



School Safety Monthly

September 2015

Preparedness Month Wrap-Up!

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Photos: Rachel Wilson



Message from



the Editor

Welcome to the Preparedness Month Edition of *School Safety Monthly*!

Lets google it:

Preparedness (noun): *a state of readiness, especially for war.*

Well, maybe we are not quite preparing for war, even though sometimes it might feel like it! How did you "celebrate" this month? Do you feel more prepared yet?

There are still lots of activities that you can do to maintain the momentum from Preparedness Month. As always, we encourage you to always strive for a

culture of safety that strengthens preparedness through prevention, response, and recovery to protect against and overcome the next crisis. But there is always so much to do. What should we focus on first?

Think of yourself on a regular day. From the moment you get up in the morning there are things on a list. Things you try not to forget. Kids - Check, Coffee - Check, Keys, Cell phone, Wallet - check check check. But what if Tomorrow were different? What is on our list of activities and resources that will be needed when the time comes?

Getting back to business after large scale events largely depends on emergency planning and preparation beforehand. In smaller incidents it can decide the outcome of the event altogether.

Remember to make your decisions to fit your local hazard assessment, including manmade and natural disasters. In 2013 Natural Disasters displaced three times as many people as

war. More people every year are being displaced by extreme weather and natural disasters. This includes all weather-related and geological hazards events, like storms, floods, landslides, volcanos, tsunamis or earthquakes.

If you already have a plan remember to review it regularly and include your key stakeholders (Police, Fire, EMS, Emergency Management, etc.).

In this month's issue we have some tools to help you with the nuts and bolts of preparedness. This issue includes tips on emergency mapping, free mapping icons to get you started plus information on how to consider color-blindness in your preparedness efforts.

For comments or suggestions on *School Safety Monthly*, you can contact us via our website, at Facebook.com/SafeHavensIntl, or through [@SafeHavensIntl](https://twitter.com/SafeHavensIntl) on Twitter.

-Rachel



Photo: Chris Dorn, Safe Havens International



5 Tips for Emergency Map Design

One of the most basic and often overlooked preparedness tools is the emergency map. We create them and they get moved, fall down or misplaced. They end up getting mixed up over time. As building modifications are made, they go out of date.

A good map design will use common software that can be used to make updates over time as needed. Source maps can be pulled from floor plans, created from scratch using design software, or even hand-drawn and scanned. If you are having trouble locating your floor plans, one place to look might be the server room. Copies of building blueprints are often stored here since one was needed to place wiring.

Here are a few tips to consider when you are creating or updating your emergency maps.

1. Clarity

Are your maps clear, easy to read and understand? Use easy to read fonts, only include information that is absolutely necessary, and use helpful icons to help the viewer quickly determine where they are and where they should go.

2. Orientation

Are all maps oriented properly to the viewer? For example, if you are reading the map and your emergency route takes you out the door and to the left, does the arrow on the map guide you to the left?

3. Universal language

Are you using terminology that anyone can understand, including regular users as well as visitors and first responders? If using special location names, are these communicated through corresponding signage as well? For example, if a map refers to "D Hall" does "D Hall" have paint or signage saying it is such? This is something to consider in your emergency planning as well.

4. Up to date

Are your maps current? Include a version number and/or date on your map. This also makes it easier to make sure all maps are updated when changes are made.

5. Fire code

Do they meet the requirements of your local fire code? Ask your first responders to review them. They are often going to be the ones using them.



Here are some map features we look for when we are doing a school safety assessment:

- Are emergency evacuation maps placed in all occupied areas?
- Are severe weather sheltering maps posted?
- Are maps oriented properly to the viewer?
- Does the map design feature icons to indicate your location, evacuation routes, etc.?
- Do maps use text instructions? For example: "Exit the room and go left to exit through the door at the end of the hall. Assemble at the soccer field."
- Do maps include photos to help convey evacuation routes and assembly areas? This can be especially helpful for younger students or some populations with special needs.



Free Resource download: Mapping Icons

Download at: <http://safehavensinternational.org/emergency-map-icon-samples/>

Sample Emergency Map Icons

One of the basic components of a good map is a good set of icons. For those of you that are working on creating or updating emergency maps, this month's free resource may save you time or inspire you. These icons have been created based on general standards and fire code requirements for emergency mapping. To download these icons as individual files or in PSD format, visit www.safehavensinternational.org/resources/ and look under the "Mapping Resources" category or [click here](#).

SAMPLE EMERGENCY MAP ICONS

PRIMARY ROUTES



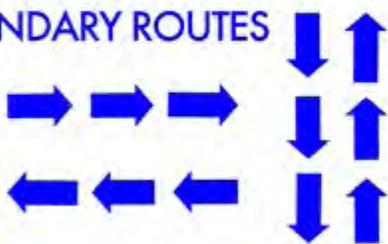
FIRE ALARM
PULL STATION



FIRE
EXTINGUISHER



SECONDARY ROUTES



ADDITIONAL ITEMS
FOR BUILDING MASTER MAP



ADDITIONAL ICONS





Color-blindness and Emergency Preparedness

Color vision deficiencies affect 1 in 12 men and 1 in 200 women. In fact, you would probably be surprised to learn how many people have some sort of difficulty seeing certain colors. It is important that we consider this in our emergency mapping work.

A great way to do this is screen your maps through a color-blindness checker. There are several different types of visual impairments so keep this in mind when reviewing the various preview images using these tools. Here are some free tools that are available online which allow you to upload your images and view them through a color-blindness filter via a preview image:

- VisCheck tool: <http://www.vischeck.com/>
- Color Blindness Simulator: <http://www.color-blindness.com/coblis-color-blindness-simulator/>

We should also consider color-blindness when it comes to our other response materials, for example signage, crisis plans, emergency reference charts, job action sheets, etc. In general, here are a few tips to avoid color-blindness conflicts:

- Avoid mixing red and yellow, since these can look very similar for specific types of color-blindness.
- Blue and red contrast well.
- Use distinct and dark colors. A light blue or light red might be hard to read for anyone, especially in low light.
- Use distinct icons, so that even if someone has trouble determining what color it is, they will still be able to figure out what it represents.
- Consider the need for outlines, drop shadow or other effects to make sure that items on the map stand out.
- Remember there are other types of visual impairment, so consider the need for including things like tactile signage.



Photo: Rachel Wilson



Save the Date: Great ShakeOut! 10/15/15!

Are you participating in the Great Shake Out? This is a great opportunity to remind us to practice for earthquakes. Dust off your "Drop Cover and Hold" with 23,356,267 other participants worldwide.

Remember if you are indoors, drop to the ground, cover under sturdy furniture like a table, and hold on until the shaking stops. If you are outdoors, find a clear spot away from buildings, telephone poles, trees or other potential hazards then drop, cover and hold. To register with the Great ShakeOut, visit: shakeout.org/howtoparticipate/



Photos: Rachel Wilson



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