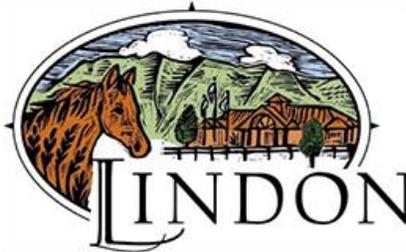


After Action Report

Lindon City Drill Down for Safety

Monday, September 14, 2020



Now Taking Reservations (385) 273-7100



DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITY
MANAGEMENT SERVICES



SPRING GARDENS
Lindon

An Avista Senior Living Community

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Table of Contents

Exercise Details	4
Mission	4
Exercise Summary	5
Core Capabilities	5
Exercise Overview	6
Concept	6
Objectives	7
Participation Results	7
Residential Care Centers	7
Citywide	7
Area Results	7
Results Cont'd: Grading and Analysis	8
Timeline	9
Major Strengths	10
Lessons Learned: Areas for Improvement	11-12
Issues & Improvement Considerations	11-12
CALENDAR ITEMS	13
Contact/Feedback	13

Exercise Details

Exercise Name

Lindon City Drill Down for Safety 2020 (Lindon City Drill)

Type of Exercise

Full-scale Communications Exercise Citywide

Exercise Start Date

Monday, September 14, 2020: StartEx 18:00

Exercise End Date

Monday, September 14, 2020: EndEx 20:00

Duration

City-wide: 2.5 hours, including after action “thank you” text

Locations

Lindon, Utah

- All Lindon City Residents
 - o 3 Areas: West, Central, East
 - o 24 Neighborhoods—divided throughout Areas
 - o 10-12 Blocks per Neighborhood
- Spring Gardens of Lindon: Avista Senior Living Community
- Lindon Care and Training Center: Developmental Disability Management Services
- Grove Creek Assisted Living: Rocky Mountain Care

Sponsor

Lindon City / Lindon City Police

Mission

Give the residents of Lindon City the opportunity to practice their role in a disaster, improve city communications and emergency response capabilities over the years with an annual drill, and be more prepared to survive and to recover quickly from a disaster as a municipality.

