

Zombie Preparedness: Effective Practices in Promoting Disaster Preparedness

Thursday, September 6, 2012

3:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m. EDT

Good afternoon, everybody. Welcome to FEMA's community preparedness webinar series. Welcome to the September monthly FEMA update where our topic is zombie awareness: Effective practice and promoting disaster preparedness. A few technical considerations before we get started. Please make sure your computer speaker and volume is turned up so you can hear the proceedings sufficiently. This webinar is free and open to the public. It is also being recorded. Within 48 hours we will be posting a link to the recording as well as the presentations on Citizen Corp's website. If you look directly to your left in the chat box you can see the link to that website in our webinar library

With that, I'd like to turn the proceedings over to Dante Randazzo from FEMA's Individual and Community Preparedness Division. Dante.

Thank you, Steve. Good afternoon, everybody. As you know, this month is National Preparedness Month and we're committed to making this the best one yet. We want to provide all of our stakeholders with really creative and innovative ideas for not only what you can do during September but also beyond including for Halloween next month. This webinar is a follow-up to our presentations in June, July, and August.

In June, we've launched National Preparedness Month 2012 and our speakers from Arizona and New York City presented a few of the easy ways you, your organization, or your business or place of work can fulfill the pledge and become better prepared for disasters this year.

In July, the Corporation for National Community Service and Serve Montana discussed resources and ideas for service projects, activities and events you can organize in your own communities in September to help make them better prepared.

Last month our speakers from Ready Georgia and the Texas School Safety Center discussed ideas for creative projects and events you can use to prepare schools, children and youth this month and beyond. We also unveiled our school preparedness toolkit. All those webinars are available. Their recordings are posted to our website at CitizensCorp.gov and this month, we have zombie awareness as our topic.

Zombie preparedness messages and activities have proven to be an effective way of engaging new audiences, particularly young people who may not be familiar with what to do before, during or after a disaster and to inject a little levity into preparedness while still informing the educating people.

It's also a great way to grab attention and increase interest in general preparedness. The CDC zombie campaign which you will hear about in just a moment has been able to generate an enormous amount of publicity at very low cost. We're fortunate to have guest speakers with us today that describe some excellent ways to leverage zombie messaging to engage people in preparedness activities that will help them be prepared for actual emergencies with plenty of time to plan something for Halloween. Our first featured guest speaker is Maggie Silver of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention or CDC. Also own the line is David Degal, the CDC. Second speaker is Devan Tucking-Strickler, of Kansas Division of Emergency Management. I'd like to introduce now our first speaker, Maggie Silver.

Thank you, Dante. Thank you everyone who's tuning into today for this webinar. I hope you're able to get some great ideas from our campaign, see how we went about launching this and take it home and see if you can't do something similar either with zombies or some other pop culture reference.

So I'm going to talk about CDC's zombie preparedness campaign titled, Preparedness 101 Zombie Apocalypse. We launched this in May 2011 right around the hurricane season that was gearing up and our basic campaign objectives were 1) to raise awareness about emergency preparedness, again with hurricane season coming up, attract new audiences, and then also use pre-existing content and channels to keep the costs down. We have a very small office and an equally small budget, so we had to do something that wasn't going to take a lot of manpower or dollars.

So the first question we usually get is why zombies? Why did CDC decide to talk about zombies? And that really came from Twitter. We had asked our Twitter followers following the Japan earthquake tsunami response, what are you prepared for and we got a variety of responses back including hurricanes, tornadoes and the like. But a lot of people were often mentioning zombies which we thought was really interesting. We decided to keep that in the back of our minds as we were planning for future events and of course when hurricane season came around and we wanted to spice up our general preparedness message, we decided why not give people what they want and tell them how to prepare for zombies.

So we decided to put the initial campaign out on our Public Health Matters blog, like I was saying before, we wanted to keep costs low and use pre-existing content and channels and so our Public Health Matters blog has been around for several years. We use this on a regular basis to put out health messages, information about public health preparedness, so we thought it was really the perfect channel for this. And we really just put together a short tongue and cheek blog post that used our basic message which FEMA and Red Cross also use to get a kit, make a plan, be informed but we just tied that to zombies because if you're prepared for a zombie apocalypse, you're prepared for any emergency. And we followed this scene throughout the blog but made sure to relate back to what we call real emergencies, things like earthquake, tornadoes, floods and the like and we linked that to our website to make sure people weren't only being entertained by the blog posts but they were also being driven to our longstanding content about these real emergencies and what we really wanted them to prepare for.

So to get the word out about all of our blogs, we use these general channels. There was one slight difference for the zombie blog, we did contact some mainstream media outlets that we know just to give them a heads up. Hey if you have a slow week next week we might have something for you. We had no idea what this was going to turn into and we actually probably didn't need to give anyone a heads up but we did give a few of our contacts a heads up we'll have something interesting coming out but like I said our general Twitter, Facebook feeds we sent something out on, GovDelivery is our listserve, so you might be signed up for some of the delivery messages already, so we also have an RSS feed and of course our website.

