

How to Safeguard an Entire Community Through Strong Communication

By Kathleen Ohlson, Rave Mobile Safety

Notifying residents about a public health emergency. Evacuating them before a wildfire or a hurricane strikes. Coordinating rescue efforts to a flooded neighborhood. Responding to a major car pileup on a highway.

Informing and safeguarding residents and visitors are just some of the priorities for emergency managers, 9-1-1 teams and first responders when an emergency strikes a community. One of the biggest challenges during these critical events is identifying everyone in a community, especially those who will need additional assistance and what actions these individuals will need to take. Emergency personnel don't always know where these community members live, or how many there are. It's essential for these stakeholders to have the tools to engage and communicate effectively with residents, as well as with other agencies and within their departments.

Questions to think about

Having the best tools and a strong communication strategy will ensure emergency managers can initiate their plan when an adverse event strikes, while 9-1-1 teams and first responders will have a better understanding of what's happening. These actions, along with the most accurate information, will put the community at ease.

So how do stakeholders stay engaged with residents about an event? How can they ensure everyone will be protected wherever they're located? Is there a way for stakeholders to know about residents' needs beforehand? How do emergency managers, 9-1-1 teams and first responders continually receive and share information about an ongoing incident?

Critical features for an effective response

A critical communication and collaboration platform would allow all stakeholders to effectively connect and update residents, employees and visitors during an emergency. They would be able to immediately alert everyone through multiple modes of communication at all stages of an adverse event. The platform would automatically connect to devices through Common Alerting Protocol (CAP), such as public address systems and digital signage, to share trusted information simultaneously. With multimodal messaging, there won't be a delay or gap in notifying their community as soon as possible.

Departments and agencies would also be able to communicate internally, so they'll have the most current information to respond to these emergencies and know what resources to allocate.

As an emergency evolves, the platform would also feature a tactical incident collaboration tool to assign critical tasks to stakeholders across departments and agencies. The tool would automatically communicate key information and provide access to specific resources, as well as track what actions were implemented and what activities were completed.