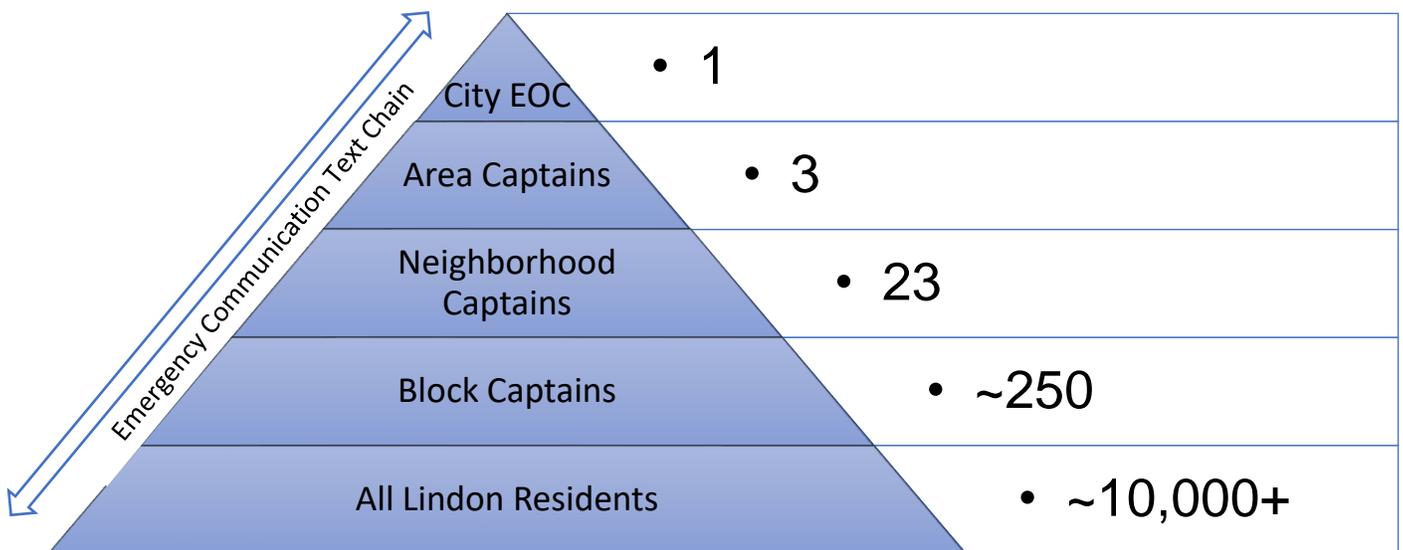
Exercise Summary

2020 marked 12 years of practicing the annual Lindon City Drill Down for Safety exercise, also called the Lindon City Drill. Lindon City police, elected officials, administrators, and residents proved once again that Lindon is a municipality that works together to improve resourcefulness, practice potentially life-saving protocols, and prepare and train for disaster response.

The Lindon City Drill is designed to engage every Lindon City resident simultaneously in preparedness and communications training. This year marked a significant departure from past methodology.

Safety information is passed from the city → to the area → to the neighborhood → to the block → to the individual/family and then back up the communication chain from the individual/family → to the block → to the neighborhood → to the area → to the city.

This allows for swift big-picture information gathering and risk assessment at the city level as well as situational awareness and immediate resource organization at the block, neighborhood, and area levels.



Core Capabilities

Operational Communications: Ensure the capacity for timely communications in support of security, situational awareness, and operations by any and all means available, among and between affected communities in the impact area and all response forces.

Community Resilience: Enable the recognition, understanding, communication of, and planning for risk and empower individuals and communities to make informed risk management decisions necessary to adapt to, withstand, and quickly recover from future incidents.

Situational Assessment: Provide all decision makers with decision-relevant information regarding the nature and extent of the hazard, any cascading effects, and the status of the response.

Exercise Overview

Lindon has a proud history of holding an annual emergency communications drill where every household is encouraged to participate. This was our 12th year practicing our citywide Drill Down for Safety, and significant changes were implemented. A new methodology was initiated, purposely engaging in all communications activities exclusively through telecommunications.

A Block Captain system is organized in Lindon. In the event of a disaster, Block Captains are supposed to check on their blocks, a group of 10-12 houses or apartments. Blocks typically meet in person for this drill, one night a year. Households gather outside at their Block Captain's residence. Block Captains then communicate to the city Emergency Operations Center how many people attended through a system of runners. In a large-scale emergency when technology might be down, we would use this system to communicate vital information to city leaders to help formulate a timely big picture assessment for a more effective response and increased resiliency.

This year the drill was changed to be done exclusively by phone instead of gathering in person. A text message was initiated from Public Safety and was passed down to residents via Area Captains to Neighborhood Captains to Block Captains and then to residents. As this was a first-time implementation of a new methodology, we anticipated in advance there would be many lessons learned.

Concept

To find out whether the city could get an emergency message to every household through the Block Captain system efficiently and rapidly, the city organized a cellphone communication-chain. This chain would only be employed during drills or in circumstances when people need critical knowledge or instructions in a hurry. It could be used citywide or only in one area of the city (East, Central, or West) depending on the emergency and what information needed to be relayed. It must be practiced first to be effective and would be used *in addition* to outreach through media, social media, and Everbridge.

In the past, Lindon has exercised under the assumption of a total infrastructure collapse and zero ability to communicate except in person—no technology. While inherently valuable in the most serious disasters like a major earthquake, it has limited applicability in smaller yet vital responses such as 1) rapid evacuations, 2) messages that must reach everyone, like boil orders, or 3) situations where exiting a home/business to communicate in person or gather as a group could be deemed dangerous, like the need to shelter-in-place due to criminal activity (active shooter/other), a wild animal, a hazardous materials spill, or a pandemic.

This year's text-oriented drill helped the city work on that notable gap in emergency communications with our Block Captains. The drill was significantly simplified to allow focus on concept reorganization and the necessary training of nearly 300 Captains engaged citywide, many of whom were new volunteers. It should be noted that COVID-19 created real-world challenges for the organizers who began concept planning and decision making many months before the drill was executed.

