Crisis and Emergency Risk Communication in Flint, Michigan

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Mission

- A Unified Coordination Group (UCG) was established to coordinate federal, state, and local response agencies.

- A Public and External Affairs Task Force (PEATF) coordinated communicators from multiple federal, state, and local organizations.

- The role of each CDC PEATF LNO was to coordinate public health communication efforts.
Challenges

- Trust
  - Governments (federal, state, and local)
  - Community
  - Media

- Target Audience Access
  - Identifying target audience needs
  - Determining the best way to disseminate information

- Thermometer
  - It was -4F when I landed in Flint on 2/12
  - It was in the 50s by Wednesday of that week
  - Then, this happened...
Accomplishments

- Community Engagement
  - Collaborated with community partner sub-groups focused on communication and education
  - Observed Flint Rising meetings
  - Attended Surgeon General presentations for clinicians and Flint citizens
  - Joined EPA for information sharing during mass at Our Lady of Guadalupe...and helped make bacon
- Communication Planning
  - Updated the UCG communications plan for all response agencies
- Materials Management
  - Catalogued communication materials...and community concerns
Takeaways

- This response was different from any I’ve ever done…but aren’t they all
  - Cons: There was no easy solution in this situation
  - Pros: But the community-level participation was awe-inspiring
- What we (communicators) do matters
  - People do value our presence
  - …and…
...at the end of the day, a good sense of humor goes a long way.
Questions?
Resources

- CERC Website
  - http://emergency.cdc.gov/cerc/

- Additional Inquiries
  - cercrequest@cdc.gov