So this is just a basic graph of what happens. So we posted the blog on Monday, May 16 and we did the soft launch because we realized we were going out on a limb. The federal agency was talking about zombies, definitely new, not something people had done before, so we gave it a soft launch and we put something out on Twitter or Facebook and we crashed and burned, we didn't want it to be out in the social media realm without us able to control it. So soft launch on Monday and Tuesday, light media attention began. By Wednesday morning we still had our jobs. We actually had gotten a nice note from some leaders in the risk communication field, so we realized that it was okay to give the go ahead on Wednesday morning with our full social media push. We gave our first tweet out and within 10 minutes, the blog site crashed as over 30,000 people swarmed the site, so you'll notice sort of a lull in this graph until it picks up on the 18th & 19th because we were having to scramble to put together a cache site on our main CDC servers but after that the traffic exploded, over 60,000 views per hour and phones were ringing off the hook with mainstream media calling in. I think our first call was from Fox News. They called to ask if we had been hacked or if it was a hoax and we assured them no, CDC was in fact talking about zombies and they should go check out the site and find out why they need to be prepared.

So I'm going to breeze through these next few slides, they are basically just about our metrics from social media and the web but basically, Twitter was really important for us getting the word out and making this go viral, just the one Tweet that we sent out had over 70,000 clicks. There were 34,000 unique tweets and over a million people were driven to our site from Twitter in that first week alone. We also had two trends on Twitter.

While Twitter was perfect for helping us go viral, Facebook was actually better for us to track the conversation. Twitter moves very quickly so it was hard for us to follow what was being said whereas Facebook we were able to follow the responses that people were posting on to our wall and we actually saw users talking to users about their preparedness activities. So that was just a great example of how zombies were 1) grabbing people's attention and then also getting them to talk about what they were doing to prepare just in general for emergencies.

Then also on the website, another thing that we saw was that we had a huge increase in traffic to our general emergency website, so not only were people coming to read this funny tongue and cheek blog post about zombies but clicking on all of the links that we had and then being taken to our general emergency preparedness message which was really important for us, it was really the ultimate goal of this. I'd like to point this out for people who question why the government agency is talking about zombies and I like to show them this to say well, you know, it works. You pull them in with the zombies and then they stay to check out your other content.

So we have also looked at analysis of the comments that were left on the blog and based on some of our objectives for increasing knowledge about preparedness, getting people to think about preparedness behaviors and then also attracting new audiences we are able to see based on the comments that we had achieved this through a number of people who came to visit the blog and read it. You'll notice in these different categories that we have listed on this graph, they aren't mutually exclusive ever so several people talked about zombies but then also talked about their for example their preparedness behaviors.

So we also had great media coverage and that really was something that helped spread our message and helped drive additional traffic to our site and I encourage you if you are thinking about doing either a zombie event or something else, that you contact a local media outlet because they can really help you get your message out. Social media is great and it's cheap and easy to use but traditional media is still a great tool. You'll see that we've got some stats on here we reached an estimated 3.6 billion viewers in that first week alone. If we paid a private marketing firm to do this it would have cost \$3.4 million but in reality the campaign cost us \$87 for the stock photography that we used so I'd like to point this out to just say even if you have a small budget it is possible to reach a huge audience with your message. You just need to be creative about it.

So, the initial push was on the blog and then after that, after we had a great response from the public and the media, we decided to go further and we created posters, T-shirts, graphics novella which you can all view on our website. Then we also had a video contest and most importantly, we created a lot of new partnerships or strengthened existing ones. So FEMA was one of the groups that we've partnered with. We also did Run For Your Life which is an adventure race where people are chased by zombies and we got invited to a few of those so we could talk to attendees, hand out our preparedness materials. We also spoke with Max Brooks who is an author for zombie related novels, who did *World War Z* and the *Zombie Survival Guide*. We talked with Walking Dead and gotten to do a few things with them. We've been at Comi Con, Dragon Con, which are huge conventions with lots of zombie fans. And definitely an audience we normally wouldn't be able to reach out to and most importantly, we've been able to help schools, scout groups, health departments, Emergency Management agencies who are either looking to host events or want to hand out our posters and novellas at things they're doing.

So why did our zombie campaign work and why have others been so successful? And one is that we listen to our audience, the idea to do this came from a question that we posed on Twitter. We kept in mind what people told us and we used that to our advantage. The theory of combined relevance take something that your audience is interested and combining it with something that you're interested which in our case is preparedness which makes something more likely to go viral, more likely to be shared. People aren't going to share things if it's not interesting to them, if it's not funny, if it doesn't touch them in some way. So we also had a sense of humor and for the CDC who is known for being pretty straight laced and putting out scientific information and NWRs, that was definitely helped us kind of grab peoples attention. And then also we obviously had brand identity, people know CDC, we've got credibility and then timing. I don't know if you all remember May 2011 but actually the world had been predicted to end that week, so that also helped get a lot of headlines in for us on the zombie apocalypse and the impending end of the world.

