or divisions, their goals and their responsibilities. For example: the National Cyber Security Division, the Safe School Initiative or TOPOFF, the national terrorism response exercise program.
 - In addition, teams may choose to review and report on news releases or articles about action taken in specific incidents. For example, the opening of the National Computer Forensic Institute, the ongoing work to aid those affected by Hurricane Katrina or national and international travel restrictions.
 - Finally, students may research and report on your state's department or office of emergency management and its initiatives and activities across the state and locally.



Wrap-Up

Ask groups to be ready to report on the information they discovered through the Department of Homeland Security.



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Write “DHS” in the center of the chalkboard. As the groups share their information, begin a class mind map to classify the different agencies, divisions or activities of the DHS. Consider how the department reaches out across the nation, coordinating with local authorities and emergency responders, as well as the activities it encompasses.



Home Connection

Have the students take home *Emergency WATCHES and WARNINGS* to share with family members to help them better understand and identify geographically the WATCHES and WARNINGS that authorities announce before, during and after an emergency.



Linking Across the Curriculum

Social Studies: Geography; Science: Earth Science and Technology; Language Arts: Research and Analysis



The National Weather Service (<http://www.nws.noaa.gov/>) keeps us informed about possible local weather emergencies. Have the students find local announcements and interpret and plot the announcements on maps. Based on the weather information, ask the students to write and present radio announcements that forecast possible problems over one or several days. Remind the students that announcements must make citizens aware and ready, not fearful, frozen or disbelieving.

TEACHING NOTE Ask the students to broaden their geographical boundaries, especially if local weather appears fair and uneventful.



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Emergency Operation Center Response Representatives

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Name _____

1. Mayor—you have been in office for only one month when there is a major explosion in your town.
2. City emergency manager—you are responsible for managing the community response and for ensuring public welfare.
3. City public information officer—you are the spokesperson for the city. You deal directly with the media.
4. Public works officer—you are responsible for water, sewer, street and park maintenance. Major thoroughfares are flooded and blocked and water may be contaminated.
5. Electric/gas company officer—you are responsible for making sure your company fixes the many downed power lines and the broken gas main. Your company is responsible for turning the gas back on in residential buildings.
6. Phone company representative—you are responsible for making sure the city is able to communicate via telephone.
7. Fire chief—your personnel are responsible for fighting the fire in the building, handling the hazardous materials response and responding to medical emergencies.
8. Police captain—your personnel are responsible for directing traffic during the evacuation process and providing security for evacuated areas.
9. County Humane Society—you are responsible for finding, holding and taking care of pets or stray animals that might be within the affected area.
10. Hospital and care facilities—you are responsible for emergency care for those affected by the emergency as well as evacuation, transfer and care of patients within the affected area.





Emergency Operation Center Response Representatives

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11. Weather forecasters—you are responsible for keeping the team apprised of possible weather conditions that would change or add to the emergency or hinder the response.
12. Hospital representative—yours is the only hospital in town, and your chief of staff is on vacation abroad.
13. American Red Cross representative—you are responsible for providing food, drinks and shelter for people who have been displaced from their homes.
14. Citizen Advisory Committee chairperson—you are responsible for representing the views, concerns and needs of the citizens of the community.
15. Building inspector—you are responsible for making sure people do not return to their homes and offices until the buildings are safe.
16. Humane Society representative—Because pets are not allowed in shelters, you are responsible for helping people who have pets and who choose to stay in the shelter.
17. National Weather Service representative—you are responsible for relaying the most current and accurate weather information; bad weather (rain, ice, snow) could make the response and cleanup effort much harder.
19. Media personnel—you are responsible for reporting accurate information about the fire and what the public should do.





Issues for Emergency Management Meeting

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You live in a suburban community. It is the evening of February 4. You and your family are at home, cleaning up after dinner, doing homework, watching television and reading. You hear a beeping noise coming from the television, and you all gather around to watch. A news reporter breaks in to say that there has been an explosion in a building in your town. The building houses different stores, such as a plumbing supply specialty store, an auto supply store, a swimming pool and spa installation and sales office. The building is on fire, and smaller explosions continue—probably resulting from chemicals, batteries and other items in the stores catching fire. The gas company is concerned because a major natural gas supply line runs right under the burning building. If the gas company turns off the gas supply line, then natural gas service will be discontinued for the entire city on one of the coldest nights of the year.

