



# tools for a sustainable democracy

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OUR  
SPEAKERS

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# Chris Daggett (@ChrisJDaggett)



- ✓ current President at Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation (@grdodge)
- ✓ ran for governor in 2009 as an independent candidate
- ✓ Deputy Chief of Staff to Governor Tom Kean
- ✓ former Regional Administrator of the USEPA
- ✓ former Commissioner of the NJDEP

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# political capital: **governance**

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- ✓ an active & **empowered citizenry**
- ✓ elected representatives are accountable & **transparent**
- ✓ government provides **efficient services**,  
timely, accurate & relevant **information**,  
and is responsive to **citizen input**

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# themes to new civic engagement actions

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1. provide access to public information
  - digital formats
  - open government data (i.e. raw data)
2. communicate important information
  - emergency & daily routine strategies
  - digital & traditional means
3. support citizen engagement in governing process
  - public meetings & public services
  - digital & traditional means

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# Alex Torpey (@alextorpey)



- ✓ Founder & Managing Partner at Veracity Media (@VeracityMedia)
- ✓ former Village President of South Orange, NJ
- ✓ youngest mayor in NJ history
- ✓ Founder of Rethink Leadership
- ✓ adjunct professor on governance & technology at Seton Hall
- ✓ a leading voice on millennial civics leadership, technology and transparency in government

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# Carol Spencer (@CarolSpencerNJ)

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- ✓ Digital & Social Media Consultant at Stormzero LLC
- ✓ Finance Director at National Assn of Government Web Professionals
- ✓ former Digital & Social Media Manager for Morris County
- ✓ former Mayor of Denville, NJ
- ✓ a leading expert in emergency communications and social media in government settings

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## From the EPA:

- *Sustainability is the capacity for human health and well being, economic vitality and prosperity, environmental abundance.*
- *Resilience is the capacity to overcome unexpected problems, adapt to change, prepare for and survive catastrophes.*

## From FEMA:

- *National Preparedness Goal grouped into 5 Missions: Prevention, Protection, Mitigation, Response, Recovery*
- *Public Information and Warning falls under all 5:*
  - Deliver coordinated, prompt, reliable, and actionable information to the whole community through the use of clear, consistent, accessible, and culturally and linguistically appropriate methods to effectively relay information regarding any threat or hazard, as well as the actions being taken and the assistance being made available, as appropriate.



# Communication is Key

- Creating sustainable communities requires civic involvement.
- Civic involvement flows from an informed citizenry.
- An informed citizenry promotes active, participatory citizenship.
- Participatory citizenship spreads to local civic organizations, businesses, government agencies, and other local institutions.
- Failure to plan, prepare and communicate will negatively impact the entire community.



## It takes time to:

- *Build media relationships*
- *Develop web pages*
- *Create and grow social media channels*
- *Write appropriate messaging*
- *Contract with local radio, cable TV*
- *Purchase anything*
- *Train personnel*
- *Market communication channels*
- *Discuss, develop, plan and practice effective, coordinated communication.*



# NJ Major Disasters or Floods

- Hurricane Floyd, Sept 1999  
*6 NJ deaths, \$53M damage*
- Severe storms, mudslides, August 2000  
*2,700 homes damaged*
- Torrential downpours, July 2004  
*1,000 homes damaged*
- Hurricane Ivan, Sept 2004
- Flooding disaster, April 2005  
*43% of NJ impacted*
- Severe storms, heavy rains, June 2006 & April 2007
- Nor'easter, March 2010
- Hurricane Irene, August 2011
- Tropical Storm Lee, Sept 2011
- Halloween Snowstorm, October 2011
- Superstorm Sandy, October 2012  
*346,000 homes destroyed, 37 fatalities, Billions in damages*



# Emergency Communications

- Rapid technological changes have caused a disconnect between the way government disseminates information and the way the public wants to receive it.
- The communication portion of emergency response is often overlooked during EOP exercises.
- The public doesn't *know* emergency responders are doing anything if information isn't shared.
- Advance preparation is key to successful crisis communication.
- Aggregate and share information everywhere.
- Waiting for an emergency to develop systems and procedures is too late.
- It isn't a question of IF something will happen, it's a question of WHEN.



# Effective Communication will

- Build trust between government and citizens
- Establish the municipal channels as the recognized source of accurate information
- Eliminate rumors and straighten out misunderstandings
- Give people something to do
- Help keep people calm
- Improve public perception of an agency
- Greatly expand responder knowledge by citizens sharing of location-based information
- Direct the public to appropriate and effective resources
- Promote a sense of community through engagement



# Examples

- **CERT** (Community Emergency Response Teams)  
*Trains citizens in basic disaster response skills*  
<https://www.fema.gov/community-emergency-response-teams>
- **Middletown Township**  
Has communications (social media, citizen alert, service requests) at the top of the home page  
<http://www.middletownnj.org>
- **Princeton**  
Access Princeton, social media, email updates prominent  
<http://www.princetonnj.gov>
- **Monmouth.edu**  
NJ E-Government: Best Practices for Municipal Websites
- **Morris County**  
MCUrgent (single FB & Twitter streams to which all municipalities may post). Twitter, Facebook, blogs, widgets on web.... Info everywhere.



# Why These Actions are Important

- Completion will position your municipality for effective communication when an emergency occurs.
- Completion will ensure your municipal EOPs are current and exercised.
- Completion will better connect your municipality with its citizens.
- Completion will engage members of your community.
- Completion will develop a more knowledgeable citizenry.
- Completion will expand your volunteer base and broaden your access to the skills available right in your towns.
- Completion will result in a more sustainable and resilient community.



# Open Gov Data in Use

- Newark snow plow tracking - <http://bit.ly/newarksnowplows>
- JC bike lane map - <http://bit.ly/JCbikes>
- JC art mural map - <http://bit.ly/JCmurals>
- Chicago crime data - <http://bit.ly/Chicagocrime>
- SO online budget - <http://bit.ly/SObudget>

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# Digital Engagement in Use

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collecting public input:

- Miami-Dade County's [MyGovIdea](#)
- APA-NJ [commenting form](#)

public services:

- Washington Twp (Morris) - <http://support.wtmorris.org/>
- Hoboken - <http://www.hobokennj.org/hoboken311/>
- Princeton - <http://www.princetonnj.gov/accessprinceton/>

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