So based on thinking about how this campaign worked, what can you do to create something that's equally as engaging with your community and your followers? And I'd like to suggest that people create a social media presence, if you aren't already on social media, get on there, check it out, and see what you can do. It's a great way to have two way communications and find out what your audience is interested in. It doesn't have to be a big campaign. It could just be a weekly retreat where you're asking questions or asking people to send pictures of what they're doing to prepare. Also identify influencers; if you get on social media, it's not about having a million followers. It's really about having followers who are influential, people who are going to interact with you and then share your content. That could either be partners, media, or specific communities. Obviously in this case we really want to tap into the zombie community, the Sci-Fi community, people are interested in this and they're going to share our messages and then also be innovative. Don't be afraid to take chances. We obviously went out on a limb on this and it worked, and we were very successful and we've seen a lot of other people be successful with this idea. So I think it's important to create engaging content that people are again going to be interested sharing with others; and while you're doing this, you know, don't be afraid to take chances but just make sure your message is consistent and you won't fail so long as you stick to the message that you've always given out and you stick to your credible content.

And I want to highlight a few other things that we've seen in terms of zombie content. I encourage everyone to if you want to get involved with zombies this is a great time with preparedness month and October coming up. We actually featured several groups last May on our one year anniversary for our zombie campaigns that were doing different things with zombies throughout the country. We had a lot of universities that were doing exercises; we have a picture up there of some pharmacy students at University of Rhode Island who were doing a point of dispensing exercise during the zombie outbreak. We also had Michigan State University had a whole class on zombie apocalypse, Delaware County, Ohio had a zombie exercise, the Hawaii Department of Health has done exercise videos with zombies and of course you'll hear from Kansas in a moment about what they did. But really, I think that this whole zombie movement in preparedness is a really great example of how everyone is starting to move outside of the box with their ideas. We can't be cut and dry in what we're doing if we want to engage new audiences we really have to think about what's going to be engaging, what's going to be interesting to the general public and get them involved so I look forward to your questions and I think we've got another presenter now.

Great, thank you so much, Maggie. Our second featured guest speaker is Devan Tucking-Strickler of the Kansas Division of Emergency Management.

Afternoon, everybody! When I first heard what Maggie was doing with the CDC, I was very very interested. I thought it was absolutely awesome. So you know, I kind of tested the waters and I asked my boss, hey, here is what CDC is doing. What do you think about zombies? Well of course I got some eye rolls. We're in Kansas, it's pretty conservative but I kind of kept bugging people and then finally, they're like let's give zombies a whirl. Now at that point, it was really hard to get the preparedness message across because you say to somebody, are you prepared for a disaster? Well, in all honesty a lot of times their eyes kind of glaze over and they just stare at

you so I really knew I had to find something more effective and I found out pretty quick that thing was definitely zombies.

So we went with, "Are you prepared for the unexpected?" which of course that covers tornadoes, floods, fires, any disaster, you name it. Everything is unexpected, and so you see here is our picture here. Marlo is our lovely zombie model and we needed something inexpensive just like Maggie said, so we did our own photo shoots and we kept saying, you know, stuff we could create ourselves.

So it wasn't long before we started circulating this around, stuck it out on Facebook, it kind of floated around by e-mail pretty quick and started getting attention. We went ahead and used October as our zombie preparedness month. I don't want to forget to mention last year we talked about getting a proclamation but again it was our first year so we still had some eye rolling going on. But this year, hopefully our governor is going to sign a proclamation in Kansas for zombie preparedness month in October, so I'm very excited about that.

Now like I mentioned, we did not know how this was going to go over in Kansas so we are watching things pretty carefully. I started getting stuff forwarded to me and then I started getting requests to write articles, for interviews, stuff like that. So that's when we thought wow, this thing is catching on like crazy. The zombie thing worked like a charm. It was unbelievable. You can kind of see some of the different headlines we had here. It just floated around all over. I caught newspapers in Ohio talking about it, Pennsylvania, everywhere. So it worked out perfect. We decided to unveil our zombie month at State Preparedness Day at the Kansas State Fair. We walked in there, all of us wearing black and green t-shirts with really, really large zombie silhouettes on the back, and great big texts that said "Are you prepared for the unexpected?" and for the first time, when I talked about disaster preparedness to people, they actually paid attention, looked me in the eye and had a conversation with me. We would ask them, you know, have you ever thought about zombies? You know, are you prepared for anything? And they would say, you know, excited, "Oh, yeah, you know, we've got this much food and we've got water" and they would talk for like 15-20 minutes sometimes. It was bizarre but finally I had the engagement with the population that I saw my message for preparedness was finally getting across. And we worked hand in hand with our State Citizen Corps coordinator and he knows especially with the teen population we were getting some attention which was amazing because that is one population that really rolled their eyes at us before.

