

Portland Government Provides Emergency Preparedness to Staff

Every bureau in Portland has a Continuity of Operations Plan. This plan outlines how a bureau will continue to function after a disaster. Parks' Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP) is maintained with an Update, Training and Exercise Plan (UTEP) to ensure that the most up to date information is being used. One function of the UTEP is to assist Parks employees in becoming personally prepared for emergencies of any scale. The importance of preparing ourselves for disasters is universal. Emergencies can happen anywhere - at home or at work – and everyone must take action and prepare in case something unexpected happens. As we have seen in the wake of disasters such as Hurricane Katrina, Super Storm Sandy and Hurricane Harvey, citizens look immediately to local municipalities for support. As we also know, a more critical look comes in the weeks and months following a disaster. Did the organization take every preventative measure to protect its citizens and resources?

On September 7th, Parks hosted a free, 60-minute crash course in Emergency Preparedness to begin the bureau's steps toward resiliency. Glenn Devitt of the Portland Bureau of Emergency Management (PBEM) led the informative and engaging presentation, touching on items from developing a disaster kit to creating composting toilets to locating emergency routes for families. In addition to personal preparedness at home, Mr. Devitt also stressed the importance of being prepared in the workplace, in the car and at a child's school. He provided the group with budget friendly guides to create emergency kits, urged participants to download emergency alert applications for their cell phones and gave a demonstration on how to manually shut off utilities. Mr. Devitt is the Neighborhood Emergency Team (NET) Program and Information Specialist at PBEM. He included information on how to get involved in the community including the Basic NET training which began on October 4th.