Objectives

1. Establish two-way text communications from city officials to every resident of Lindon City through a system of pre-designated Area, Neighborhood, and Block Captains.
2. Collate participation results & track resident responses to a question about 72-hour emergency kits.
3. Send a thank you text with drill results to every resident of Lindon City on the night of the drill.
4. Note gaps, problems, successes, and ways to improve after our first-ever mass text drill.
5. Create a list of ways to improve in a formal After Action Report to be shared with city officials and other captains as recommended.

Participation Results

Participating Organizations

Lindon City

Lindon City Police Department

Spring Gardens of Lindon: Avista Senior Living Community

Lindon Care and Training Center: Developmental Disability Management Services

Grove Creek Assisted Living: Rocky Mountain Care

City-wide

3,811 cell phones texted

2,840 replied to Block Captain

2,123 households report having a 72-hour emergency kit

3,119 households reported

Lindon East Area

1,172 cell phones texted

823 replied to Block Captain

597 households reported having a 72-hour emergency kit

Lindon Central Area

1,009 cell phones texted

757 replied to Block Captain

660 households reported having a 72-hour emergency kit

Lindon West Area

1,630 cell phones texted

1,260 replied to Block Captain

866 households reported having a 72-hour emergency kit

Grove Creek Assisted Living

100% staff and residents accounted for

Spring Gardens Senior Living

100% staff and residents accounted for

Lindon Care and Training Center

100% staff and residents accounted for

Results, Cont'd

Grading of Drill Objectives

P= Performed without challenge

S= Performed with some challenges

M= Performed with major challenges

U=Unable to perform

__P__ Establish two-way text communications from city officials to every resident of Lindon City through a system of pre-designated Area, Neighborhood, and Block Captains.

__P__ Collate participation results & track resident responses to a question about 72-hour emergency kits.

__S__ Send a thank you text with drill results to every resident of Lindon City on the night of the drill.

__S__ Note gaps, problems, successes, and ways to improve after our first-ever mass text drill.

__P__ Create a list of ways to improve in a formal After Action Report to be shared with city officials and other captains as recommended.

Analysis

For a first-time test of concept, Lindon City had excellent participation and excellent results. Residents as well as Captains at all levels are to be commended for their cooperation, support, willingness to pivot, and training efforts as well as for taking part in high numbers.

Figuring out exact citywide participation percentages is likely impossible. The text message very often went to multiple adults in a single household, many of whom then picked one representative to respond to the Block Captain. That will account for at least some of the discrepancy in numbers between those texted and those that replied.

If participation percentages are based only on cell phones texted versus cell phones that replied, there was a 75% participation rate, a certain underestimation of reach when looking at overall household response.

If participation percentages are based on cell phones that replied compared to total households, there was a 91% participation rate, a possible overestimation but very much in line with past years.

In addition, the total number of households may have been overcounted at 3,119. Lindon City currently has 3,227 utility accounts, approximately 250 of which are businesses. So if there are 2,900 to 3,000 residences and those numbers are compared to cell phones that replied, that puts participation at the much higher rate of 95%—98%, a possible to likely overestimation.

Furthermore, all 3 areas reported receiving additional replies to Block Captains trickling in after EndEx, even hours later. As such, reply numbers are at least a little higher than reported in this document.

The true household participation rate was between 75% and 98%, and was likely closer to 91%.