Now, what we did in Kansas is we were trying to figure out with a limited budget how do we really get this thing going. You know, it's a new thing. We're really hoping we could fly with just zombies catching the attention but we really wanted it out there in the community. We have 105 counties in Kansas so we worked with the Emergency Managers and school districts and scout groups to get the message out there. We had kids that we sent out to different counties that had brochures, different ideas, stuff for kids that they could do that went along with the zombie preparedness. Counties did safety booths, safety fairs, we worked very closely with our Citizen Corps groups and they did all kinds of different events. We actually developed lesson plans specifically for zombies and you know, I'm sitting in here at my desk as a State employee going wow, this is the most awesome thing ever! I mean it was like a whole sci-fi movie that I get to write, doing scenarios and all kinds of stuff to send to these sophomore, junior, senior high

school classrooms to talk about disaster preparedness. And the response we got from the teachers was great. The students listened, they had a ball, and it was just fun for everybody. We used social media a lot and I think like Maggie said at first people wondered is this real? And well yeah, it was. We used Facebook and Twitter and just really got the message out there. We even filmed a zombie PSA commercial and posted that up on Facebook and did a lot of stuff like that and coming out this year, we have a short cartoon that will announce our zombie preparedness month. I think we're going to post that here in about two weeks or so. We did a lot of presentations. Actually here is the strangest thing. The most popular request for presentations has been by GIS folks. We have been asked to do zombie presentations for conferences talking about how you map a zombie apocalypse. That's a really fun conversation. You get to talk about what kind of zombie are you preparing for, how are you preparing, and what might happen. And it's the same spread you might see with something like a pandemic. So as long as we keep relating it back to reality, everybody has fun, you know, it's a light hearted concept of the zombies but we're still getting the message across. This year we're headed out to State Fair again so we'll once again do our big push this coming Monday for zombie preparedness.

My friend Bob is our State Citizen Corps coordinator who found this in the paper one day which I thought was awesome because it went along with Kansas and zombies. Okay, next one.

So you never know when a zombie might show up or you might have a tornado, a flood, or a fire.

But if you're prepared for zombies, then, my friends, you are prepared for anything. I really can't think of anything you'd do to prepare for a zombie that wouldn't prepare you for a flood, fire, tornado. You name it. Let's move on to the next one.

And we seriously went along with exactly what we have been preaching to people for years, you know, build a kit, make a plan, practice your plan, and get trained. But unlike that classic conversation in the past talking about tornadoes and floods, this one got the attention. I highly recommend it. You don't have to do zombies. You can do vampires if you wanted to. Although I don't know if I'd do vampires because they are pretty popular right now, so I don't know if people are afraid of them. Strange as that is to say somebody told me that the other day.

We just went along; you now have your kit. What are you going to put in your kit? We did this at the fair, we did this with our zombie preparedness day and it was always the same thing. Well, I need water for three days, I need food, I need medication, I need my emergency contacts, all of that information. And they would say "Oh, yeah we've got to keep it updated." One thing I want to touch on, it was very strange the connections I made during this whole zombie thing. I was worried at first that we were going to get complaints because we are in a conservative State and not everybody likes creativity for some things. One of our first contacts was actually by the Kansas Anti-Zombie Militia. I kind of thought okay, really, but yes, they do exist and I actually saw one of their presentations which were exactly like the presentations I would do for scout groups, community groups, talking about how to build your disaster kit. So I realized then that these guys are our partners. They are using zombies the same way we are but they're getting everybody prepared so I was very very impressed by that. Most recently, we have connected to the Zombie Research Society and they actually also have a zombie awareness month which is in

May. So we're working to promote each other but if you look around, there are a lot of groups that really are just promoting disaster preparedness so I made those connections. And I told you before that I was worried about complaints we might get. Well, the complaint I got was not from the group I expected to get. If you do zombies, you might be prepared for a strange complaint from a Zombie Rights Commission. It really does exist. I thought it was a joke at first but then I found out it really wasn't. They believe in rights for the living impaired and they were dead serious when they requested an apology from me in Kansas because we were poking fun at zombies. So you might want to know they're out there. It's quite strange; otherwise the response we got was fantastic. We work very closely with all of our voluntary organizations active and disaster and they supported it. They passed the word on, and they're very cooperative and we all had a great time with it. We're really looking forward to this years.

Here was part of our zombie walk from our first Zombie Preparedness Day. We did this in Topeka, which is our State capitol and you can see the capitol behind. When we chose our location I wanted the location that would actually see the capitol in the pictures so I wanted to use that for pictures for the next year. So you can kind of see some of our zombies. Now at our preparedness day, we had fire departments, Citizen Corps groups, public health, Department of Ag, basically any partner we could think of we asked if they would like to join us for zombie preparedness day. And again, the response was great. People had a great time with it. We set up about three hours early so people could get what we started referring to as Zombified, so we would do their makeup, we had some killer makeup going on and all of the agencies dressed like zombies and they did the public safety thing. We talked about disaster preparedness, general safety; we did fire extinguisher displays, all kinds of stuff. It was really awesome. And we ended our day with a zombie walk and the thriller dance. So we are planning our second hopefully annual zombie preparedness day for October 20 of this year which is coming up and hopefully it will catch on even more. We're again working with our counties trying to figure out some new exciting things to do, we're considering zombie tag so that is one thing in the works, and again, the social media is really really important because for us, it was a lot of it's a budget issue. We did not have the money to do like commercials that were put on air, things like that, so the social media was a free resource we could use to still get our message out. And that worked out perfect. So if you do decide to do zombies, partner up with everybody you can think of because just like you they're looking for creative ways to get their message out. And the zombies, they really really do the trick.

