

CRISIS MANAGEMENT COMMUNICATION PLAN

INTRODUCTION

Transparency is an important function of a public agency, especially in emergency situations. No operation or facility is immune from emergencies and the Des Moines Pool Metropolitan Park District (DMPMPD) recognizes its responsibility for the safety of its employee's and patrons during such a time. In addition, the District has identified the need to protect property and assets and to expedite the recovery of its functions and activities. An important element of this process is a Crisis Management Communication Plan to ensure the patrons and public are communicated to in an effective manner.

The Crisis Management Communication Plan will be implemented in the case of an emergency when communication to the public and media is critical.

The plan shall rely on the District General Manager, Aquatics Manager and other management team staff to ensure that all information in emergency situations are investigated, disseminated and accurately communicated to its employees, patrons, public and the media.

DMPMPD* MANAGEMENT TEAM

The following individuals are members of the DMPMPD Management Team:

- District General Manager
- Aquatics Manager
- Aquatics Coordinator
- District Clerk
- Head Guard and Other Key Staff (if needed)

ACTIVATION OF THE CRISIS MANAGEMENT COMMUNICATION PLAN

In the event that the Emergency Response Provisions (Section 5) of the Mount Rainier Pool, Operations Manual is activated, the following DMPMPD Management Team members will assume their responsibilities as outlined. In all areas involving the District General Manager (as listed below), the Aquatics Manager will assume responsibilities if the District General is not available.

District General Manager (DGM)

1. Make immediate contacts (Board of Commissioners, Management Team and Key Staff)
2. Spokesperson
3. Receive all media calls
4. Gather pertinent information for distribution to media
5. Delegate key employees to assist with gathering of information and to be interviewed by media
6. Notify victim's family of emergency situation
7. Call DMPMPD Management Team together
8. Produce memo regarding Media Crisis Policies for all District staff
9. Assist with Media Communication and Media
10. Notify other Agencies (if applicable)
11. Contact Attorney
12. Contact Insurance Company

Aquatics Manager

1. Make immediate contact with District General Manager and other management team members (if applicable).
2. Notify front line staff of crisis

3. Complete or review Accident/Incident Report and any other pertinent paperwork
4. Assist with media calls and communication
5. Contact EAP or other counseling services for employees or public involved in the crisis
6. Coordinate the identification of witnesses and gather contact information

Aquatics Coordinator

1. Assist Aquatics Manager with responsibilities (if needed)
2. Assist with photography/video capture of incident area (if needed)
3. Contact other managers (if needed)
4. Assist in other areas (if needed)

District Clerk

1. Assist District General Manager with responsibilities (if needed)
2. Contact other managers (if needed)
3. Assist in other areas (if needed)

CRISIS COMMUNICATION PHONE LIST
Des Moines Pool Metropolitan Park District

EMERGENCY

	<u>Emergency</u>	<u>Non-Emergency</u>
Police	911	206.878.3801
Fire	911	253.839.6234

DISTRICT FACILITIES

Des Moines Pool M.P.D. District Offices	206.429.3852
Mount Rainier Pool	206.824.4722

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Shane Young (President)	206.427.4649
Tricia Croom (Clerk of the Board)	206.427.1195
Gene Achziger	253.941.3785
Joe Dusenbury	206.795.4832
Eric Kasnick	206.824.5831

DMPMPD MANAGEMENT TEAM

Scott Deschenes (District General Manager)	253.245.3810
Dominic Finazzo (Aquatics Manager)	425.757.6047
Lauryne Bartlett (Aquatics Coordinator)	206.309.9452
Linda Ray (District Clerk)	971.274.1267

LEGAL

Brian Snure	206.824.5630
WCIA Insurance (Tanya Crites)	206.687.7904

PRESS CONTACTS

Waterland Blog (Scott Schaefer)	206.248.2565
Kent Reporter	253.872.6600
Federal Way Mirror	253.925.5565
Seattle Times	206.464.2121
Highline Times	206.878.3710
King 5	206.448.4545
Komo 4	206.404.4442
Kiro TV 7	206.728.7777
KCPQ 13	1.888.225.5322
Komo 1000	206.404.4000
Kiro 97.3	206.726.7000

CRISIS COMMUNICATION

In the unfortunate event of a crisis related to the Des Moines Pool Metropolitan Park District (DMPMPD), it is important to have one person available to receive updated information and to provide official information to the media. Otherwise, differing messages with inaccurate facts may be given to reporters resulting in catastrophic repercussions for the District. It may also prohibit important information from reaching the media. A crisis is defined as any event or emergency that generates deep public concern and a need to provide prompt, accurate information.

