



IAEM Bulletin

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Oct. IAEM Bulletin Call for Articles
“Honor the Past, Treasure the Present, Shape the Future”
Deadline:
Sept. 23, 2019
 The October issue will be our conference issue, based on the conference theme.

IAEM Announces the Speakers for the 2019 EMvision Talks

We are pleased to announce a dynamic lineup of speakers for the IAEM EMvision Talks on Tuesday, Nov. 19, 2019. This popular conference event is modeled on the well-known TED™ Talk format. The talks provide a forum for people to share a personal connection to an idea, experience or passion related to the field of emergency management. The 2019 EMvision Talks speakers are:

- **Marcus Coleman, Jr., MPA**, senior associate, HWC, Inc.
- **Andrew Friend, MA, CEM**, disaster clinical specialist (EM director), King Faisal Specialist Hospital & Research Centre.
- **Monte Fronk**, tribal public safety responder, Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe.
- **Renate Garrison, MPA, CEM**, emergency management officer, City of Beaverton, Oregon.
- **Courtney Grey**, director of disaster behavioral health, Boston Public Health Commission.
- **Lara Pagano, MA**, meteorologist, National Weather Service.
- **Blake Stave, MPA, CEM**, program manager, Xcel Energy.
- **Libby Turner, MA, CEM**, federal coordinating officer, FEMA. ▲

 **More conference news is available on [pages 7-10](#).**




Marcus Coleman, Jr., MPA



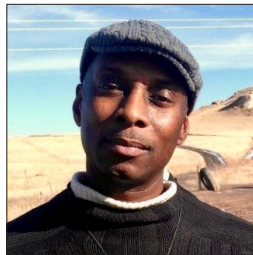
Andrew Friend, MA, CEM



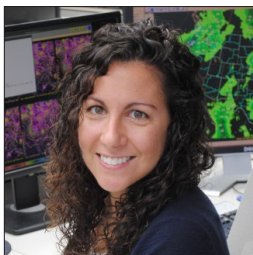
Monte Fronk



Renate Garrison, MPA, CEM



Courtney Grey



Lara Pagano, MA



Blake Stave, MPA, CEM



Libby Turner, MA, CEM

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The *IAEM Bulletin* is a benefit of membership in IAEM, now in its 36th year of providing information, resources, and ideas for IAEM members.

Call for Articles
Special Focus Issue
**“Honor the Past,
 Treasure the Present,
 Shape the Future”**
October 2019 IAEM Bulletin
Deadline: Sept. 23, 2019
750-1,500 words

■ The last special focus issue in October 2019 will be based on the theme of the 67th IAEM Annual Conference & EMEX, to be held Nov. 15-20, 2019, in Savannah, Georgia. [Visit the IAEM Bulletin web page](#) for details.

IAEM Bulletin Advertising

Obtain details on ad guidelines and costs at www.iaem.org/Bulletin.

IAEM members and EMEX exhibitors receive ad discounts.

About the IAEM Bulletin

The *IAEM Bulletin*, the official newsletter of the International Association of Emergency Managers, is published monthly by IAEM to keep members abreast of association news, government actions affecting emergency management, and research and information sources.

The publication also is intended to serve as a way for emergency management colleagues to exchange information on programs and ideas. Issues from the past five years through the present are available in the members-only [IAEM Bulletin Archives](#).

The *Bulletin* is distributed electronically via the members-only archives to emergency management officials each month, representing all levels of government, industrial, commercial, educational, military, private, nonprofit and volunteer organizations.

Publishing an article in the *IAEM Bulletin* may help you to meet IAEM's certification requirements. If you haven't written an article lately, or at all, for the *IAEM Bulletin*, check out the [author's guidelines](#).

The members of the IAEM Editorial Committee know that every one of us has a story to tell. ▲

Connect through the IAEM Jobs Board!

<https://jobs.iaem.org>

One Emergency Manager's View: The Role of the Telephone in EM Response

By Michael D. Prasad, CEM, Assistant Director, State of New Jersey,
Department of Children and Families, Office of Emergency Management, Trenton, New Jersey

Here's one emergency manager's view on the role of the telephone in emergency management response, and how it has evolved from a one-way communication method (back when the public called first responders for help from landlines, or when one agency called the other for interoperability if their radios didn't match up, etc.) to the multi-directional smart devices we use today. Considering the technological advances made over the last five years, let alone the ones over 25 years – how will we maximize this ever-changing capability into the future?

I grew up in a home with a rotary phone on the wall with a long cord to the handset. It was probably lime green – and no, it wasn't as old as this stock photo I found. But it was a rental (yes, back then you didn't own your own telephones – kind of like many of the high-end cell phones today), and it was a party-line. For those of you who are not old enough to recall party-lines, they were shared lines between neighbors, and whoever was on it first had the line until they disconnected.

Over the years, my family got their own line, splurged on touch-tone (that was an extra fee for a long time), got an answering machine, and eventually bought cordless phones (which we purchased ourselves when the Bell System in the United States was broken up and people could actually buy their own phones).