So, I ask, are you prepared for the unexpected? It's kind of a silly question but if you get in a group of people this can be at any event, even at dinner. Like have you watched the walking dead lightly? What would you do with the zombie apocalypse and they list of the disaster kit whereas if you say do you have a disaster kit, they roll their eyes and go what is wrong with you? The zombies though, they work.

There is my contact information. I have worked with a lot of other groups helping them develop things, getting ideas for how to make it work for them so I would happily work with any of you guys if you have questions about how to get a zombie preparedness month going in your area. It is a lot of fun. Photo shoots are great, the commercials were great. The social media is fun. It's just not stuff you would normally think to say. I mean the phrase, "what would you do if a zombie apocalypse happened," doesn't normally happen on a daily basis but in my world now it

kind of does. So it is a lot of fun so if you're looking for something refreshing, creative and different tryout the zombies. If you want try out vamps, werewolves, you name it. It's a great great time. And I am looking forward to any questions that you guys have.

Great, Devan. Thank you so much. We will have a question and answer period at the conclusion of this presentation but thank you again. Right now we're going to transition to our regular updates starting with an update from the Ready Campaign as well as FEMA Individual and Community Preparedness Division and I'll be providing both of those updates this month.

So again, it is September. It is National Preparedness Month and I would strongly encourage you if you haven't already to register for the National Preparedness Coalition. The link for that is below, www.ready.gov/pledge. You can also go directly to the coalition website at community.FEMA.gov, and if you look on the right hand side it will say pledge/prepare. This year instead of simply asking people to sign up for National Preparedness Month we're asking them to pledge to take a concrete action this September to help themselves or others in the communities to prepare for disasters, whether it's putting together a kit, making a plan, learning more about local hazards or becoming involved in their communities and volunteering to help their communities prepare for in response to disasters.

On the National Preparedness Month website there are a lot of different things you can do. There's a rapidly growing coalition this year. Last year by the end of September we had about 8900 coalition members. This year we're just a week into the month and we already have over 15,000 coalition members which is more than a 50 percent increase over the end of last year. So again this is a rapidly growing coalition, a rapidly growing community and we really want you to come in and join us. It gives you an opportunity to connect with peers and like-minded individuals who are also interested in preparing their communities. It's a great way to exchange ideas and to discuss preparedness with people who are doing the same things you are in communities throughout the country. We have an interactive calendar you can use to add events and get extra publicity for the events you're doing and get credit for the hard work you're doing to organize events in the community. You can also enter in your zip code and find out about events that are happening nearby your community.

There are also discussion boards that we have available so you can converse with people that are interested in the same topics as you. National level forums include Youth Preparedness, Community Emergency Response Teams CERT, as well as general forums for general preparedness. We also have a discussion forum for each of the 10 FEMA regions. Finally, there is also resources available to help you spread the word. Ready to use templates, posters, web banners, traditional and social media resources, and more to help you get the word out in your community and help them get better prepared this September and beyond. So again I encourage you to pledge today and join that coalition. Not only do we have over 15,000, again it's rapidly growing even since we put this slide together we've seen another jump of 1000 coalition members. We now actually do have just over 1000 events posted on the National Preparedness Month calendar and our goal is to have 2000 posted on the calendar by the end of September. There's a media tour that was launched this month with Deputy Administrators Serino and Manning of FEMA. And we also had this week the Presidential Proclamation was released and

if you click on the link here it will take you to that Presidential Proclamation that came out this week.

I also want to talk a little bit about the new campaign that Ready has come out with. Ready will be launching its new PSA campaign on September 16 in San Francisco in partnership with the San Francisco 49ers, the California Emergency Management Agency, the San Francisco Office of Emergency Management, Duracell and Lowe's. This campaign launch has for the first time a State oriented landing page that's available now and again if you go to that link, www.ready.gov/today. Last week, in partnership with the Ad Council, the Ready campaign kicked off this new PSA campaign called, "You Never Know When the Day is the Day Before". And so using a compare and contrast approach, the campaign emphasizes the importance of having a plan in place before disasters strike. The preparedness message is conveyed by highlighting the devastating effects of disasters through use of an interactive map of the United States that displays the date of what the State has said it to be its most impactful disaster. By hovering over each State you see the routine life activities the day before and the stark contrast to the day after a disaster. The campaign illustrates the importance of preparedness by calling to your attention to how normal the day before really is.

For the Individual and Community Preparedness updates, this month we want to provide you with some resources and opportunities to build up your capabilities as we begin National Preparedness Month. And the more immediate term we have some resources that you can use to make yourself heard, increase your visibility, share information with the public, including what to do before, during and after the type of disasters that happened recently throughout the country. And a longer term we have resources you can use to build up your programs, increasing the capabilities of your CERT teams and engaging youth and preparedness.

