



Preparing for Climate Effects at the Municipal Level: A Public Health Symposium

Friday, April 22, 2016

Massachusetts Department of Public Health

Hosted at the Endicott House, Dedham, MA

Brookline Project to Protect Public Health from Effects of Climate Variability

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Summary

- Review hazard vulnerability assessments for Brookline
 - 2013 by Emergency Preparedness Region 4b
 - 2015 by Massachusetts Area Planning Council (MAPC)
- Use hazard vulnerability assessment data
 - Identify key stakeholders and partners
 - Share information among all members of Brookline's Emergency Management Team
- Promote and expand on the Emergency Preparedness (EP) Buddies program
 - Develop additional programs & methods for reaching Brookline's most vulnerable residents



Challenges

- Reaching vulnerable populations via the organizations that serve them
 - Barriers include language, social isolation, transient populations
 - Lack of interest in hazard preparedness related to climate variability
- Recruiting/Retaining EP Buddies program volunteers
 - Concerns regarding anticipated time commitment and/or responsibilities in the event of an emergency
 - Significant time lag between training and assignment



Actions

Outreach:

- Foster new partnerships with community, faith-based, and culturally-focused organizations
- Develop relationships with management of housing complexes geared toward elderly, low-SES, and transient populations
- Comprehensively update the Vulnerable Populations list



Actions

EP Buddies Program:



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Actions

Whole Community:

- Build on the EP Buddies program to reach a variety of at-risk populations
- Work with partners
- Translate materials
- Focus on rental housing
 - Lower SES
 - Transient





Community Impact & Benefits

- Reduce health burden of climate change hazards, including heat, floods, and vector-borne disease
- Increase collaboration with community-based organizations, including faith-based and culturally-focused groups
- Decrease the vulnerability of groups most at risk, including elderly, low-SES, and transient populations
- Increase community-level resilience via preparedness and connectivity