A few people, who were on the street when the explosion happened, were injured by flying glass. Other people who live nearby are becoming sick from the toxic fumes produced by the fire. There is a nursing home located only blocks from the explosion.

The fire chief contacts the mayor to request an immediate evacuation of a 10-block area surrounding the building. The mayor agrees. The mayor and the emergency manager activate the Emergency Operations Center (EOC), calling in the staff and EOC agency representatives. You're on call.

Here are the issues that need to be addressed:

1. This is a response-and-recovery operation. What needs to happen first?
2. What is each person's responsibility—immediately after the explosion, during the evacuation and after the evacuation?





Issues for Emergency Management Meeting

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3. With all the damage that has occurred, can each person do his or her job? What problems do they face?

4. What is more important, that residents be able to get back to their homes or that residents have a safe place to stay?

5. Whom do you assist first? Elderly people? Injured people? People staying in shelters? Stray animals?

6. How do you know when it is safe to allow people to return to their homes? What further problems or conditions must you consider?





Emergency Response-and-Recovery Ongoing Scenario

Page 1 of 2

Name _____

The Emergency Management Team must take actions to protect the people of the community.

February 4, 11:23 p.m.

People in apartments nearby must leave their homes because of the fire and concern about burning chemicals in the building causing a toxic cloud.

People within a 10-block area are asked to leave as soon as possible and go to the safe place they identified when they completed their family disaster plan. If they can't get there, the American Red Cross has opened a shelter outside the affected area.

The Emergency Operations Center takes action...

February 5, 2:55 a.m.

The fire is still burning, but the smaller explosions from chemicals in the building have stopped. The fire department has received assistance from several other fire departments in nearby communities who are helping in a mutual aid response. People from the apartments have evacuated the area, but there are pets and stray dogs around. The evacuation of the nursing home has been very difficult because of the patients' age and mobility issues. The weather is getting colder and now the clouds are moving in.

The Emergency Operations Center takes action...

February 5, 4:00 a.m.

The city emergency manager reports to the mayor that there seems to be some flooding in the area. An aqueduct that normally channels a creek that runs through the area to the Flumen River a few miles away has broken. There are also broken water mains. Electric power is out for about a 20-square-block area around the explosion. While the natural gas supply line under the building has not ruptured, smaller gas supply lines have broken and caused more fires.

The Emergency Operations Center takes action...





Emergency Response-and-Recovery Ongoing Scenario

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February 5, 5:30 a.m.

Commuters are ready to get on the road. They are finding that two major highways have been closed, Interstate 777 and Columbia Pike. Fires are still burning, but under control. The fire department is concerned about spraying too much water on a chemical fire because of the pollution it can cause to the nearby stream and environment. People who think they were exposed to fumes from the fires overwhelm the hospital.

The Emergency Operations Center takes action...

February 6, 7:00 a.m.

It is obvious to everyone that by dawn the fire will not be out and the city streets will not be reopened to allow people to return to their homes and drive to their workplaces. Many people who live in the nearby apartment buildings want to get back into their homes to check on them and get personal belongings and clothing for work and school. But the roads are still blocked and the fire is still not out, so there is a potential for more chemicals to burn and produce toxic smoke.

The Emergency Operations Center takes action...





Emergency WATCHES and WARNINGS

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Name _____

It is important to understand what emergency bulletins on radio and television mean and whether or not they apply to you.

WATCH

A severe weather WATCH means:

Severe weather may be on the way. Be ready to take steps to get to safety if conditions become worse.

WARNING

A severe weather WARNING means:

Severe weather is happening right now. Get to safety right away.

What kinds of severe weather or emergencies might you experience near your home?





Emergency WATCHES and WARNINGS

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Where do you live?

City or Town: _____

County or Parish: _____

State, Province or Territory: _____

Area within the state, province or territory: (Circle any that apply.)

North

South

Central

East

West

Area within the county or parish: (Circle any that apply.)

North

South

Central

East

West

Nearest and most notable geographic landmarks: (rivers, mountains and lakes)

