



## IDAHO REGION II STABILIZATION PLAN



### Annex K

## NET TEAMS

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This annex provides guidance to manage Neighborhood Emergency Teams (NET Teams), including organization and communications.

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Lead: NET Manager

Partners: Chief Elected Officials  
Emergency Manager

Support: Annex Coordinators

### INTRODUCTION

The Neighborhood Concept. One of the reasons why the crime rate was so low in 1940's and 1950's suburban communities was the simple fact that people took the time to get to know their neighbors. Each neighbor participated in the welfare and safety of their neighborhood, believing that what affected one neighbor affected them all.

In contrast, modern society encourages isolation. This provides fertile ground for crime and unrest in a catastrophic disaster. Additional contributing factors will include:

- Mistrust of the government
- A "Do For Me" attitude
- Lack of personal preparation and supplies
- Minimal inventory on store shelves because of "just-in-time" business practices

The Catastrophic Environment. In a prolonged and dire national emergency, resources will run out, and outside assistance may be unavailable. It will be imperative for neighborhoods to become cohesive in order to endure during unstable times. This means that, rather than being wary of their neighbors, folks will need to actively get to know those who live around them. This is the underlying foundation and philosophy of Neighborhood Emergency Teams (NET Teams). By preparing for emergencies as a group, the "me" philosophy gives way to the "we" philosophy. The neighborhood becomes stronger and more likely to survive any emergency, stabilize more quickly, and succeed afterward than individuals can.

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The purpose of the Neighborhood Emergency Teams (NET Teams) is to bring connectivity between government and neighborhoods, while helping to build sustainable communities. NET Teams consist of a city/county employee and a volunteer. Their purpose is to extend the local government to the neighborhood level, providing a constant, positive presence in citizens' daily lives.

## **SCOPE**

1. NET teams have two critical objectives and will use the attached NET Guidebook to achieve them.

- The first objective is to assess and prioritize basic needs – food, water, shelter, sanitation, healthcare, and transportation at the neighborhood level. The NET Team visits the homes in their assigned neighborhood to assess the needs of residents. Needs that cannot be met at the neighborhood level are communicated to city/county government. Annex coordinators prioritize these needs and allocate resources to the NET Teams for distribution.
- The second objective is to actively promote neighborhood sustainability. Sustainability begins with people taking individual responsibility for their lives – becoming self-reliant as individuals and as a neighborhood.

Achieving these objectives is significantly enhanced if neighborhood residents are organized in advance to become prepared for disasters and emergencies.

2. Neighborhood security is managed by the Sheriff or Police Chief, as applicable.

## **POLICY**

1. NET Teams are the authorized representatives of local government for public safety and welfare.

2. The NET Manager is an operations position in the city/county Emergency Operations Center, and reports to the Emergency Manager.

3. The NET Guidebook will be the standardized set of procedures used by NET Teams.

4. NET Teams will be provided personal protective equipment appropriate to the hazards faced.

5. NET members will be screened and trained.

## **DEFINING A NEIGHBORHOOD**

The term *neighborhood* has many meanings and uses, including:

- The area surrounding a school or other local institution
- Voting district or precinct
- Sub-division of similar houses
- An area as defined by city/county planners
- An area defined by census boundaries

Choosing Boundaries. As part of preparation, the NET Manager should consider the above definitions to develop working neighborhood boundaries. There is no single, right definition. For the purposes of this annex, a neighborhood is both an area and identification with and/or social unity felt, by a group of people.

Neighborhood boundaries must be identified to develop maps and assign NET Teams. As a general guideline, one NET Team should be assigned for up to 50 residences. Since neighborhood sizes will likely vary, some neighborhoods may have more than one NET Team.

A commonly recognized neighborhood gathering point will be critical to cohesiveness. This facility will be the hub of the neighborhood, where people meet for social activities, education, and news and information. It also serves basic needs, including food preparation, first-aid station, and (if needed) a shelter.

## **NEIGHBORHOOD PREPARATION**

It is prudent to promote neighborhood preparation and education *in advance* of a catastrophic event. Neighborhood preparation needs to be a formal program that actively organizes residents to form a disaster-resistant community. Suggested ways to do this include:

- Neighborhood preparation as a project for “Community Emergency Response Teams” (CERT Teams). Under the sponsorship of the Emergency Management Office, CERT members visit homes in their neighborhood to provide education about home safety and disaster preparedness. Hand-out materials can be provided by local public safety agencies.
- “Map Your Neighborhood” (MYN) is a program developed by LuAn K. Johnson, PhD, Public Education Manager, Washington State Emergency Management Division, to help build and strengthen disaster readiness among neighbors.

