
For Immediate Release**#32-18****NEW YORK CITY EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT HOSTS COMMUNITY
PREPAREDNESS BOOT CAMP IN HARLEM***Two-day session teaches leaders to build resilient neighborhoods through community planning*

June 15, 2018 – The New York City Emergency Management Department hosted the first session of a two-day Community Preparedness Boot Camp in Harlem on Wednesday, June 13. The training, held at the Salvation Army Corps Community Center in Harlem, targeted community and faith leaders from local organizations, congregations, associations, coalitions, Community Emergency Response Teams (CERTs), and networks interested in creating an emergency plan for their neighborhoods. The second session is scheduled for June 27.

“During emergencies, New Yorkers often look to their community for support,” said **New York City Emergency Management Commissioner Joseph Esposito**. “The Community Preparedness Boot Camp gives community and faith leaders the knowledge to empower them to prepare their neighborhoods for emergencies.”

“The New York City Emergency Management Community Preparedness Boot Camp is a much-needed resource,” said **Athena Moore, director of the Northern Manhattan Office of the Manhattan Borough President**. “The training allows community leaders to work proactively to bridge the gap between government resources and community needs.”

NYC Emergency Management’s Community Preparedness Boot Camp aims to connect community leaders and organizations with the resources available to prepare them before the next emergency. Part of the two-day session will focus on building more communities that are resilient.

Carol Johnson, a member of New York City Emergency Management’s Manhattan North 11 CERT, uses her experience in emergency response to affect change in her own community.

“After the 2015 Lower East Side gas explosion, the response was quick. Community leaders were on the ground, resources were being moved, and communication was flowing,” **Johnson** recalls. “The most important factor in the efficient response was the work that the community had done prior to the emergency – creating a plan. After witnessing what could be done through preparation, I had to start a similar coalition for my neighborhood of East Harlem.”

In September 2015, Carol launched the East Harlem Community Organizations Active in Disaster (COAD) to connect the community with resources prior to an emergency. Alongside 14 partner organizations, the COAD works to prepare the community for emergencies through training, while creating emergency plans for response and recovery.

The first session focused on:

- **Defining Community & Emergency Networks** – Community emergency networks help local communities share information during all phases of emergencies. Networks also help identify community gaps in services and offer a structure for community-based emergency planning. The training informed attendees about how to start or join a community emergency network and noted key organizations community leaders should include based on their specific needs.
- **Creating a Community Response Portal** – Online portals like [Samaritan](#) allow community leaders to connect to New York City Emergency Management and their neighborhoods. Community organizations can use Samaritan to reach community members and City officials by posting unmet needs such as food, water, and clothing, to the portal during emergencies. Government officials can also use the portal to post available resources such as open shelters and commodity distribution points throughout the City.

Community Emergency Planning Toolkit:

New York City Emergency Management’s [Community Emergency Planning toolkit](#) is an interactive booklet tailored to any community, and can be used by congregations, housing developments, tenant or civic associations, community boards or coalitions, community-based organizations, or CERTs. From emergencies like hurricanes and heat waves to fires and utility disruptions, the toolkit reviews the varying threats and hazards New Yorkers may face and provides an overview of the key response roles communities can play to mitigate risks.

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