What is a Crisis?

A crisis is a situation or event that causes (or has the potential to cause) keen public or media concern. The potential crisis lists are endless but see below for a list of potential incidents. If you know of a situation or event that could be of concern to the public or media, please contact the head of the Management Team immediately. The District has appointed District General Manager to decide whether the crisis management communication plan needs to be implemented or whether the situation needs to be monitored and handled carefully. If the head of the DMPMPD Management Team is not available, a potential or immediate crisis should be reported to any management team member.

- Drowning or other serious aquatic related emergency
- Missing Person
- Allegations of abuse
- Criminal act that has occurred on District Property
- Natural disaster
- Medical quarantine

Airline accident

Please see Mount Rainier Pool Operations Plan for full list of Emergency Action Plans (EAPs).

Before a Crisis Occurs:

1. Designate a media spokesperson. This person will receive all media calls and coordinate all official information that is to be given to the media. The designated person should be the District General Manager, Board President or designee.
2. Make sure that all key staff and anyone who takes outside telephone calls know that the District General Manager is to take media calls during a crisis. Put that information in writing near the telephones.
3. Make sure that all staff of the District know that the District General Manager needs to be kept informed of important news and needs to be updated frequently in any emergency. All key staff must lend a helping hand to gather and investigate information during a crisis.
4. Staff, commissioners and staff should know how to reach the District General Manager by phone.
5. All key staff members will act as a crisis team that will assist with communications and develop specific strategies when a crisis occurs. The team will help gather accurate information.
6. Understand the role of our attorneys in our communications efforts.
7. Compile a list of media contacts.
8. Determine where a news conference could be held, if ever necessary.
9. Practice implementing the plan.

Emergency telephone numbers are listed on page ?? of this plan. Do not give these numbers out to the public or the media.

CRISIS COMMUNICATION FACT SHEET

Des Moines Pool Metropolitan Park District

What Happened?

Who Is Involved?

When Did It Occur?

How Did It Occur?

Why Did It Occur?

Action Taken?

THIS FORM IS LOCATED IN THE BACK SECTION OF THIS BINDER UNDER THE REFERENCE TAB

CRISIS COMMUNICATIONS – DISTRICT SPOKESPERSON

Keep the following information nearby in case of a crisis at the Des Moines Pool Metropolitan Park District or Mt. Rainier Pool. If there is accurate, up-to-date information available, that must be provided to the public in an emergency, the attached procedures will be followed, and the attached information will be important.

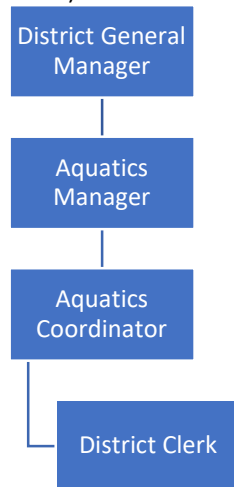
The District General Manager or designee will be the official spokesperson of the Des Moines Pool Metropolitan Park District. Contact the District General Manager immediately in a communications-emergency situation. If the District General Manager cannot be reached, the Aquatics Manager will take responsibility.

The District General Manager or designee will receive all media calls and coordinate all official information that is to be given to the media. The spokesperson will designate other individuals to be interviewed as appropriate and will assist the news media in getting access to the key individuals and accurate information.

The District General Manager must be kept informed of important news and must be updated frequently in any emergency. All staff members are delegated to assist in gathering and investigating information for its validity as it becomes available. If the news media cannot get accurate, prompt information through the District General Manager, they will quickly find their own sources to meet their deadlines.

CRISIS COMMUNICATION PROCEDURES FOR STAFF

1. Stay calm and in control. Notify the District General Manager that a crisis exists and give all information about the crisis to the ?? immediately (that is known at the time).
2. The District General Manager will quickly assemble the DMPMPD Management Team through the 'Phone Tree' (as shown below). Obtain and compile accurate information quickly.