Timeline of Major Events

TIME	ACTION	NUMBERS
1800	StartEx Text to Area Captains	
1800	All Area Captains report text received	
1802	Text to Block Captain of Spring Gardens	
1803	Text to Grove Creek Assisted Living	
1804	Text to Area Captain of LCTC	
1805	Reply Grove Creek	100% staff/residents
1807	Reply Spring Gardens	100% staff/residents
1815	Received Lindon City text from Block Captain	
1834	Everbridge Notification sent reminding residents to check in with Block Captain	
1834	Everbridge Notification text received	
1838	Everbridge Notification email received	
1935	Lindon West Area Report	1260 of 1630 of those texted replied; 866 of 1478 households have kits
1951	Lindon Central Area Report	757 of 1009 of those texted replied; waiting on 72-hr kit report
1951	Reply Lindon Care and Training Center	100% staff/residents
1957	Lindon East Area Report	823 of 1,172 of those texted replied; 597 of 869 households have kits
2008	Lindon Central Area, 2nd Report	660 of 772 households have kits
1951	3 residential care centers TOTALS	29 staff / 146 residents
2008	CITYWIDE TOTALS	2,840 of 3,811 of those texted replied; 2,123 of 3,119 households have kits
2011	Thank you text sent to Area Captains to pass back down to all participating residents	
2011	EndEx	

Major Strengths

Overall City Participation

- No matter how the participation numbers are compared, whether cell phones texted that replied or total number of households reporting back, the participation throughout the city was excellent, particularly for a first-time test of concept.

Start Time / End Time

- It can be difficult to start and end large-scale exercises on time, particularly when there are thousands of people. All three areas (West, Central, East) and all three residential care centers had reported in by 8:08PM, meaning the entire city had performed a two-way communication chain and city officials had accounted for all responses at only 8 minutes beyond the intended 2 hour mark.

Communication

- Objectives were met as Captains forwarded messages down to all residents and then reported back up the chain of communication to the city.
- All 3 residential care centers participated and accounted quickly for all staff/residents, and the LCTC did an additional in-service on the drill.

Rapid Training/Re-training

- Because the typical annual training meeting was cancelled due to COVID-19 concerns, it was left to Area Captains and their teams to disseminate city training materials, ask clarifying questions of the city emergency manager, get information to Neighborhood and Block Captains, and answer those captains' questions. This was a particular challenge in 2020 as two new Area Captains were freshly put in place in two out of three of Lindon City's geographical areas, Central and East, only 2 weeks and 1 week before the drill, respectively. Those with prior experience really stepped up to help.

Publicity

- For two months prior to the drill and in increasing amounts as the date of the drill approached, pre-notifications and reminders occurred in the city newsletter, city website, city social media, the drill website www.LindonCityDrill.com, and email, as well as through detailed training materials provided to captains at all levels citywide, door-to-door fliers made available to every Block Captain, and street signs put out in key places in the week prior to the drill. In addition, announcements about the drill were made over the pulpit amongst faith groups throughout the city. Last, a reminder Everbridge Notification went out mid-drill to remind people to participate by checking in with their Block Captain.
- Considerations must be made how much to publicize a drill. It's a trade-off between preparation and a true test of reality and emergency capability. As such, a conscious, discussed, and mutually-agreed upon command decision was made to put yard signs only in key places in the city and to wait until mid-drill to send an Everbridge Notification participation reminder.

Innovation

- In a pandemic year, residents and organizers worked together to refresh processes and training, continuing to emphasize the drill in a positive and simplified way.

City Goal Encouraging Residents to Make or Update a 72-hour Emergency Kit by the End of 2020

- Over 2/3 of our participating city households reported having a 72-hour emergency kit.

Lessons Learned—Areas for Improvement

Communication Gaps

Although feedback about the change to a text exercise as well as the city’s planning and communication beforehand was overwhelmingly positive, gaps in this first-time test were anticipated in advance of execution. Some issues were foreseeable and will take additional practice and training to overcome. A few issues were surprises and will take additional thought and planning to iron out.

ISSUES

1. Block Captains simply missing/forgetting a household in a group text or missing home phones.
2. Block Captains texting only one member in a household instead of all adults.
3. Block Captains having changed sometime in the previous year but Neighborhood Captains not realizing a new Block Captain is in place.
4. Neighborhood Captains and Block Captains not knowing the follow-up thank you text from the city was meant to be pushed all the way back to residents.
5. Although rare, instances when Neighborhood Captains or Block Captains were not immediately available but had no back-up in place.
6. Questions about how long to wait on missing data and when to cut that loss and report back up the chain to the city if there was a) one or more households not reporting to a Block Captain, b) one or more Block Captains not reporting to a Neighborhood, c) one or more Neighborhood Captains not reporting to an Area.
7. Expectation that an Everbridge Notification would be sent at the start of the drill.
8. Some confusion that additional meetings such as a table-top exercise, city council training, and after action debrief would not be held during and post-drill at the city center as in past years.
9. Not all drill training materials being distributed to appropriate captains prior to the drill.