In the short-term we want to let you know about some resources that you might find useful in the context of the disasters that communities are recovering from across the country. We extend our sincere appreciation to all of the First Responders and volunteers for assisting recovery efforts in Hurricane Isaac in the Gulf. Now is a good time for citizens to review the potential hazards where they live, knowing likely risks for their area whether it's wildfires, earthquakes or tornadoes and knowing what to do when disaster strikes is a critical part of being prepared and they make all of the difference. So be sure to share the information on this slide with family, neighbors, colleagues and friends. Talking about preparedness ahead of time helps everyone to be ready. As we recover from these incidents we nationally begin to look to what we can do for next time and these disaster areas can serve as an opportunity to make preparedness actions immediately relevant to those affected areas and throughout the country. After the danger has passed in your area if you're in an affected area please be sure to let us know about what you've been doing with regards to response and recovery to these disasters and communities. We want to hear your stories and we want to know what's working and what's been effective so let us know what helped you as you respond and recover to these incidents whether it was training, protective actions, supplies, information, or anything else.

Also coming around next month is the Great Shakeout 2012. The Shakeout is another great opportunity to educate the public and you can still participate even if it's not officially happening in your State. This year on October 18 at 10:18 a.m., the 2012 Great Shakeout will take place in

15 states and territories and two other countries. In addition for the very first time, Virginia, Maryland, the District of Columbia, Virginia, the Carolinas and Georgia will participate in the Great Southeast Shakeout, so that will be the first year for that event. Drills are an excellent way to engage the public just by participating millions of people will be better prepared by practicing the actions that they should take when an earthquake hits. The shakeout is a fast way for the general public to develop smart habits and responding to earthquakes and also a great way to generate publicity not just for earthquake preparedness but preparedness in general and programs that like yours that support it. Shakeout gets a lot of press attention so planning tie-in activities can help to increase the visibility of your programs.

I also want to let you know about the FEMA Think Tank and be sure to visit FEMA.ideascale.com. We want to make sure that leaders and Emergency Management hear from you and they are able to voice your opinions and propose ideas. The Idea Scale site and Think Tank allows visitors to view, contribute to and comment on conversations about emergency preparedness, response, and recovery as well as other emergency management topics. We want States and locals to be a big part of this conversation and I hope that you'll join this national discussion and bring your thoughts, concerns, questions and ideas to the table and we've posted here a few of the ideas that are currently on the site that might be of particular interest to you.

I also want to let you into about some of the resources you can use to develop the capabilities and scope of your programs, starting with youth preparedness which is the top priority. We have resources that can help if you're interested starting a youth preparedness program or expanding an existing one. We've been adding additional resources to the Citizen Corps website to try to provide you with good options if you're thinking about starting or enhancing a youth preparedness program. We're also offering direct advice and support in the form of a technical assistance program, just send your questions requests to citizencorps.FEMA.gov, and put youth preparedness in the subject line and we'll respond within two business days to acknowledge receipt and help you achieve your goals. The youth discussion board again on the National Preparedness Coalition website is another great Resource and we're continuing to have State level youth preparedness workshops throughout the country. We're also really excited about the Youth Preparedness Council which met for the first time last month consisting primarily of high school students, members of the council we've been working to support youth preparedness in their communities and each of the FEMA regions. They will be able to voice opinions, experiences, ideas and solutions to help strengthen the nation's resiliency for all types of disasters. We're really excited to have them join the discussion and lend their unique perspective.

Finally we've also released some new resources related to the Community Emergency Response Team program. We just published six new supplemental training modules that are now available for download and they're all hyperlinked for your convenience. The supplemental modules will train certain members in new skills and increase the capacity of CERTS to support local emergency services and public safety. So please determine which of these will address the local training needs of your communities and we hope they will be helpful. In addition we're currently accepting applications for the National CERT Director position here in Washington. Of you or

someone you know has a passion for preparedness and has experience running a program at the State or local level, be sure to apply before the September 11th deadline which is next Tuesday.

If you have not already refreshed your profile in the national CERT registry in the past six months, please do that now. You probably conducted at least one round of CERT basic training so please update those numbers and other information on your program activities. Please be sure to notice your program is working with teens or high school students or with colleges and universities. Finally we just released the latest issue of the CERT newsletter which focuses on CERT program activities in the central states. That concludes our updates. Again if there's a topic you'd like to see addressed in a future months call, send it to Citizen Corps@Ddhs.gov.

That second link is a link to our previous webinars. If you want to see any of the previous webinars we've done over the past months and years, just go ahead and click to that link and all of the webinars we've done will be there. This webinar will be posted to that website within two business days. And that concludes my presentation. I'm going to hand it now back to Steve and we can transition into the question and answer period.

Thank you very much, Dante. As Dante said we will now be moving on to our question and answer period. You should see in front of you a white chat box. You should be able to type in underneath that chat box your questions. We will be able to select them here and publish them for our speakers to answer. So while you're typing, we look forward to hearing what you have to ask and we'll do our best to get to all questions.

One last thing I'd add is we're also looking if you're not just for CERT, but Citizen Corps Councils to please remember to if you haven't updated your Citizen Corps profile to update that as well on the registration. Thank you.