3. The District General Manager will disseminate all related facts on the crisis as known.
4. The Aquatics Manager and Aquatics Coordinator (if needed) will inform key staff of the activation of the Crisis Management Communication Plan has been activated. Message to Staff will be as follows:
 - a. Brief Description of situation.
 - b. Inform staff that they may receive phone calls from media or concerned patrons.
 - c. Instruct that if contacted to simply state that we do not have any details regarding the situation and that the District General Manager is the spokesperson and can be reached 253.245.3810.
 - d. Write down any media contacts on 'Media Log' when called

5. Once information has been gathered, the DMPMPD Management Team would then determine the investigation and research roles of employees present. DMPMPD Management Team will direct all statements to 'Crisis Management Communication Plan.'
6. The District General Manager and the Board President will provide all "official statements." Any employee who has spoken with the media must notify the District General Manager immediately and let the crisis team know what was said and to whom. The DMPMPD Management Team needs to be aware of the information being requested and/or disseminated.
7. The District General Manager shall notify and brief Legal Counsel and ask for immediate legal suggestions. The District General Manager will also notify the insurance company immediately. The insurance company may suggest the District utilize their Pre-Defense program in managing the situation.
8. The District General Manager shall be immediately available to the media and provide the media with information as soon as it is verified.
9. Let the media know what information we can and cannot provide. ("We cannot release the names of the accident victims yet, but as soon as we have notified the victims' family, we will let you know.")
10. No victim information of any kind can be released until family is notified and may not be mentioned at all, depending upon the victim's age.
11. Never speak "off the record". Treat everything you say as if it were going to be on the television and radio news, it just might be.
12. Liability or guilt must never be admitted under any circumstances.
13. Never say, "No comment." Instead, let the media know that the District General Manager will provide the information as soon as it is available.

Because official statements can come from either the District General Manager or the Board President, it is imperative that they be in close communication throughout the crisis. Each must let the other know what official statements have been made to the media and each must be kept informed of new or changing information.

Remember that if you make a statement, you can be quoted. Reporters like short phrases that are easy to quote especially colorful phrases that make good headlines. Use caution as you speak. Don't let a friendly reporter disarm you. If you don't want to read it in the paper, don't say it!

Be sure to ask when the reporter's deadline is and respect it. Remember that journalists are under pressure due to time constraints and unfortunately, accuracy sometimes suffers as a result. When you respond to a reporter's questions and inquiries on time, they will appreciate your efforts. If you must respond to a question posed by a reporter later, get the appropriate information and respond before the deadline. The finished article will be more accurate.

1. If a reporter telephones you at home or work and catches you by surprise, you will probably need time to get your thoughts together before the interview. It is okay to tell the reporter that you will telephone him right back with accurate answers. Find out what he/she needs to know and what his deadline is. Before you call the reporter back, decide what you want to say and get the information you need.
2. Every reporter will want to know these fundamental questions: Who? What? When? Where? Why? And How?
3. You will also want the reporter and audience to understand the message you want to convey: The Des Moines Pool Metropolitan Park District is a caring organization dedicated to serving the people of this community. Think about your message as you answer the interviewer's questions. Weave that message into your answers. Give examples that express the District's concern. **For example:**
 - Who?** "Several residents who live near the pool have expressed concern about the use of pesticides by the District. We understand their concern and we are making every effort to address this issue. We have spoken with the residents at length and have invited them to address the board at our next meeting."
 - What?** "Because we realize that some of our citizens are concerned about the safety of pesticides, we have temporarily halted their application while we conduct a thorough study of this issue. Members of our staff have been researching literature about pesticides. We also had an international expert on this subject meet with our staff and discuss research findings on Roundup. He was most helpful in providing answers to our questions about the safety of these products. I would be happy to get his name for you. What is your deadline?"
4. Nothing is "off-the-record." Make sure you don't say anything that you don't want to read in print.
5. If the reporter asks you a question you are not prepared to answer, tell him/her you do not have that information. It is okay not to know. You are not required to answer every question.

WHEN DEALING WITH THE NEWS MEDIA

In a Crisis Situation, all information will be released from the District's Management Team. Employees that are knowledgeable of the event or who are witnesses to the event may be approached by reporters. Employees should automatically direct reporters to the District General Manager as the official spokesperson for the District.