Individual NET Team members may (and should) participate in these programs, since prepared neighborhoods reduce event impact, and facilitate the work of the NET Teams. However, the NET Team program and this annex are NOT part of the above programs. NET Teams are ONLY activated during a catastrophic event.

## **CONCEPT OF OPERATIONS**

At the local level, public safety and welfare is the foundation for any subsequent continuity-of-government. Chief elected officials carry out this obligation when they direct activation of the NET Teams. The NET Manager has two objectives:

- 1. Objective 1: Assess and prioritize basic needs.** NET Teams first conduct a *Preliminary Assessment* of the immediate needs of their neighborhood - food, water, and healthcare. This assessment must be completed within 36 hours of NET Team activation, in order to identify and move the needed resources.
- 2. Objective 2: Actively promote neighborhood sustainability.** NET Teams work with citizens to become self-reliant as individuals, and as a neighborhood.

These objectives are unified in the NET Guidebook.

### **NET Guidebook**

Objective 1: The NET Guidebook details procedures for conducting a preliminary assessment. The NET Team visits the homes in their assigned neighborhood to assess the needs of residents. The amount of information needed in the preliminary assessment varies according to the magnitude of the catastrophic event. The purpose of NET Guidebook is to:

- Establish a single standardized process by which preliminary assessment information is gathered by the NET Teams.
- Clearly define the roles of those involved in the preliminary assessment process.
- Describe how information is obtained, and how information is relayed to the NET Manager in the Emergency Operations Center.

Objective 2: The NET Guidebook provides a framework for increasing citizen management of their own interests and taking individual responsibility for their lives. A neighborhood preparedness program implemented in advance will greatly facilitate neighborhood sustainability.

This phase begins with forming an expanded NET Team (see Figure 1), and starts after the preliminary assessment is complete.

- Each residence is visited a second time. The NET Team conducts a detailed inventory of skills, and assesses citizens for potential and willingness to assist their neighbors as lead members on the expanded NET Team (Figure 1). Eligible candidates must be mentally resilient in the face of catastrophe.

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Although individual leadership potential may not be known in advance, candidates are likely to be citizens who have prepared for emergencies with extensive study on austere survival and self sufficiency. These may be members of a neighborhood preparedness organization, or individual prepared households. In either case, they will be invaluable assets for their expertise in various fields which may include expedient sanitation, food, water purification, healthcare, and others

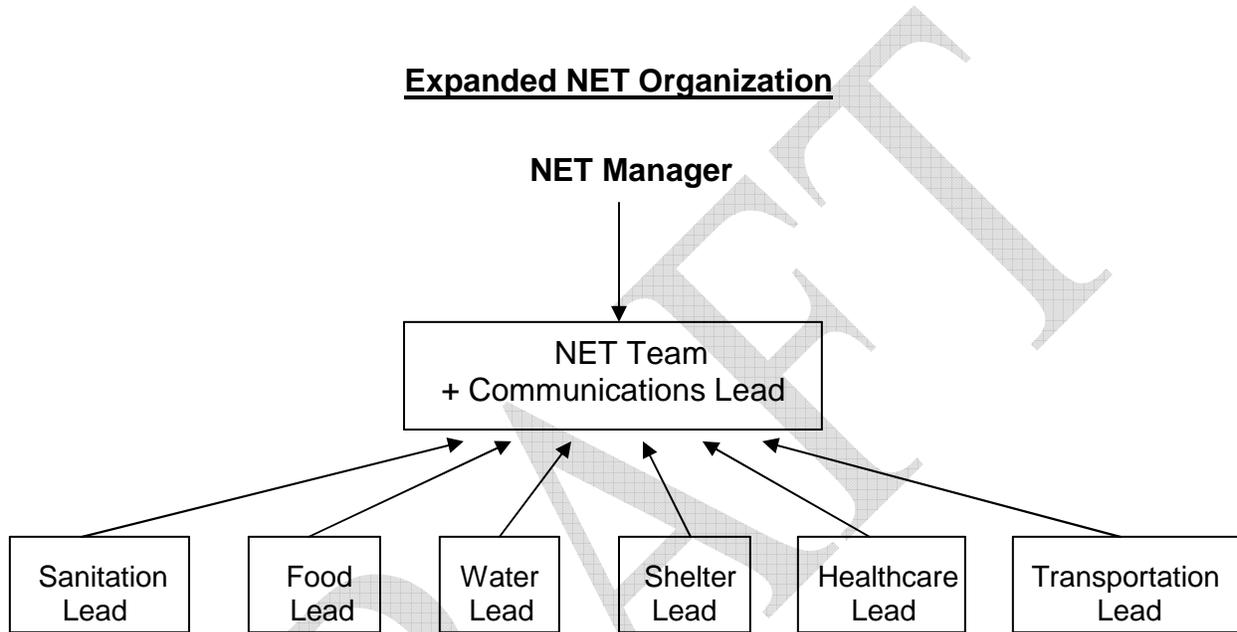


Figure 1. Expanded NET Team organization. As volunteers are recruited, the NET Team organization expands to better meet basic needs of residents.

