

Using Social Media During a Disaster

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Social media

forms of electronic communication (such as websites for social networking and microblogging) through which users create online communities to share information, ideas, personal messages, and other content (such as videos)

State perspective

- More listening. Less talking.
- Learn HOW to listen.
- Verify, don't (automatically) trust.
- Be ready BEFORE the disaster.
- Get your message heard.

State perspective

More listening. Less talking.

- It's more important for us (State) to monitor social media rather than push information.
- However, social media is a better choice than traditional means (e.g. press releases) to disseminate information.

State perspective

Learn HOW to listen.

- Effectively use search terms, key words, hashtags, lists, geocoding
- Utilize monitoring software, websites, search engines
- Set up news alerts
- Monitoring can be a solo or team event
- Monitoring can be done virtually anywhere

State perspective

Verify, don't (automatically) trust.

- Social media can be valuable. It can also be dangerous as false information and rumors can spread quickly.
- Follow/share verified accounts.
- Enlist other staff/volunteers to help run down information.

State perspective

Be ready BEFORE the disaster.

- Develop pre-scripted messaging.
- Incorporate social media into training/exercises.

State perspective

Get your message heard.

- Use different messaging for different platforms.
- Use widely-shared (but relevant) hashtags (e.g. #IAwx).
- Mention or tag other users or organizations.
- Cross-promotion: Share other organizations' posts, plan coordinated campaigns.
- Photos and images ALWAYS get more attention.

State perspective

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Small county social

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Large county social

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