1. As members of the Des Moines Pool Metropolitan Park District team of employees, you will be responsible for following the media policies of the District. (See Employee Handbook Section 8.13).
2. If you find yourself in an emergency situation, please take all immediate action. Once the situation is under control, notify your immediate supervisor and/or the Management team.
3. All contact with outside media sources such as reporters, producers and directors, print or television, must be referred to the District General Manager. If you can't remember that, refer them to your Department Head.
4. All media contact must be cleared through your District General Manager, who will in turn contact you if a reporter has been given your name as a media source.
5. Please do not talk to media without prior approval.
6. The procedure allows the District to protect the privacy of our staff and participants.

7. Please refrain from speaking about the incident with friends, relatives or anyone outside of work until cleared to. Stories can be exaggerated based on who is telling it, and inaccurate information can get into the wrong hands.

ON TALKING TO THE MEDIA

After you have received approval from the District General, you may speak with the media.

It is acceptable not to know the answer to a question. If so, just openly admit "I don't know." Direct the reporter at that time to the District General Manager as the Spokesperson. Do not say "No Comment" as the Reporters may interpret the "no comment" to imply guilt and reluctance to speak with the media.

When Speaking To The Media

- Stay Positive – Admit Crisis but never guilt or cause
- Only release verified information as directed by the Executive Director
- Reinforce rescue efforts, positive safety record, etc.
- Balance public statements with known facts
- Never say "No Comment"

Basic Media Response Outline

- Acknowledge incident
- Highlight rescue efforts
- Emphasize investigation efforts
- Provide facts as available and approved
- Always be honest
- Answer all phone calls from media in order they are received

Remember Following Responses

- "I know, and I can tell you...."
- "I know, and I can't tell you, and here's why...."
- "I don't know, but I'll find out"
- "Let me get back to you"

POST INCIDENT MANAGEMENT PLAN

Subsequent to any incident that requires the implementation of the Des Moines Pool Metropolitan Park District Emergency Operations Management Plan, the following will occur:

- The Emergency Management Team will meet within 24 hours of the conclusion of the incident to review the effectiveness of the operation of the team.
- Representatives of outside agencies that were involved in the incident will be included in the review process; e.g. Fire Department, Police Department, City of Des Moines, utility companies, and District's attorney.

MEDIA RELATIONS PLAN

The Des Moines Pool Metropolitan Park District has already established a good working relationship with the media. However, we should all strive to enhance these communications even further, especially during a time of crisis.

The following are some basic ideas to help provide guidelines in dealing with the media. Special attention is given to suggestions on how to deal with crisis or emergency situations.

The Crisis Management Team Must Know the Message to Convey

It is important for the Des Moines Pool Metropolitan Park District spokespersons to be well informed about the event and issues that will be the focus of news stories and/or community attention. The crisis committee will try to provide this information on a timely basis.

While it may not always be possible to know in advance of a reporter's call, there are certain messages that are always appropriate for this organization:

1. The District is a caring organization, dedicated to making the best possible decisions to serve the people of this community.
2. We are concerned about the taxpayers, park users and environment. Whatever policy decisions we make and whatever crisis we face, those concerns are paramount.
3. We will provide the media with any pertinent information they request. If we don't know the information, we will attempt to get it.

The Crisis Committee Must Know Their Audience

The kind of information you provide to the media depends on the audience that publication will be reaching. For example, the details you provide to the press would be of local human interest. It is important to change your editorial viewpoints when dealing with certain topics such as: guns in the parks, pesticides, safety, governance and other issues.

The audience for local publications is varied. It includes people of all ages and incomes, taxpayers, government employees, conservationists, developers and corporations. It includes all residents who live in the District boundaries. These residents include large families and people who live alone. Each group could be affected differently by what you say. How will this impact your message? What information would you like to offer to reassure each group?

What other information is your audience receiving? Are newspapers, magazines and special-interest groups printing articles that have an impact on park district policies? How will you address those issues?

The Crisis Committee Must Know the Reporter

Just as each newspaper and television station has its own focus and style, so does each reporter. Some are general assignment reporters who cover anything they are assigned. Others are feature reporters; developing in-depth stories about people, programs and parks. Specialty reporters may cover the park district for a business, governmental or arts viewpoint.

Become familiar with the journalist who covers the District. Read their articles. Do they report the information we provide or do they do extensive research and write stories from their own perspective? Offer to clarify information for them so they report it accurately and suggest good sources for their research.