Standard #3: Multiple communication tools are identified and established in order to contact internal and external stakeholders

Is there a communication plan in place that addresses internal and external contacts if standard methods of communication are unavailable?

During emergencies communication is frequently disrupted.

- Phone lines are overwhelmed -- the phone system is designed to handle a certain number of calls, when too many people call, the system can't connect all of the calls. This affects landlines and cell phones. The long distance and local calling systems are separate though, so usually it is still possible to receive a long distance call.
- Even when the larger system is functioning, loss of power may disable your phone system because it requires power to operate.
- In major events, communication infrastructure can be damaged: this can include wires, and or cell phone towers.

3a. You have emergency, after-hours contact information for all staff.

- ☐ This information is easily accessible for staff both onsite and offsite.

3b. Primary and alternate procedures for communicating with critical staff and key partners are in place.

- ☐ Ensure all staff can receive critical information about the status of your organization during an emergency (examples: employee emergency hotline, Web site and/or Intranet, radio or TV news reports, communication tree)

- ☐ Establish the following roles:

  - o Who approves the messaging (messaging topics include: agency operational status, damage assessment, services offered or changed, funds needed, volunteers needed)? Does s/he have a designated back-up?

  - o Who is authorized to communicate the information? Does s/he have a designated back-up? Are they properly trained?

- ☐ Are the messages they share consistent?

- ☐ Messages and spokespeople should be prepared in advance.

Key Tools for This Standard

- [Collaborating Agencies Responding to Disaster (CARD), Sections C and L](#)

- [Overcoming Communication Challenges (PDF)](#)
  This PDF provides practical ideas on alternative methods of communication.

- [Information on the Government Emergency Telecommunications Service](#)

- King County Health Care Coalition recommends asking the following questions while creating your [communication plan](#).

- [ECHO Minnesota](#)
  Provides communication tools in multiple languages to public health and safety agencies during a crisis.

➔ [Agency Emergency Planning Contact Info](#)