- The second step is the selection of candidate members of the expanded NET Team. The NET Team leader forwards names of the top two candidates for each position in Figure 1, to the NET Team Manager. The NET Team Manager coordinates the candidate list with annex coordinators in the Emergency Operations Center for final eligibility review, and returns the finalized list to the NET Team leader
- The NET Team then actively recruits the citizens identified for each lead position in Figure 1. The candidates may or may not be willing to help. Some will consider assistance a civic duty, while others remain suspicious and decline. Both positions are valid and should be accepted

**Building Sustainability.** With the expanded NET Team formed, efforts to build sustainability begin. The work of the NET Teams is complemented by a variety of programs at the neighborhood gathering point. This facility (school, etc.) brings people together for the common good, and is expected to be used by the following annex coordinators:

Healthcare
Shelter
Education
Public Information
Food Preparation

***Neighborhood Gathering Point***

The transition to sustainability will take time, with specific programs – such as classes to be taught, and seed saving - determined by actual events. Additional leaders will emerge, and neighborhoods are expected to increasingly manage themselves. During this time, the NET team’s role transitions to training and support. As basic needs are increasingly met, the neighborhood may expand activities to include self defense (in coordination with law enforcement), education, and social/entertainment functions.

The conscious intent is to build neighborhood self-sufficiency, which should be constantly communicated to the citizens. The correct role of local government is to assist the public in these endeavors, encouraging citizens to step into roles of greater responsibility. The end result of sustainability will be the citizens of a community actively working to provide for that community.

**PREPARATION**

The following activities should be started immediately:

1. Work with city/county GIS staff and emergency management to identify and map neighborhood areas, and identify neighborhood gathering points.
2. Work with emergency management to educate citizens about disaster preparedness and community sustainability through:
  - Community meetings, church groups, parent/teacher associations
  - Larger seminars held at venues such as hotels or community centers
  - Field work to educate citizens who cannot make it to a meeting but still would like to help or gain insight on preparedness
  - Booth at county fairs with preparedness information

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- Information on public broadcasting television channel
  - Coordination with local scouting offices for education and merit badge qualification
  - Local fraternal organizations such as Moose, Masons and Elks
  - Running an ad about NET teams and community volunteers in local theaters prior to shows
3. Solicit volunteers to help with neighborhood preparation and serve on NET teams.
  4. Develop training program for NET members. Examples: CERT training, Incident Command System (ICS) 100, and basic communications skills.
  5. Coordinate with law enforcement for background check on NET members.
  6. Create ID badges for NET Team members.
  7. Assign NET Teams to their neighborhoods. Work with interested volunteers to organize their neighborhood. This will vary with the interest of neighborhood residents.
    - Recruit: Solicit volunteers to serve on the NET Team for their neighborhood. Suggested ways include NET brochures, and neighborhood parties/BBQs
    - Organize: Assist in building a neighborhood organization for sustainability and disaster resilience. See the “Community” section of the NET Guidebook
      - Assist with a neighborhood skills inventory
      - Identify people with special needs to determine extra assistance or supplies that may be needed
      - Identify people who have animals with special skills such as hunting dogs who could assist in search and rescue if necessary
    - Train: home safety, CERT classes, CPR, first aid, etc.
  8. Participate in disaster exercises.

## **RESPONSE – EVENT NOTIFICATION**

- \_\_\_ NET Team Manager: proceed to Emergency Operations Center when notified
- \_\_\_ Review status and obtain update from Emergency Manager
- \_\_\_ Establish event log
- \_\_\_ Determine additional staff needs
- \_\_\_ If not completed in the PREPARATION PHASE, work with city/county GIS staff and emergency management to identify and map neighborhood areas
- \_\_\_ Obtain list of neighborhood gathering points
- \_\_\_ Identify NET Team assignments for each neighborhood
- \_\_\_ Consider placing NET Team members on standby

## **RESPONSE - PRELIMINARY ASSESSMENT**

Response actions are under the direction of the NET Team Manager in coordination with the emergency manager.

