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Resilience Report

Brief insights and the latest innovations in emergency management and health security.

This week's Resilience Report takes a look at the evolving role of social media in crisis communications. We also examine COP27, new programs and reports from FEMA and the GAO, and the latest in public health. Finally, we prepare for next week's Thanksgiving festivities and the start to the holiday shopping season.



Outcomes of COP27

- The 2022 United National Climate Change Conference was held for the 27th time and [COP27](#) discussions included President Biden announcing [new initiatives](#) to strengthen U.S. leadership in addressing and tackling climate change.
- A [report](#) published this week by Rebuild by Design identified that 90% of U.S. counties experienced a federal climate disaster during the period of 2011 to 2021. The report provides several recommendations for mitigating the impacts of climate change through public policy, collaboration, infrastructure, etc.

EM Round Up

- FEMA is accepting nominations for its [Emergency Manager Exchange \(EMX\) Program](#) through November 30, 2022. The program allows SLTT emergency managers to work at FEMA during a short-term assignment to contribute to policy and program implementation. A FEMA employee is also sent to the organization that is 'exchanging' an employee to support capabilities.
- A recent [GAO Report](#) recommends actions to be implemented to improve the federal approach to disaster recovery. The report highlights that disaster recovery is currently fragmented across federal agencies, creating both benefits and challenges. The report comes just a day after a blog focused on [Puerto Rico's](#) delayed hurricane recovery efforts was also published by GAO.

The Latest in Public Health

- The Senate [resolved to end](#) the national emergency declared in 2020 in response to COVID-19 this week. Yet last week, officials had announced that the COVID-19 [public health emergency](#) will remain in place until at least January of 2023. On the state side, the [National Academy for State Health Policy](#) tracks COVID-19 public health emergency declarations and mask requirements.
- As healthcare responds to the respiratory illness 'trifecta,' leaders in [Washington](#), [Oregon](#), [Colorado](#), and [more](#) are warning that pediatric hospitals are nearing capacity due to RSV surge. The shortage of both [pediatric beds](#) and specialized [staff](#) is exacerbating the challenges.



The importance of social media in crisis communications has become increasingly clear as posts about disasters can help strengthen [situational awareness for constituents](#) in real-time. While several studies suggest that merely 10% of the U.S. population turned to social media for information during a crisis in 2011, this number has grown to about [70% at present](#). Let's take a look at what the most recent data and viewpoints say about utilizing social media prior to, during, and following disasters.

- What was it like before social media? With Twitter being founded in 2006 and Meta (Facebook) in 2004, social media was not in widespread use when Hurricane Katrina impacted New Orleans in 2005. As such, cable news and internet sites were the primary sources of how to receive information about the hurricane, particularly for those not directly impacted by the storm. The media coverage of Hurricane Katrina has been [widely criticized](#), and communications professionals argue that social media would have contributed to a [more humanized portrayal](#) of residents impacted by the disaster and, possibly, a quicker government response.
- So when did social media really take off as a source for information during a disaster? It appears to vary by region but some argue that it started with Hurricanes [Sandy](#), [Harvey](#), or [Irma](#). Over the most recent years, however, the role of social media in crisis communications has really been solidified as experienced during Hurricane [Ida](#), and most recently Hurricane Ian.
- What's the catch? While use of social media during disasters has benefits, we would be remiss to not acknowledge some of its detriments, including that followers can be exposed to [misinformation](#) and rumors and/or lured into [scams](#). For example, following the 2013 [Boston Marathon Bombing](#), a number of rumors went viral and while some were later corrected, corrective tweets were minimal compared to the volume of tweets related to the incorrect rumor.

Social Media and Emergency Management

As an emergency manager, how can you ensure that social media plays the correct role in your community prior to, during, or following disaster? With the goal of social media to complement crisis communications, here are some tips for solidifying a social media strategy ahead of the next emergency.

- **Recommendation #1: Establish your social media credibility as an official source before disaster strikes:** With a rise in imposter accounts possible due to [Twitter's](#) changes to its verification process (a still evolving situation at time of writing), it is only increasingly important that emergency managers are able to establish their social media accounts as a go-to for disaster-related information impacting their community **before** disaster. Build your network before a disaster by collaborating with other local sources and mediums (like community newsletters) to ensure stakeholders are aware of trusted sources to receive information from.
- **Recommendation #2: Monitor social media during a disaster through social listening.** Social media should not be used by local jurisdictions merely to produce information but also to monitor social media for conversations related to an incident. Rumors, misinformation, and false information may proliferate. Learn more about [countering false information](#) on social media in disasters.
- **Recommendation #3: Provide staff with the needed education and training to leverage social media to its potential.** FEMA's independent study course for [Social Media in Emergency Management](#) is available as are tools from [ASPR](#), [FEMA](#), and [Ready.gov](#). This [study](#) also provides a different approach to how local emergency management agencies can use social media to disperse essential information beyond the role of a PIO.



Giving Thanks

- As Thanksgiving approaches next week, here are [34 unique traditions](#) to try this year. Looking for a new recipe? We have [those](#) too! And, don't forget about the [Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade](#), which will include 5 parade debuts.

One Does Not Simply Not Watch Football on Thanksgiving

- Besides the food, family, friends, and Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade, football reigns supreme on Thanksgiving Day. Keep in the loop on all things [Thanksgiving Day Football](#) here or learn how the [NFL popularized](#) Thanksgiving Day Football all the way back in 1934.

Savvy Shopping

- Right after Thanksgiving, Black Friday and Cyber Monday will kickoff the spree of holiday spending. Find the deals you are looking for on [Black Friday](#) and [Cyber Monday](#). As you're shopping, be cautious of [scams](#) – if the deal is too good to be true, it very well might not be.



We're Here to Support You

If you need help with disaster preparedness, COVID-19 AARs, or anything in between, send us an email at donna@constantassociates.com. We are here to help.

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