IMPROVEMENT CONSIDERATIONS

1. Train area, neighborhood, and block captains in person or over Zoom.
2. AND/OR, produce videos at 5 mins or less, with instructions that could be advertised and disseminated before the exercise, keeping instructions simple, short, and easy to understand.
3. Encourage all positions to designate back-ups.
4. Encourage minimal but additional text-dialog during the drill as needed to problem solve, encouraging more autonomy and a less formulaic approach.
5. Continue to offer emergency response training opportunities to city council, city admin, and city departments.
6. Encourage a “message received” protocol so that direct texts and emails that may have been missed for any reason are caught by the sender.
7. Train that the “thank you” message with initial drill results should be sent back down the communication chain to all residents.
8. Use Everbridge to check-in with all city employees on the night of the drill.

Apathy

While participation rates are high and most residents express gratitude for the Block Captain program, there is a “been there, done that” attitude that grows over the years.

IMPROVEMENT CONSIDERATIONS

1. This issue may not ever be completely solved. Though testing smoke alarms isn't always fun, it still needs to be done. **Possible actions include positive media coverage, awards, involvement of youth in a new way, sending a “thank you” with drill results to all residents, making short and/or entertaining training videos, and/or real-life use of the Block Captain communication system in an actual emergency or disaster event.**

Additional Efforts

Requests have been received for a continued push toward preparedness measures throughout the city other than the Lindon City Drill.

IMPROVEMENT CONSIDERATIONS

1. **A new city-sponsored youth activity on preparedness** had been planned for fall 2020 in conjunction with the city drill. West Area, Central Area, and East Area were all on board, but the activity was cancelled due to COVID-19 concerns. When safe to do so, the city would like to reinstate this joint youth preparedness activity effort.
2. **Continue to push Everbridge Notification registration.** The Block Captain system would never be used in a silo unless there was a total infrastructure collapse with no ability to use cell phones, landlines, and email, and runners were needed until more typical communications could be resumed. The Everbridge Notification System continues to be the city's primary emergency communication system for city announcements as well as emergency messaging. We encourage all residents to sign-up and opt-in.
 - **SPECIAL NOTE:** There are currently two registrations available, one for Lindon City and one for Utah County. Both links can be accessed here:
<https://member.everbridge.net/1332612387832225/login>
3. **Continue to encourage the making and updating of 72-hour emergency kits.** In a large event, city resources will be taxed and unavailable to respond to every call. Residents are encouraged to take personal responsibility for their own safety to every extent possible, including making a written family emergency plan, building and maintaining a 72-hour emergency kit, learning what kind of emergencies/disasters can occur locally and how to respond to them, and actively practicing those responses and plans.
 - **SPECIAL NOTE:** This and other information can be accessed at Be Ready Utah:
www.utah.gov/beready

CALENDAR ITEMS

POSSIBLE YOUTH ACTIVITY—PREPAREDNESS NIGHT

August or September: TBD

(City will work with Area Captains to coordinate)

NEXT YEAR'S DRILL!

Monday, September 13, 2021

CONTACT/FEEDBACK

Kelly Johnson: kjohnson@lindoncity.org or 801-836-8522

I just want to thank everyone who helps with this program and makes it work. It is amazing! We have never had anything like this anywhere that we have lived before.

I am a very risk averse person and when the Battle Creek fire was burning Saturday night I felt safe knowing it was burning away from us, but knew that if there were a change in the wind's direction and intensity we could be in trouble really fast.

The only reason I could go to sleep that night was because I knew that we had this plan in place and if anything changed we would have a phone alert and neighbors making sure we were informed.

Thank you! I am really grateful for everyone who puts time and effort into making this possible.

Kristi Evans, September 14, 2020

Current Lindon City resident with recent disaster experience and property loss from Hurricane Harvey