Where I grew up, we didn't have 9-1-1 to contact emergency responders – and they had no way to contact us directly, unless they drove to our house or neighborhood. By the end of 1976, 9-1-1 was serving about 17% of the U.S. population. By 1987, those figures grew to **about 50% of the U.S. population.**

Advent of Cellular Telephones

Then we got cellular telephones. They were not the giant bricks you see on classic TV shows or commercials. We waited a bit for the prices to come down, the availability to go up, and the size of the phone to shrink. It wasn't a flip phone (yet), and that model cell phone just made and received calls. It had an antenna you had to pull out, it had call-waiting, and I think it had voice-mail – the same kind of features that office telephones had back then. You would never call for an emergency from your cell phone at the time, since the dispatchers had no quick way of knowing who you were or where you

were located. I kept my landline telephone for many years, just for that reason. Eventually my community's emergency responders subscribed to a "reverse 9-1-1" system, where they could contact everyone (with landlines only!) in their jurisdiction and send them a recorded message. At the same time, email systems were evolving, and more people used that route for their correspondence with each other. Emergency managers took notice and started sending non-critical information that way, as well.

Arrival of Smartphones

Eventually, text message capability was added to cell phones, more subscriber-based alert systems became available, and then smartphones arrived. Now the applications on people's smartphones are more capable than many of those on their home computers – if they even have home computers anymore. Much of people's daily information sources, including emergency information, comes to them via their smartphone. Apps like the **Red Cross' Emergency!** can aggregate National Weather Service (and potentially other **IPAWS**) warning alerts for multiple jurisdictions, as well as provide real-time emergency and disaster



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Role of the Telephone in Emergency Management Response

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training and knowledge (such as where the nearest shelter is located when a flood strikes a community).

Nationwide Testing of Emergency Alerts

In 2018, the U.S. federal government tested both the Wireless Emergency Alerts (WEA) and the Emergency Alert System (EAS) in the first-ever nationwide test of these alert systems together. This included testing the **Presidential Alert** (the only one that the vast majority of U.S. cell phone subscribers cannot block – as long as their cell phones are turned on). Many organizations, colleges/universities, and local and state governments also are implementing two-way alert systems, like AlertUs, Everbridge, Hyper-Reach or OnSolve (to name just a few), which can not only send alerts via multiple methods (text, voice, e-mail, for example) and retry multiple times, those systems also can log the confirmation by the recipient of “message received” as well as obtain information back from the recipient for questions asked by the sender.

For example, let’s use a “shelter-in-place” public notification for the impacted plume area from a chemical spill – which crosses multiple communities. In the “older” version for public notification, a series of reverse-911 calls would be made by multiple emergency managers (where a recorded voice message could be sent to landlines and pre-registered cell phone numbers of the residents of a specific community). The Emergency Alert System would probably be activated as well – sending an emergency broadcast alert to local media, cable systems, radio and television stations, etc. It would be up to each broadcaster to further distribute, based on their

area of coverage. In “today’s” version, those same communities (or even the state) could sign up for an alert system (or be signed up based on residency, property tax roll status, school registration, etc.) and not only get the alerts for their own impacted community, but also for those impacted communities they may be traveling through. Most alert systems can send to all subscribers within a geographic area – such as a polygon associated with a chemical plume).

Enhanced 911 Systems and Alerts Delivered by Smartphone

Emergency management also can receive immediate feedback from impacted residents, such as sheltering residents who have medical concerns and may need emergency medical transportation. The **Enhanced-911 system** provides better coverage for Voice-over-Internet Protocol phone systems and cellular calls, and will allow for text and even video to be received (and transmitted) to and from Public Safety Access Points.

For responders, gone are the days of pagers and air-raid sirens across town. Your smartphone now sends you the alert, asking your availability to respond and letting you know where to stage, if you take the call. It may even provide you the best route to get there and provide accountability tracking for the planning section, describing your ever-changing location.

FirstNet and Interoperability

With the rollout of **FirstNet**, interoperability between a single-purpose nationwide cellular network dedicated to first responders’ use and existing public service land mobile radio systems has the promise of linking voice, data and even video communications systems across multiple entities and jurisdictions. This can be a life-saving capability, especially during large-scale disasters when interoperable communications systems are mission-critical.

Looking Forward

How emergency managers use telephones in the future is only limited to their imaginations, their coordination and cooperation with other partners, and of course, their budgets! My recommendation is to stick to the “science” of what we do, how we do it, and when. Look for telephone systems, dispatching systems, radio systems, and alert and notification systems that are comprehensive – along the lines of planning, organization, equipment, training and exercising – as well as providing capabilities for preparedness, response, recovery, mitigation, and protection/prevention. ▲

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The *IAEM Dispatch* tackles today’s most relevant issues, gathered from sources like Associated Press, The Washington Post, Financial Times, and the leading industry publications. Delivered to the in-boxes of emergency management industry professionals, the *IAEM Dispatch* keeps professionals informed of topics that impact their programs.