



Keynote Speakers & Break-Out Sessions

There Cannot Be a Crisis Today. Our Schedules Are Already Full.

Presenter: Tom Olshanski

As the key spokesperson for the United States Fire Administration, Tom Olshanski has gained real-world expertise in emergency planning and management with media. He will share his experiences organizing joint information centers at major national disasters and will discuss the tools needed for effective communication.

“The Chinese use two brush strokes to write the word ‘crisis.’ One brush stroke stands for danger, the other for opportunity. In a crisis, be aware of the danger – but recognize the opportunity.”

(John F. Kennedy, *Speech in Indianapolis, April 12, 1959*)

Crisis Communication — How To Handle a Crisis Even When It’s Not Your Own

Presenter: Peggy Anderson

Sometimes the unthinkable happens. A crisis occurs and you are called on to communicate with the public and media representatives. What do you do when tragedy strikes a neighboring state, and you’re still called on to respond? At this session, learn how the North Dakota Department of Transportation handled a barrage of media requests immediately following the August 2007 Minnesota 35W bridge collapse. Peggy Anderson, NDDOT Communications Division director, will discuss the importance of communicating even when the crisis isn’t occurring in your area.

Get the Lead (and the Message) Out! A Multi-Agency Risk Communication Response

Presenters: Loreeta Canton, Ted Quanrud, Terry Steinwand

In 2008, the North Dakota departments of Health, Agriculture and Game and Fish worked closely together to develop simple, clear and direct messages to explain a complicated new issue. When lead particles were discovered in ground venison that had been donated to food pantries, the health implications were not clear. What was clear was the potential impact this discovery could have on hunters, meat processors, food pantry clients and others who consume wild game. Panel members will discuss the communication response and reactions from the public and media across the country.

Social Media and Risk Communication

Presenter: Marnie Piehl

This session will look at the benefits of Twitter, Facebook and other social networking sites. Marnie Piehl also will discuss how and IF to use social media tools in crisis communication.

When There Is Nowhere To Run and Nowhere To Hide ...

Lessons Learned When the Boss Leaves

Presenters: Denise Kolpack and Mark Armstrong

What happens when the head of your agency or company is in serious trouble and is the subject of intense, daily media scrutiny? How does a communicator manage information through this crisis, both internally and externally? What do you do when blog sites carry information that you know to be patently false and your internal employees are devouring information from these sources to find out “what is really going on?” How do you respond to the media’s need for information and your desire to maintain some sense of order with your customers and your stakeholders? Some lessons from two communicators who recently had first-hand experiences in dealing with this kind of crisis.

2009 North Dakota Flood Response Panel

Presenters: Karena Lunday, Cecily Fong, Deanna Van Bruggen, LTC Rick J. Smith, Gloria David

As predictions for the Red River continued to rise this spring, communities in the Red River Valley began a massive effort to fight back. Record snowfall in many parts of the state soon led to problems all across North Dakota catching some communities by surprise. This panel will discuss the public information response from both a local and state viewpoint, from the Fargo area all the way west to Bismarck.