Our first question comes from Irene. Where can we get copies of the zombie novellas to handout to the public?

Well, Irene, you can go to the CDC website. If you go to www.CDC.gov/phpr, that's our office acronym, you'll find a link to all zombie related items. One of those will be the zombie novellas. If you would like us to mail you a copy, they will be an email that you can send a note to.

I just went ahead and posted that link that you just gave.

Perfect.

Just as a reminder to all participants this webinar is being recorded and there will be a copy of the transcript as well as audio recording and all presentations posted to the Citizen Corps website.

It looks like we have another question for CDC from Christa Hafemann, will the CDC be doing more themed preparedness or redoing the zombie one?

Well, right now for Preparedness Month we actually have a few preparedness themed events going on Mondays and Thursdays we're tweeting out dare to prepare challenges trying to get people to complete different challenges in a 24 hour period. Either tweet us a picture of their emergency kit for example, or tell us what their preparedness super hero would be and we're sending out copies of contagion DVDs, zombie T-shirts, things like that, so that's really just a social media based preparedness event and then we are also doing zombie themed things with middle school students. We actually just launched a website and if you go to the same one I just mentioned there will be a link to our middle school website where we've got a full curriculum to teach about preparedness with the focus on a zombie apocalypse so that it keeps kids interested and engaged but you can check that out. We always have zombie stuff up on our site and I don't think we're doing any other big pushes but we'll always have zombie content there just from what we've already done.

Thank you very much. Looks like we have another question.

For the zombie apocalypse, do you do any evaluation or follow-up surveys for the events and PSAs to track behavior change? For example, making a kit.

I'll answer this really quick and I don't know if you have any answers but for us, I mentioned in there that we had gone through a lot of the comments on our blog post and we had analyzed them based on the qualitative answers, so we've gotten some information back on that. Our initial goal was not behavior change. It was really just to create awareness so a lot of our metrics are just social media metrics, how many people were talking about it, how many people were clicking on links, how many people were visiting our website, but we do have some behavioral research that we're doing right now, one just with evaluating the comments that were left and a few universities have actually contacted us and are doing some research in the response based on students who read just a plain blog post it has our basic message, get a kit, make a plan message, and if they read the zombie blog post and which groups retain that information better. But again the behavior change information is limited just because that was not our initial objective and then Devan, I don't know if you have any information based on what you all did.

Really I was going to echo what you said. Our goal for the first year was to get people to focus on and think about building a disaster kit. Like I mentioned before, we would talk to them but nobody was truly honestly listening. So our goal is to get people to understand you need a disaster kit. You need a disaster plan. I would venture to say that people actually did listen and if we do another survey this year, if we look at it, we will have more people with kits this year than we did last year.

Thank you ladies and Devan it looks like this next question is great for you. From John Sanches, where is there information on the zombie runs or Run For your Life information from Kansas?

There are all kinds of zombie walks and zombie runs floating around. Runforyourlife.com is the organization that goes around literally throughout the United States and does the big run for your life. Now in those you can actually be a zombie or you can be a runner. It's really neat. You can get on their website they all of the information about where they're going and stuff like that. A lot of communities do zombie walks, most of them are fundraisers to benefit like a food bank or

something like that so look at your community calendars. In Kansas, you can go on Facebook and friend the Kansas Anti-Zombie Militia and they have a lot of updates on stuff like that in there. I know a year ago the Governor's mansion , they did a zombie, I believe Bob was it a 5k? They did a zombie fun run so really kind of just Google it. I have not seen any posted this fall for Kansas. But what I can do is start looking at those and keeps them on our calendar too. And you can check out our website at KSready.gov.

Great, thank you very much, and that is actually a perfect segue into our next question about how individuals can find out if there is an event scheduled near them and I see that Dante put up the links to the National Preparedness Coalition website. One of the neat things about this website is that you can actually find events on the event calendar that others have posted by entering your zip code and that's a great way to see what's currently scheduled. You can also post events of your own so if your community is hosting a run or any type of event you can post it for others to join as well. That's the community.FEMA.gov link that you see posted by Dante there.

We have another question from Maria Hernandez. Not interested the in the novella, but would like booklets printed out of the various emergency kits and techniques. Are they available?

We do have if you go to that middle school learning site that I just mentioned we do have a lot of printable items including a checklist, a little note card that you can put into your backpack or your wallet, and that is just the same website that we gave earlier, CDC.gov/phpr/learn. That should take you there but again if you go to the main website there will be a link on there and I would like to mention really quick the run for your life link that was just sent out is actually runforyourlives.com and that will take you to the race that's run nationally.

Great, thank you so much. Tonya Ester asked: Will there be new updated e-mail tags for 2013?

Devan, and Maggie if one of you would like to take that question?

I'm not sure I know the context for that question so maybe Devan, that's better for you?

What exactly do you mean by e-mail tags?

Tanya, you can feel free to e-mail us at CitizenCorps@dhs.gov, with a little more context about your question and we will be more than happy to find an answer for you and get back to you on that.

And Mark Pastor entered or typed in the runforyourlives.com website in response to the earlier question, so feel free to click on that link to learn more about the zombie runs.

We have another good question from Irene. This is a fabulous idea; however down here in Miami we recently had a zombie incident so people are concerned. How can we move the focus from a negative event to a more positive preparedness event, still using zombies? How do we make that a positive event? Maggie or Devan if you would like to take that?

Sure, my personal thought would be you don't have to use zombies to prepare for the unexpected. We had talked about this year changing from zombies to another sci-fi critter whether it be vampires, werewolves whatever you were thinking. So you can warp it however you think best fits your area and if you're concerned about that being a hot topic, I would just simply use another popular creature.

Great, thank you. And from Darwin Ray, are there any copywriting or other intellectual property concerns from CDC or any other entity involved with potentially developing a zombie emergency preparedness program?

No, there are not. Anything that the CDC puts out is in the public domain so you are free to use it. We are happy to help you out though if you want help with files or tips on how to publish different things. You can always contact us but everything that we put out is in the public domain so you're free to use it.

Great, thank you. And we have a question from Derek Murawasky, pardon my mispronunciation. Have you reached out to any of the larger/older zombie-specific groups like zombie squad for assistance with photo shoots, volunteers, etc.?

In Kansas we've not. Locally we've worked with groups but I haven't really encountered too much as far as outside of the State except for recently the Zombie Research Society.

In terms of CDC, we have talked with groups like I said the Walking Dead and a few others but really once we started this, people came to us and so it hasn't really been hard to get volunteers or jump into the zombie community and we're always happy to talk to people who are interested doing stuff with it but usually, I guess people have come to us about it. But if you're planning something I'm sure any zombie group would be happy to work with you.

Marti Eddington asks: My CERT team is very excited about using zombie apocalypse but aren't quite sure exactly how to involve the community. Do they dress up as zombies, do we capture zombies, and how do we keep everybody safe?

We had a lot of different things in Kansas. We had CERT groups that dressed up as zombies and did trunk or treats and things like that. I think they had a ball dressing up as zombies. It's a good excuse for an adult to get to wear a fun costume. And it worked well because you wear your CERT T-shirts and people see and they notice you. So they so they want to know what you're doing which gives the perfect chance to say you're talking about disaster preparedness so make it however involved as you want to. The capture zombies thing is what we were kind of thinking about the zombie tag this year. We were trying to figure out a way to do zombie tag involving literally people in all of the different counties. So that one is still in the works, but like I said really just make it work for your community and have fun with it. There is no limit to the creativity you can have with zombies.

Thank you and we had a lot of great resources and websites from all of the presentations and Jeanne Hanim asks or notes she wasn't able to access all of the websites as we were going through them but where can she find them. Again, when we post the recording and the

presentation of this webinar, on the Citizen Corps website, we will also include links to all of the great tools and URLs there as well. And again I'll post that link so everybody can have that and visit it.

Looks like we have a good question, Dante also posted a great training course as well, community preparedness implementing simple activities for everyone. It's free, it's online and offered by FEMA and you can download some excellent preparedness materials, some great get started materials at that website.

I wanted to, this is Dante, I wanted to respond to Jeanne's question who wants to put on preparedness seminars for the community and where to start. Community preparedness simple activities for everyone is a course IS909 and that's an excellent introduction for preparing your community it consists of sort of like discrete one hour sessions you can use to prepare anyone in your community for a disaster and it's really perfect for a community that's entry level and wants to do very basic things to be better prepared for disasters.

Great, thank you, Dante. And David Diabo asks: Greetings to everybody from Canada. There's lots of great information here and he sees from the website there's a zombie run in Toronto. How can he get more information from organizing a zombie run? Devan, Maggie I would imagine there would be more information on that Runforyourlives website. Would that be correct?

That's where I would start and if you're wanting to organize event by yourself like a zombie walk or something like that that is how I wound up hooking up with our local sci-fi horror film club because they had done it before and they are more than happy to help with the zombie preparedness campaign so you can find somebody locally that wants to volunteer their time and help.

I think Devan had a great suggestion about that finding someone in your community and I will say the Run For Your Lives organization is a for profit group. They do donate proceeds to American Red Cross but it's something, it's a very large organization that conducts those races which is a pretty big undertaking but I think Devan had it right with contacting other groups in your community who have done events that might be similar even if it's a 5k race done every year. Just talking to them about how they conduct all of that and then you can get ideas for how you can do your zombie themed run.

Hello, everyone. Again this is Dante from FEMA Individual and Community Preparedness. It looks like we're pretty much out of time but thank you so much for your input and your questions. As a reminder, this webinar will be posted to our website within two business days, at the link that we provided in the Q & A box. As a reminder please do remember to sign up for National Preparedness Month this September, at community.FEMA.gov, and finally if you'll stick around for a few moments, we are going to put up a quick poll so we can make sure that we are consistently improving our webinars and get an assessment of that so if you could take a few moments before you leave to fill that out, it would be great. I'd like to once again thank our speakers, Maggie and Devan from CDC and the Kansas Division of Emergency Management for giving us their time and expertise today, so thank you both.