### ***Upon NET Team activation by chief elected officials:***

- \_\_\_ Identify and assign NET Teams for each neighborhood
- NOTE: If electricity is out and/or homes cannot be heated, NET Teams may be assigned to shelter operations (Annex F).***
- \_\_\_ Contact city/county employees designated as NET Team members. They report to the location designated by the NET Manager
- \_\_\_ Contact volunteers. They report to the location designated by the NET Manager
- \_\_\_ Check with annex coordinators for brochures and supplies to be distributed to citizens by NET Teams
- \_\_\_ Coordinate radio net schedule with Annex J: Communications (EMCOMM Team). Be ready to monitor radio nets

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- \_\_\_\_\_ Coordinate with Annex G: Public Information for news to be relayed to citizens by NET Teams
- \_\_\_\_\_ Refresher training and equipment issue to NET Teams (see Appendix 1)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Compile preliminary assessment reports and coordinate with appropriate annex coordinators
- \_\_\_\_\_ Record additional information updates (personal delivery, radio, phone, etc.). Use “Message Form” at Annex J: Communications, Appendix 2

***NOTE: Information updates and resource allocations will be on-going after the preliminary assessment is complete.***

- \_\_\_\_\_ Pass copy of Message Form to appropriate annex coordinator
- \_\_\_\_\_ Coordinate response/resource allocations with appropriate annex coordinator and affected NET Team
- \_\_\_\_\_ Update neighborhood status charts
- \_\_\_\_\_ Coordinate with Annex G: Public Information for news to relay to NET Teams during scheduled radio nets
- \_\_\_\_\_ Track and record NET member time cards

## **RESPONSE – BUILDING SUSTAINABILITY**

- \_\_\_\_\_ Consolidate data from the preliminary assessment (see Appendix 2)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Prepare for EOC status update briefing with emergency manager
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Overview of neighborhoods and NET Teams assigned
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Summary of present and anticipated needs by jurisdiction
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Summary of citizen resources by jurisdiction: skills and equipment
  - \_\_\_\_\_ List of candidates for lead positions on the expanded NET Team for review/selection
- \_\_\_\_\_ Participate in additional EOC discussions, such as sustainability projects

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- \_\_\_\_\_ Coordinate finalized list of candidates for lead positions on the expanded NET Team with NET Team leaders
  
- \_\_\_\_\_ On-going activities with NET Teams
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Resource allocations as determined by EOC staff
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Relay status/news updates from Public Information
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Activities in support of sustainability projects with other annex coordinators
  - \_\_\_\_\_ As neighborhood involvement grows, it may be practical to divide the area into smaller units - eight or ten families - each with its own “neighborhood leader” to address concerns of those families

## Appendix 1 – NET Team Refresher Training

### 1. Welcome and introductions

### 2. Brief review of status

### 3. The role of NET Teams

- You are the representatives of local government, at the neighborhood level
- You have a critical role to stabilize our community. Your broad tasks are:
  1. Help us meet the life-essential needs of our citizens. You will be visiting the homes in your assigned neighborhood to assess the needs of residents, using the NET Guidebook. This is a preliminary assessment.
    - This must be completed within 36 hours.
    - Your reports will be used by city/county officials to put community resources where they are most needed.

2. Help us build a sustainable community. Community resources are limited. We meet this challenge by building a sustainable community. We need each citizen to become more self-reliant, and we need programs dedicated to sustainability.

Your second visit to homes in your neighborhood will initiate this process. This is described in detail in the NET Guidebook. You will be organizing your neighborhood. We are looking for:

- A neighborhood skills inventory.
- Candidate volunteers to serve with you on the NET team. Your NET team will be expanding to have lead people for sanitation, food, water, shelter, healthcare, and transportation.
- Early identification of people with special needs, to determine extra assistance or supplies that may be needed.

### 4. Handout NET Guidebooks (as needed). Review NET Guidebook

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- tbd
- tbd

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5. Handout neighborhood assignments to each team

- Map from city/county GIS, if available
- Review location and potential functions of neighborhood gathering points
  - Healthcare: advanced first-aid station, staffed by healthcare personnel
  - Shelter: Limited shelter facility, should electricity be lost
  - Education: Adult/teen education facility
  - Public Information: for official and neighborhood information
  - Food preparation: for those unable to prepare meals

6. Review radio net schedule and protocols (see Annex J, Appendix 1)

7. Review safety issues

- Weather Outlook
- Anticipated Field Conditions
- Road Closures
- Law enforcement input

8. Sign out equipment to NET Teams:

- ID badges, vests and backpack
- PPE (as required)
- Radio

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## **Appendix 2 – Consolidated Preliminary Assessment Form**

**(to be developed)**

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