

Using Mass Communication Systems to Support Legionnaires Before and After Disasters

Disasters often strike with little warning, and when they do, communication becomes one of the most important tools an organization can have. For local posts of The American Legion, maintaining the ability to quickly reach members can make a significant difference in ensuring the safety and well-being of fellow Legionnaires.

Mass communication systems such as One Call Now provide posts with the ability to contact their entire membership within minutes through automated phone calls, text messages, or email. These systems are becoming increasingly valuable tools for posts that want to strengthen their disaster preparedness and response capabilities.

Preparing Members Before a Disaster

Before a hurricane, severe storm, or other emergency, post leadership can use a mass calling system to quickly notify members with important preparedness information.

These alerts can include:

- Weather warnings and storm updates
- Reminders to secure property and prepare emergency supplies
- Evacuation notices or shelter information
- Contact information for post leadership or local resources

For many members—particularly older veterans—these reminders can be extremely helpful in ensuring they are aware of approaching dangers and have time to prepare.

Checking on Members After the Storm

Once a disaster has passed, the priority shifts to ensuring the safety of members. Reaching each Legionnaire individually can be time-consuming and difficult, especially if communication systems are disrupted.

A mass communication system allows the post to quickly send out a welfare check message asking members to respond if they are safe or if they need assistance.

This can help post leadership:

- Identify members who may need help
- Coordinate volunteers for welfare checks



How a Post Could Use a Mass Calling System During a Disaster



1. Send an Alert

Warn members of the approaching storm or emergency.



2. Share Instructions

Give evacuation info or safety tips.



3. Check on Members

Ask members to respond if they are safe.



4. Identify Needs

Find out who needs help with supplies or transport.



5. Mobilize Help

Organize volunteers for welfare checks and assistance.

— Veterans Helping Veterans —

- Provide support such as transportation, supplies, or cleanup assistance
- Ensure that no member is overlooked

This type of outreach reinforces one of the guiding principles of The American Legion—looking out for fellow veterans and ensuring that no Legionnaire faces hardship alone.

Strengthening Communication Year-Round

While these systems are especially valuable during disasters, they can also strengthen communication throughout the year.

Posts can use tools like One Call Now to send meeting reminders, share important announcements, and keep members informed about post activities and community service projects.

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These regular communications keep members connected and ensure that when an emergency does arise, the post already has an effective system in place to reach its membership quickly.

A Valuable Tool for Post Preparedness

Disaster preparedness is not only about supplies and planning—it is also about communication. Having the ability to reach every member quickly can help posts respond more effectively before, during, and after emergencies.

By incorporating modern communication tools into their preparedness plans, posts of The American Legion can better support their members, strengthen their communities, and continue the tradition of veterans helping veterans when it matters most.

Natural Disasters Fraud:

In the wake of natural disasters like tornadoes, flooding, earthquakes, fires, and hurricanes, it's important for Veterans and their families to know VA is here to help. Scammers prey on vulnerability resulting from natural disasters and often exploit the chaos and desperation of homeowners in disaster-stricken areas. To alleviate financial stress, which can heighten vulnerability, we recommend that Veterans enroll in direct deposit to receive their benefits. Likewise, scammers also seek to exploit generosity with charity scams to divert donations from genuine causes. For resources to help manage fraud or to file a report, call 833-38V-SAFE.

Disaster Recovery Resource Survey

I want to thank the posts that have responded to our Disaster Recovery Resource Survey. The following Posts have responded: Post 4, Post 15, Post 72, and Post 118. If you haven't completed the survey yet, you can do so at:

<https://forms.gle/L8PCAbWauh0m5nEDA>

7th District Disaster Preparedness Plan

To support posts during emergencies, the 7th District of The American Legion, has developed a District Disaster Preparedness and Response Plan.

The plan provides a simple framework to help posts prepare for hurricanes, severe storms, and other disasters. It outlines how posts can check on members, maintain communication, organize volunteers, and assist veterans and their families when emergencies occur. It can be used as is, or modified for your Post.

When combined with tools like mass calling systems to quickly reach members, this plan helps ensure no Legionnaire is forgotten when disaster strikes.

Post leaders and members are encouraged to review the plan and consider how it may be used at their local post.

View or download the plan:

<https://tinyurl.com/rvf6cew3>

Or scan this code:

