



NAPA VALLEY COAD EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS FOCUS GROUPS REPORT 2024

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COAD BACKGROUND & EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Napa Valley COAD (Community Organizations Active in Disaster) is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization that works in all phases of disaster – preparedness, response, and recovery – across all areas of Napa County, focusing on the vulnerable population. COAD’s mission is to develop and enhance partnerships for communication, coordination & collaboration amongst the whole community including non-profit & faith-based organizations, government agencies, and the private sector during all phases of disaster and envisions a community where all members are equitably prepared for disaster so all have an equal opportunity to survive and recover from a disaster. COAD leverages and leads the coordination of services outside the scope of government.

In fall 2019, COAD’s response activities began in earnest to support vulnerable populations during the first major Public Safety Power Shutoffs (PSPS). In March 2020, with the closure of schools and businesses due to the pandemic, COAD’s response activities broadened to meet the wider range of community needs these closures generated. In August and September 2020, Napa County was hit with two back-to-back wildfires requiring additional response and recovery activities. During 2020 and early 2021, COAD agencies and their staff contributed a substantial number of hours and services in support of COAD’s coordinated efforts. In total, in-kind hours provided by member agencies averages 8200 hours per month, for a total value of about \$4.2M. Total services delivered to over 22K individuals was \$8.5M. **The sidebar shows selected examples of COAD coordinated services delivered to the community during emergency incidents.**

EXAMPLES OF COAD COORDINATED SERVICES TO THE COMMUNITY:

- **Pandemic Rental Assistance** –\$5 million to 3300 households
- **Pandemic non-medical volunteers to the COVID testing site** – 30/week for 36 weeks valued at \$127,440
- **Pandemic food access support** – over 4800 food deliveries to vulnerable households
- **Pandemic children and family support** – connected 120+ essential workers and first responders to child care
- **2020 Wildfires immediate cash assistance** – \$1M in grants to 460+ households, \$330k in gift cards
- **2020 Wildfires Long Term Recovery** – \$700K in direct cash assistance to 16 households; \$650K of in-kind support to 87 households
- **2023 & 2024 Winter storm power outages** – \$28,200 in gift cards to 300+ vulnerable households for food recovery

These incidents came with many lessons learned, one of which was the importance of having clear emergency messaging with readily understood calls to action to keep the public safe. Community members look to trusted messengers to stay informed to better respond to and recover from disasters. As such, it is critical to periodically review the existing communication systems to identify gaps and continually improve the effectiveness of communication systems to keep community members safe. Core to COAD's mission is promoting timely, accurate, and effective communications.

COAD's Communication and Language Access Subcommittee initiated a language access study in partnership with Napa County in early 2021. COAD published its findings in 2023; a summary report can be found here [<https://bit.ly/LAPStudy>]. The *Emergency Communications Focus Groups Report 2024* serves as an extension of the previous work done to ensure equitable access to information for Napa County community members in and outside of disasters. During the first half of 2024, COAD conducted focus groups with Napa County community members, primarily Spanish speakers, to promote language inclusion and access to information and identify potential gaps in emergency messaging. These focus groups were conducted using human-centered design (HCD) to identify community needs by talking with people about their lived experiences around emergency messaging. Based on their input, opportunities for improvements to the emergency messaging process and systems were identified.

As COAD spoke with fire survivors and other community members around emergency messaging, recurring themes began emerge. Spanish-speakers were appreciative and grateful that alerts were available in their preferred language, and everyone agreed that the increased frequency of messaging made them feel safer and more informed. It also became apparent that there was a need for a review process for translated message content to ensure they are communicating accurate. Other potential areas for improving the effectiveness of communications included: adding more visuals cues to enhance understanding; diversifying methods of communication to reach those not digitally connected; simplifying messaging; and developing a shared glossary of terms for emergency terms to be used across jurisdictions to limit confusion. Better understanding how we can expand and improve emergency communications will foster a more resilient Napa County.

PURPOSE

Napa Valley COAD went out into the community to gain a better understanding of the effectiveness and accessibility of emergency messaging for residents in Napa County, and to share what was learned. A grand part (73%) of Napa County's geography resides in Tier 2 and Tier 3 high fire risk areas. With so many recurring emergency events, it's critical that the County, municipalities, and first responders are able to clearly communicate to the community what the calls to action are in an emergency message, and what areas to avoid. Community members need to receive emergency messages in their preferred language so that they are readily understood, as well as ensure they are accurate and sent out in a timely manner.

Recent changes in the Napa County alert system now include app notifications through Everbridge and allows community members to customize the way they receive emergency messages, as well as prioritize the methods in which one can receive these alerts. Although there have been great strides in improving the Napa County alert system, there are still gaps to be addressed. This report uses the results of community focus groups conducted across Napa County, where we heard directly from community members, to better understand how they access, receive, process, and understand emergency messages. It proved to be a great opportunity to hear first-hand from the message receiver about their experience with the alerts and identify other ways in which they receive information during emergencies, to better leverage these sources as a means of getting critical information out into the community.

"Yo recibo los mensajes de Nixle desde el 2017 y antes no salían los mensajes en español, pero ahora sí."

"I've gotten the Nixle alerts since 2017 and they didn't used to come in Spanish, but now they do."

"Me di cuenta de que todos se estaban saliendo por los incendios porque mi vecino me vino a tocar la puerta."

"I found out that people were leaving because of the fires only because my neighbor came and knocked on my door."

METHODOLOGY

Napa Valley COAD conducted focus groups with vulnerable individuals who we know are disproportionately affected by disasters – older adults, parents with young children, and those living in high fire risk areas – using human-centered design.

- **Focus group** – Using a human centered design approach, focus groups provide an opportunity to gather qualitative data that is not available from other sources to learn directly from community members in their own words about their experiences with access to information before, during, and after emergencies.
- **Human-centered design (HCD)** is an approach to develop solutions to problems by involving the human perspective in all steps of the problem-solving process. This method of collecting data from the community removes any assumptions preconceived notions about what the gaps and solutions are for improving the communication methods used for emergency messaging.

COAD met the focus group participants ‘where they are at’: communal areas in apartment complexes where they live, local schools where their children attend, and community centers they already frequent. Bringing the focus groups to the community members and conducting the discussions in their preferred language of the groups made it more accessible to attend and participate in them. COAD acknowledges that each community within Napa County has different needs, so we selected key locations around the county to ensure geographic diversity. We also spoke with different age groups to ensure a broader perspective. **In total there were 73 participants who provided feedback for this report:**

St. Helena	16 Older Adults
Calistoga	11 Older Adults
Calistoga	8 Promotoras
Napa	21 Families
Angwin	10 Families
American Canyon	7 Families

All focus groups had the same structure, as outlined by the facilitator’s guide [APPENDIX A]. Each session was targeted to last one hour. The facilitator asked questions and engaged the group, while a notetaker kept track and documented comments made by participants. Participants were encouraged to give their opinions and share anecdotes outside of these questions to fully capture their experiences. COAD provided samples of real Alert Napa County messaging sent through

Everbridge for participants to look through. Many participants were quick to say the messages were generally well understood before they were given the samples because they couldn't think of a specific example of an alert. Having the samples in front of them helped engage conversation on how to improve the experience of the message receiver and make them more accessible to community members [APPENDIX B]. The sample alert messages selected for the focus groups were previously identified as unclear or confusing by community members. These samples also helped with participation amongst individuals who were not signed up for alerts at the time the focus group was conducted. Every focus group ended with COAD signing people up for the Alert Napa County text message alerts, while providing additional information on how to create an account on Everbridge, and distributing additional emergency preparedness resources in both English and Spanish.



[Picture of Napa parents that participated in COAD's focus groups]

KEY FINDINGS

AREAS OF SUCCESS

Napa County has come a long way in regard to emergency communications with the community. Many community members still remember the lack of emergency messaging during the 2014 earthquake and the 2017 Napa Complex wildfires, but they also mention the great strides made to improve on these communication systems. Emergency messaging from the County, municipalities, and other first responders come with more frequency and provide information in both English and Spanish on how people can stay safe. It's important to celebrate the progress being made in our community, and those who participated in the focus groups were in agreement that emergency communications in Napa County have greatly improved since 2014.

Language Inclusion & Access

Some community members from the upper valley who had gone through the 2017 fires stated that they did not receive any kind of notifications for evacuations during that time. They shared that the emergency messaging system has greatly improved since then, and they now receive lots of messaging when something is happening. The option of signing up for text message alerts makes it easier for people of all demographics to sign up and receive critical messaging, in both English and Spanish. About 35% of Napa County's population is Latine and 23.7% of Napa County's population speaks Spanish in the home. The Promotoras (a group of volunteers for UpValley Family Centers who serve as community connectors and share critical resources to the community in the upper valley) in Calistoga, the older women's group in St Helena, and the parent group in Angwin all expressed how appreciative they were that emergency messages were available in Spanish and that the Spanish messaging has continuously improved since the 2020 wildfires. Language inclusion has made County alerts much more accessible to a large percentage of Napa County's population, and continuously improving these methods to include other groups will promote inclusion and a more resilient community.

Trust in the Emergency Messaging System

Another success area identified during our focus group discussions was the amount of trust the community has in County alerts. When the County was initially transferring the community from Nixle to Everbridge, many people didn't click on the link sent to them as a test because they thought it was a scam. There was an initial assumption that the links provided in the Everbridge

messaging would have the same result, but many of the Spanish-speaking parents that participated in the focus groups mentioned that they were only signed up for the English alerts and used the links provided at the end to find the Spanish messaging. This shows that community members currently signed up to Alert Napa County trust the message sender enough to click links in text messages, and take advantage of the functionality of Everbridge to find the messages in their preferred language. However, this was only found to be true with the younger demographic that had the tech skills to troubleshoot this issue. Overall, the efforts Napa County has put into the emergency messaging system has helped foster trust in government from the community. People can rely on Napa County to give timely and accurate information during and outside of disasters.

“[The alerts] are very good. They make us feel protected [...] enough time to respond.”

“Es bonito que ahora nos mandan mensajes en español para nosotros los latinos.”

“It’s great that they now send messages in Spanish for us Latinos.”

*“Yo los recibo en inglés, pero abajo le presiono en el enlace y me lleva a la página donde puedo encontrar el mensaje en español.”
“I get them in English, but I press the link at the bottom and it take me to a page where I can find it in Spanish.”*

“I like that I get [the alerts] in both English and Spanish [...] I didn’t get them in 2017, but now I get lots of messages.”

OPPORTUNITIES TO IMPROVE SAFETY WITH ALERTS

Community members expressed clear appreciation for the continuous improvement in Napa County emergency communications, they also shared some of the gaps they are experiencing and opportunities for additional improvement. Many of these opportunities for improvement may already be in process, but they are outlined in this report because they have yet to reach certain community groups and were brought up as gaps by the participants. COAD and its Communications & Language Access subcommittee is committed to supporting County efforts to improve language inclusion and diversify communication methods.

Reviewing Translations

Translation issues were identified as a gap that specifically impact the Spanish-speaking community. While emergency messaging in Spanish is identified as a key success area, participants also noted the importance of reviewing the Spanish messages to ensure they are linguistically appropriate and convey the message accurately and understandably. Translating an alert from English to Spanish will always leave room for the translator to interpret the message as they understood it. This interpretation may change the translation, depending on who the message sender and interpreter is. From our understanding, Napa County has a translation team at the ready when an incident occurs and most messages are reviewed. As a result, Spanish-speaking participants have noticed an improvement to the Spanish alerts sent by OES (Office of Emergency Services) and other County branches since the 2020 wildfires; however, this is not always the case for every municipality when they send out emergency messaging.

The alerts from some of the other municipalities gave the impression that they were translated by a computer engine and lacked the human touch and revision needed to make it more understandable. It is unclear if the municipalities use staff to review the Spanish emergency messages, but the participants suggested that native Spanish speakers be at the forefront of any Spanish messages being sent out to the community. For example, one of the participants remembered an alert had mistranslated Butts Canyon Road to “trasero,” which makes reference to someone’s backside. A native Spanish speaker would have caught such a mistake, while a computer engine translator may not have. Street names should not normally be translated into other languages because then people can’t find the roads on maps. **However, it was mentioned multiple times that the only time a street name should be translated from English to Spanish was when it was referring to numbered streets because this is how they are commonly addressed in Spanish.**

Having staff dedicated to reviewing the translations could also help point out common mistakes in translations such as using acronyms that do not translate into Spanish, and to instead provide a complete message that makes sense linguistically and culturally rather than using some of the shorthand common in English. One of the alerts that was presented as a sample to the focus groups made use of the acronym “ETA” and had left it as such in the Spanish alert. None of the participants knew the meaning of the acronym and suggested writing out the whole message. Having a guide or template for how to structure translations during emergencies would greatly reduce mistranslations. Some of the parents that spoke at the focus groups mentioned even

having staff co-create content in Spanish rather than a direct translation so there is a lower chance of losing the content meaning of the message.

Glossary of Terms

A glossary of terms would complement and add value to any potential guide or template for emergency messaging, whether that be for English or Spanish terms. Using consistent wording across jurisdictions would decrease confusion in the community, and would remove the interpretation obstacle when translating messages into other languages. This glossary would benefit both English and Spanish speakers alike because some of the vocabulary associated with emergency messaging is too technical for the average older adult or individual that isn't connected to organizations dealing with emergency response. In the middle of an emergency is not when people should be guessing what the alert is telling them to do to stay safe.

- Both groups of the Spanish-speaking older adults that participated in the focus groups did not know what the word “evacuation” meant in their preferred language.
- There have been other individuals COAD has connected with within these focus groups and at Meet Your Neighbor workshops that didn't know the meaning of “reunification” in either English or Spanish.
- The focus group in St Helena made mention that the inconsistencies with these terms lead to greater confusion about what the calls to action are. For example, County uses terms such as “evacuation warning,” while some municipalities have used such terms as “voluntary evacuations.”
- The translation of the phrase “evacuations are lifted” was confusing to Spanish-speakers because the word “lifted” was used literally and made the whole message lose meaning. The participants were able to understand the message when supplemented with additional information.
- One of the Napa parent groups and one of the St Helena older women's groups made reference to needing a glossary of definitions for emergency terms to make it easier to understand the calls to action for all demographics. The County could partner with COAD and its member agencies to provide trainings and workshops for community members on the terms used by authorities during emergencies to help clear up confusion in both English and Spanish. These trainings can also provide more information on the difference between alerts and advisories.

- CalFire uses “evacuation warning” and “evacuation order” for fire emergencies, and the National Weather Service uses “flood watch” and “flood warning” for storms. None of the participants knew the difference between a watch and warning, and they expressed they would like to have a list of emergency terms and their meanings so they knew how to respond to the emergency messages they were receiving.

“

“Quisiera ver más información de lo que está pasando en la página [de Everbridge].”

“I’d like to find more information about what’s going on, on the [Everbridge] page.”

”

“

“What does a voluntary evacuation really mean?”

”

“

“¿Qué quiere decir eso? [...] ¿Como salir?”

“What does that mean? [...] Like to leave?”

”

“

“Se escucha raro decir que una evacuación esté levantado, ¿como una mesa?”

“It sounds weird to hear that an evacuation is lifted, like a table?”

”

Creating a glossary of terms would be consistent with the Incident Command System (ICS) and National Incident Management System (NIMS) emergency management principles, which the County is already using for emergency response within different first-responder agencies. This glossary will expand these principles to community members to promote better understanding of emergency messaging. According to FEMA,

“A common language enables responders to articulate needs, describe processes, coordinate efforts, and command resources during interagency operations. When everyone clearly understands the information being shared, planning and coordination becomes simpler.”

Additionally, clear, concise and plain language is encouraged:

“Plain language refers to a communication style that avoids or limits the use of code words (e.g., “10-codes”), abbreviations, and jargon, as appropriate, during incidents involving more than a single agency.

Clear, easy-to-follow, concise information and directions allow for rapid, common understanding and promote information sharing.

“Communicating with the Public

During your disaster preparations, mitigations, and response, you may encounter people with Limited English Proficiency (LEP) or Access and Functional Needs (AFN) (e.g., hearing impaired). You should ensure that communications with these individuals are as effective as communication with others.”

[https://emilms.fema.gov/is_0315a/groups/143.html]

Combatting Low-literacy

Through both the focus groups and other workshops COAD has conducted with community members, low-literacy continues to pose a problem for the older adults in Napa County. About 1/3 of the Spanish-speaking older adults COAD has interacted with during workshops have low-literacy or require assistance when reading and writing in their preferred language. Although at a much lower rate, a few English-speakers have also expressed they aren't too confident in their reading skill when presented with COAD's post-workshop surveys – more research is needed to have a better idea of the literacy rate amongst older adults in Napa County to determine better communication methods. All of the older adults and many of the parents who participated in the focus groups agreed that the messaging could generally be simpler, more visual, or even be available as an auditory message.

- 30% of the participants stated that colors or other visuals would help those with low-literacy
- 83% of the participants wanted to see more maps being used or referenced in the emergency messaging they received – referring to Genasys Protect.
- Some mentioned the possibility of using auditory emergency messages, in the form of robocalling, to better reach older adults with low literacy and include communities with non-written languages like Mixteco. Adding auditory messaging as an option for emergency messages increases inclusivity for older adults and other demographics.

Diversifying Methods of Communication

There are many geographical obstacles that inhibit certain communities from accessing emergency information through traditional methods of communication. This could be due to low broadband connection, low or no cell service, and/or low literacy. Diversifying methods of communication and promoting these outlets before a disaster will help the community stay informed during emergencies.

- The older adults who participated in these focus groups mentioned that they rely on the radio, TV, and neighbors or friends to receive their emergency information.
- COAD learned through its *Language Access Study* published in 2023 that most Spanish-speaking older adults rely on in person communication from trusted family members and friends to receive their information. Continuing to support programs such as COAD's Meet Your Neighbor fosters connections amongst neighbors to build more resilient communities within neighborhoods. Continuing to fund and support non-traditional methods of checking in on vulnerable groups will provide the space for people to engage with their community and hear from their neighbors or acquaintances when an incident occurs. Half of the older men that participated in the focus groups were not connected to alerts, and relied on their neighbors knocking on their door to know there was an evacuation order in place. This can be especially true for rural communities where there is low broadband and lack of cell service to be able to rely on County alerts alone for emergency messaging.
- Leveraging the connections that COAD and community-based organizations, community resource centers, school districts, and other trusted messengers have with the community can help amplify emergency messaging because they're already connected to the community. Creating new connections and fostering current partnerships with COAD and member CBO's can serve as non-traditional methods for relaying critical information out to the community in times of disaster.

As Napa County continues to look for more opportunities to improve community safety with emergency alerts, it is important to take into account the lived experience of the community who will ultimately be receiving these messages. Clearly stating who the message sender is will continue to foster trust that the messages are vetted and coming from a reliable source. Continuing to work towards consistency in messaging, regardless of who the message sender is, will benefit both English and Spanish-speakers to better understand the alerts during emergencies. Napa Valley COAD and its partners will continue to support Napa County in these efforts.

“Yo no sé cómo usar [las alertas]
[...] mejor que me llamen.”

“I don't know how to use [the alerts]
[...] it's better if they call me.”

“[...] aquí no tenemos señal de teléfono
[...] es difícil comunicarse”

“[...] We don't have cell service here [...] it's difficult to communicate”

“Uso la radio, la tele [...] KBBF [...]”

“I use the radio, TV [...] KBBF [...]”

“[...] le pregunto a mi hija, ella sabe de esas cosas [...]”

“[...] I ask my daughter, she knows about those things [...]”

CHALLENGING GAPS AND POTENTIAL ACTIONS

There are gaps in the current emergency messaging system that are more difficult to address such as the limited and lack of cell service in rural communities, the digital divide with older adults, and addressing low literacy. COAD’s Communications and Language Access subcommittee has discussed potential actions to mitigate some of these challenges, but they may take years and substantial funding to bring to fruition.

- Those living in rural communities like Pope Valley and Angwin have limited or zero cell service in their community. Although most residents in these communities are signed up for emergency alerts because of their experience with wildfires and evacuations, many do not receive them in a timely manner until they make it down or over Howell Mountain. These communities are also out of the range of local radio stations such as KVON and KVYN. Fortunately, Winedown Media has expressed that their Spanish channel (1440 AM) can reach these rural communities during emergencies, but none of the participants of the Angwin focus group made mention of using this as a resource. KBBF is another great radio station used by many Spanish-speakers in up valley, like Calistoga; however, folks from Angwin and Pope Valley are not usually within range to hear it. It’s worth investigating how else we might diversify communication streams to reach this community. There is already work in progress to increase the broadband in rural communities through the Napa County Broadband Partnership.
- The digital divide has and will always continue to be an obstacle for access and inclusion with the older adults in Napa County. It’s great to see the expanded functionality of the new emergency messaging system, but unfortunately it has become too complex for many older adults to sign up and create an account. COAD conducted an Alerts Workshop with older adults in St Helena, and it took almost two hours to sign up a small group of people. Many didn’t know how to use their phones and/or didn’t remember their passwords for downloading apps, and they all expressed that they didn’t have anyone at home to help them with technology. One way to mitigate this obstacle could be to continue partnering with and supporting COAD and its member agencies to host workshops on how to use technology for

accessing resources. This could include signing up for alerts, but may also connect these individuals to other local resources. It will be difficult to reach the older adults that decide to disconnect from emerging technology because they simply do not want to deal with it.

- Addressing the low literacy rate amongst the older generation can be a challenge because many of these people decide to rely on friends and family members to look through important documents and emergency messaging, so there is no need for them to learn how to read so late in their lives. One of the first parent focus groups COAD met with mentioned the need for a robocalling option when it comes to emergency alerts. This way, an automated emergency message would be spoken aloud to the message receiver, creating better access. An option such as this would also provide inclusion to indigenous languages such as Mixteco to be included, since it's not a written language. This potential action has many obstacles, one of which would be whether or not Everbridge or other alert systems have the capacity to send auditory messages. Another obstacle would be having enough experts in the different variants of language and culture that Mixteco and other indigenous languages come in. Including indigenous languages would also mean there would have to be inclusion of other threshold languages in Napa County such as Tagalog, Hindi, and Chinese amongst others. This would require substantial funding and capacity building on the County's part to implement these changes.

CONCLUSION/SHORT-TERM SOLUTIONS

Although addressing the more challenging gaps may not be immediate, there are other opportunities of improvement that can be implemented in the short term through mutually beneficial partnerships between Napa County and COAD and its member organizations.

- Creating a guide or template for how to structure emergency messages throughout Napa County and its municipalities in the County Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) may be a good starting point for creating more uniform alerts with clear calls to action in both English and Spanish. An additional study may need to be conducted to find a more efficient template for emergency messaging that captures the critical information needed for people to respond to emergencies in a simple and concise manner.
- Encouraging and implementing a review process or co-creation of non-English messages would improve the efficacy of Spanish messages.
- Adding colors associated with the severity of the incidents can help people visually see when a message is an alert or advisory, and helps those with low-literacy understand how dangerous the situation is.

- Creating a glossary of emergency terms for consistent messaging would reduce confusion.
- Partnering with COAD and its member agencies to provide trainings to the community on these terms as part of emergency preparedness. Leveraging these relationships will help to amplify county messaging, diversify the methods of emergency messaging in low broadband areas, and connect to individuals with low literacy. COAD's Meet Your Neighbor program, which fosters connections with neighbors to build community resilience, is a great example of a non-traditional method of emergency communication.
- The focus groups revealed that community members trust the links at the end of the emergency messages, and have stated they would like to find additional information on the webpage they're directed to, while having short concise messaging in the text alerts.

The current County alert system is already identified as a trusted source of official information for community members who are already signed up. Listening to the needs of the community and implementing changes to the existing systems to reflect these needs continues to promote trust and improves the effectiveness of emergency communications and the community response during a disaster. Local government, jurisdictions, and COAD and its member agencies will continue to work together to address these gaps and challenges in emergency communications. Together we can build a more resilient Napa County.

APPENDICES

Facilitator's Guide - English & Spanish

Emergency Alert Samples

APPENDIX A - FACILITATOR'S GUIDE

The Facilitator's Guide was made in collaboration with members of COAD's Communication and Language Access Subcommittee. This guide served as a template to lead the discussion with the focus groups. The questions are open-ended and follow-up questions are provided in case the participants needed clarification for what the question was asking. Most of conversation was free-flowing and these questions provided structure in the case the conversation began to divert to unrelated topics. The translation of this guide was vetted through native Spanish-speakers in the subcommittee.



COAD Communications & Language Access Focus

Group Facilitator's Guide - ENGLISH

Introduction

Hello, my name is _____, I'm here today in partnership with Napa Valley COAD to learn how people in the community receive information during an emergency. The purpose for this focus group is to find what works and what needs improvement when it comes to communication during emergencies, so that everyone knows what they are supposed to do when they receive an alert.

Who is Napa Valley COAD? – Napa Valley Community Organizations Active in Disaster, also known as COAD, support the community to prepare for and recover from disaster. We are a coalition of non-profits and faith-based organizations within Napa County that leads the response efforts to support the community in areas outside the scope of government. After an emergency, COAD brings together all the community and faith-based organizations to provide critical services to recover from the disaster. We work to minimize duplication of efforts so we can maximize the resources available. Learn more about us: napavalleycoad.org

I am going to ask you a few questions to get your thoughts on your experience receiving emergency messages and how clear the messages are for you. We are not the government; we are a non-profit focused on emergency preparedness and recovery that is looking to improve emergency messages received by community members. We want to hear about your personal experiences. Please feel free to share honestly. There are no right or wrong answers. I may ask follow-up questions based on the conversation, and redirect the group to make sure we stay on topic.

Let's review some ground rules for our discussion today (to share with participants).

- Please be present and attentive.
- We want you all to participate if you feel comfortable sharing your story.
- It is always OK to "pass" if you do not have something to share.
- Please only one person speaking at a time so we can all pay attention to the person speaking. If you have already voiced your thoughts, please let others have an opportunity.
- Listen to and respect the viewpoints of others.

APPENDIX A - FACILITATOR'S GUIDE

Ground rule notes for the facilitator:

No one or two individuals should dominate a discussion. If you have already voiced your ideas, let others have an opportunity. Help people to get to their point.

Thank you so much for taking time out of your day to help us with our goal on improving emergency messages to community members. Are there any questions before we begin?

Focus Group Questions

- 1) **Main question: In past emergencies (e.g. the pandemic and fires), what has been your experience receiving emergency messages on your phone?**

Goal to help explain the question if people need more clarification: We want to know where people get their information during a disaster and whether or not they're signed up to Alert Napa County (previously known as Nixle).

Follow-up Question if need to probe further:

Are there other ways you receive emergency information?

(E.g.: from your neighbors, family, family resource center, etc.)

- 2) **During these emergencies, do you feel you received messages in time to take the appropriate actions?**

Goal to help explain the question if people need more clarification:

To find out if people are receiving their messages in a timely manner in their appropriate language so they can take the appropriate action.

Follow-up Question if need to probe further:

What made you concerned that you had not received the message timely? What were your cues?

- 3) **Are the terms used in emergency messages clear to you? Is it clear what you are being asked to do by the message (e.g. evacuate, shelter in place or where to go)?**

Goal to help explain the question if people need more clarification: To find out where messages are confusing and could be improved by using different words or approaches.

Follow-up Question if need to probe further:

Are you receiving messages in your primary language or your language choice?

Are translations accurate for you? What words don't make sense to you?

Example pending - Show an example of one of the translations may help them determine if the translation is accurate and understandable

APPENDIX A - FACILITATOR'S GUIDE

4) What could we do to improve the emergency messages you receive?

Goal to help explain the question if people need more clarification: To find the most effective way to format messages with consistent terms for a better understanding of the calls to action during an emergency.

Follow-up Question if need to probe further:

How can messages be made easier to understand? Would it help to have the same words all the time?

5) Are there any comments you would like to add that weren't discussed today?

Thank you for taking the time to talk with us today. This information will help to improve the emergency messages and promote greater language inclusion. We appreciate your time and your openness in sharing your opinions and perspectives.



Guía para el moderador del grupo de discusión sobre comunicaciones y acceso lingüístico del COAD - ESPAÑOL

Introducción

Hola, mi nombre es _____, estoy aquí hoy en asociación con Napa Valley COAD para aprender cómo las personas de la comunidad reciben información durante una emergencia. El propósito de este grupo es encontrar qué funciona y qué se necesita mejorar en la comunicación durante emergencias, para que todos sepan qué necesitan hacer si reciben una alerta.

¿Quiénes somos en el Napa Valley COAD? – Las organizaciones comunitarias activas ante desastres, también conocidas como COAD, apoyamos a la comunidad para prepararse y recuperarse de un desastre natural. Somos una organización sin fines de lucro en el condado de Napa que trabaja para ayudar a la comunidad en lugares fuera del alcance de gobierno. Tras una emergencia, COAD reúne a toda la comunidad y diferentes organizaciones para brindar servicios necesarios para recuperarse del desastre. Nos enfocamos en disminuir la duplicación de esfuerzos con el fin de incrementar los recursos disponibles. Para obtener más información sobre nosotros: napavalleycoad.org

Les haremos algunas preguntas para saber su opinión sobre su experiencia al recibir mensajes de emergencia y qué tan claros son los mensajes para ustedes. No somos el gobierno; Somos una organización de la comunidad centrada en la preparación y recuperación para emergencias que busca mejorar los mensajes de emergencia recibidos por los miembros de la comunidad. Queremos escuchar sus experiencias personales. Siéntanse libres de compartir honestamente. No hay respuestas correctas o incorrectas. Vamos hacer preguntas de seguimiento basadas en las conversaciones y redirigir al grupo para asegurarnos de que nos mantengamos en el tema.

APPENDIX A - FACILITATOR'S GUIDE

Vamos a repasar algunas reglas básicas para nuestra discusión de hoy (para compartir con los participantes).

- Estar presentes y atentos
- Queremos que todos participen si se sienten cómodos en compartir sus historias
- Siempre está bien "pasar" si no tienen algo que compartir
- Por favor, solo hable una persona a la vez para que todos podamos prestarle atención. Si ya han expresado su opinión, dejen que otros tengan esa misma oportunidad.
- Es importante escuchar y respetar los puntos de vista de los demás

Notas sobre reglas básicas para el facilitador:

Ninguna persona o dos deben dominar una discusión. Si ya han expresado sus ideas, dejen que otros tengan la oportunidad. Ayuden a las personas a llegar a su punto de vista.

Muchas gracias por tomarse el tiempo de su día para ayudarnos con nuestro objetivo de mejorar los mensajes de emergencia para los miembros de nuestra comunidad. ¿Hay alguna pregunta antes de comenzar?

Preguntas para el grupo:

- 1) **Pregunta principal:** En emergencias pasadas (por ejemplo, la pandemia y los incendios) ¿Cuáles ha sido sus experiencias al recibir mensajes de emergencia en sus teléfonos?

Objetivo de ayudar a explicar la pregunta si las personas necesitan más aclaraciones:

Queremos saber de dónde obtienen las personas su información durante un desastre y si están inscritos o no al Alert Napa County (anteriormente conocido como Nixle).

Pregunta de seguimiento si es necesario investigar más a fondo:

¿Existen otras formas en donde recibe su información durante una emergencia?

- Por ejemplo: de sus vecinos, familiares, centro de recursos familiares, etc.

- 2) **Durante estas emergencias, ¿sienten que recibieron mensajes a tiempo para tomar las acciones adecuadas?**

Objetivo de ayudar a explicar la pregunta si las personas necesitan más aclaraciones:

Para saber si las personas reciben sus mensajes de manera oportuna en el idioma apropiado para que puedan tomar las medidas adecuadas.

Pregunta de seguimiento si es necesario investigar más a fondo:

¿Qué le hizo pensar que no había recibido el mensaje a tiempo? ¿Cuáles fueron las señales?

- 3) **¿Le resultan claros los términos utilizados en los mensajes de emergencia? ¿Está claro lo que se les piden que hagan en el mensaje (por ejemplo, evacuar, refugiarse en algún lugar o adónde ir)?**

APPENDIX A - FACILITATOR'S GUIDE

Objetivo de ayudar a explicar la pregunta si las personas necesitan más aclaraciones:

Descubrir dónde los mensajes son confusos y podrían mejorarse mediante el uso de diferentes palabras o enfoques.

Pregunta de seguimiento si es necesario investigar más a fondo:

- ¿Reciben mensajes en su idioma principal o en su idioma elegido?
- ¿Creen que las traducciones que usan en los mensajes tienen sentido?
- ¿Qué palabras no tienen sentido para ustedes?

Ejemplo pendiente: mostrar un ejemplo de una de las traducciones puede ayudarles a determinar si la traducción es precisa y comprensible.

4) ¿Qué podríamos hacer para mejorar los mensajes de emergencia que reciben?

Objetivo de ayudar a explicar la pregunta si las personas necesitan más aclaraciones:

Encontrar la forma más efectiva de formatear los mensajes con términos consistentes para una mejor comprensión de los llamados a la acción durante una emergencia.

Pregunta de seguimiento si es necesario investigar más a fondo:

- ¿Cómo se pueden hacer los mensajes más fáciles de entender? ¿Ayudaría tener las mismas palabras todo el tiempo?

5) ¿Hay algún comentario que le gustaría agregar que no se haya discutido hoy?

Gracias por tomarse el tiempo para hablar con nosotros hoy. Esta información nos ayudará a mejorar los mensajes de emergencia y promover una mayor inclusión lingüística. Apreciamos sus comentarios y su tiempo 😊

APPENDIX B - EMERGENCY ALERT SAMPLES

COAD provided sample alerts to the participants of the focus groups to look over real emergency messages that have been used in the community to alert the public about real events. Although some participants did have specific examples of messages they have received in the past that they could share with us, most could not recall specific examples. We provided these samples so everyone could participate in giving their honest feedback on the their impressions of the emergency alerts that are used in their community, even those who are not signed up to Alert Napa County. Sample alerts were selected from those which generated questions or identified as being unclear by community members.



GRUPO DE DISCUSIÓN SOBRE COMUNICACIONES Y ACCESO LINGÜÍSTICO DE COAD

APPENDIX B - EMERGENCY ALERT SAMPLES

[« Back](#) | [Incendio de 15 acres Coombsville Road](#)

2023-07-05 14:13:34 PDT



Incendio de vegetación de 15 acres Coombsville Road al este de First Avenue. Manténgase alejado del área. Evacuaciones voluntarias al norte de Coombsville Road hacia el área de Monte Vista.



Incendio de vegetación de 15 acres Coombsville Road al este de First Avenue. Manténgase alejado del área. Evacuaciones voluntarias al norte de Coombsville Road hacia el área de Monte Vista.

Para personalizar o modificar su suscripción de notificaciones, haga clic [AQUI](#).

[« Back](#) | [Área de evacuación de incendios al norte de Coombsville entre First Ave/Montecito Blvd](#)

2023-07-05 14:46:17 PDT



Área de evacuaciones obligatorias al norte de Coombsville entre First Ave/Montecito Blvd.

Los evacuados pueden ir a los terrenos de Napa Expo en 3rd Street.



Área de evacuaciones obligatorias al norte de Coombsville entre First Ave/Montecito Blvd.

Los evacuados pueden ir a los terrenos de Napa Expo en 3rd Street.

Para personalizar o modificar su suscripción de notificaciones, haga clic [AQUI](#).

APPENDIX B - EMERGENCY ALERT SAMPLES

[« Back](#) | [El punto de reunificación de evacuación de incendios es Napa Expo Grounds 575 3rd Street](#)

2023-07-05 15:18:41 PDT



Acceso a la Reunificación Residencial Napa Expo a través de la puerta de la calle Juarez

Acceso a la reunificación familiar/estudiante Napa Expo Grounds 575 Third St Gate



Acceso a la Reunificación Residencial Napa Expo a través de la puerta de la calle Juarez

Acceso a la reunificación familiar/estudiante Napa Expo Grounds 575 Third St Gate

Para personalizar o modificar su suscripción de notificaciones, haga clic [AQUÍ](#).

[« Back](#) | [Los semáforos de la autopista 29 y la avenida Salvador están apagados. Utilice rutas de viaje alternativas.](#)

2024-02-28 14:01:39 PST



Los semáforos de la autopista 29 y la avenida Salvador están apagados. Trate la intersección como una parada de cuatro vías. Utilice rutas de viaje alternativas.

CALTRANS ha sido informado del problema. ETA para la restauración desconocida.



Los semáforos de la autopista 29 y la avenida Salvador están apagados. Trate la intersección como una parada de cuatro vías. Utilice rutas de viaje alternativas.

CALTRANS ha sido informado del problema. ETA para la restauración desconocida.

Para personalizar o modificar su suscripción de notificaciones, haga clic [AQUÍ](#).

APPENDIX B - EMERGENCY ALERT SAMPLES

[« Back](#) | [Evacuaciones de incendios de Coombsville levantadas. A los residentes se les permite regresar al área.](#)

2023-07-05 16:42:42 PDT



Evacuaciones de incendios de Coombsville levantadas. A los residentes se les permite regresar al área. El fuego está 100% contenido.



Evacuaciones de incendios de Coombsville levantadas. A los residentes se les permite regresar al área. El fuego está 100% contenido.

Para personalizar o modificar su suscripción de notificaciones, haga clic [AQUÍ](#).

[La carretera del bosque petrificado está cerrada en ambas direcciones debido a que un árbol caído bloquea ambos carriles. Se desconoce la hora estimada de reapertura.](#)

2024-02-04 10:54:53 PST



La carretera del bosque petrificado está cerrada en ambas direcciones debido a que un árbol caído bloquea ambos carriles. Se desconoce la hora estimada de reapertura.



La carretera del bosque petrificado está cerrada en ambas direcciones debido a que un árbol caído bloquea ambos carriles. Se desconoce la hora estimada de reapertura.

APPENDIX B - EMERGENCY ALERT SAMPLES

La Oficina de Servicios de Emergencia esta en comunicaci3n con PG&E sobre la perdida de luz por varios areas de el condado.PG&E nos ha avisado que han llegado a el limte que clasifican como "Major Event" (Evento Grande), y hora estan en la respuesta de "

2024-02-04 19:24:40 PST



La Oficina de Servicios de Emergencia esta en comunicaci3n con PG&E sobre la perdida de luz por varios areas de el condado.PG&E nos ha avisado que han llegado a el limte que clasifican como "Major Event" (Evento Grande), y hora estan en la respuesta de "make safe" que quiere decir, asegurar que este seguro.



La Oficina de Servicios de Emergencia est3 en comunicaci3n con PG&E sobre la perdida de luz por varios areas de el condado.PG&E nos ha avisado que han llegado a el limte que clasifican como "Major Event" (Evento Grande), y hora estan en la respuesta de "make safe" que quiere decir, asegurar que este seguro.PGE sigue respondiendo a nuevos incidentes de lineas tumbadas en las carreteras y condiciones peligrosas.Esto puede dilata el tiempo para cuando puedan restaurar la luz para los leguares sin electricidad. El pron3stico del clima nos avisa que va haber mas lluvia y vientos impactando nuestra zona a lo maximo hasta las 10PM. Estamos vigilando la situaci3n en los caminos, el sistema de 911, y la situaci3n con la electricidad. Por favor visita nuestra pagina de web sobré consejos cuando no hay luz (<https://readynapacounty.org/212/Power-Outage>) y tambien puede chequear las condiciones de electricidad en la p3gina de PG&E (<https://pgealerts.alerts.pge.com/outage-tools/outage-map/#current>) o llamar a el 1-800-743-5000. Como siempre, en caso de emergencia, llame a 911.