

Facebook can be a useful tool to help communities prepare for, respond to and recover from disasters. Organizations, governments and individuals are turning to Facebook to help get their messages out — whether to lead and rally friends and neighbors around different disaster-related events; gather and disseminate timely and reliable information from diverse sources; or share important updates from first responders. This guide aims to share useful tips and examples of best practices to help you most effectively use Facebook before, during and after a disaster.

For more information — or to share your own tips and success stories — find us on Facebook at **facebook.com/disaster**.

How to use Facebook before, during and after disasters



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facebook.com/disaster



Tips for First Responders and Government Agencies

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Tips for Response and Relief Organizations

Using Facebook allows disaster response and relief organizations to engage their community members as part of the team, quickly connecting the community to efforts focused on staying safe and informed. Knowing how to best use Facebook's tools can help different kinds of disaster-related organizations prepare for and respond to emergency and disaster events.

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Pages





On Facebook, Pages are the foundation for your organization to open a two-way communication channel with the community of people interested in your work. The different features of Facebook Pages — like Timeline, Cover and Profile Photos, the About section — allow your organization to tell robust stories and have engaging and enduring interactions with your followers.

Tips for creating an engaging Page:

- Choose a Cover Photo that helps tell the story of your organization and your mission
- Choose a Profile picture that easily identifies your organization to those who know you and those who don't
- Use the About section of your Page to clearly state your organization's mission, vision and values
- Post frequently with relevant and timely information
- Like and follow Facebook Pages related to your organization's work, and share posts and links from those Facebook Pages with your followers

Examples







American Red Cross

World Food Program USA

United Way

Learn More facebook.com/help/pages

Page Posts





Page Posts are the primary way for your organization to communicate with people who follow your Facebook Page.

Use Posts:

- To increase general community engagement
- To alert community members to available resources and connect them with appropriate organizations
- To let people know how to access relief and aid
- To support and highlight emergency preparedness and awareness activities

Before

Like · Comment · Share · Send

Create a Page posting strategy designed to keep people informed in advance of any disasters. Regularly posting helps position your organization as a credible and reliable resource during disasters. For example, post relevant preparedness tips to remind people of the steps they can take to keep themselves and loved ones safe in the event of severe weather.

During

Timing is crucial — post regularly with photos and videos, share links to more in-depth information, and, when appropriate, target posts to people in specific locations. Be sure to stay in contact with your followers by frequently responding to questions and feedback in the comments sections of your posts.

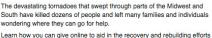
J.E.

After

Post direct and clear information about where community members can receive aid and how they can help in the recovery effort through donations or volunteer opportunities.

Examples





through United Way of Central Arkansas and Heart of Arkansas United Way, two local United Ways in some of the hardest hit communities.



Chapter Snapshot

Since July 1, there has only been ONE 18 HOUR PERIOD where the

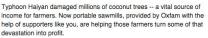
American Red Cross Capital Region Chapter in Sacramento, CA didn't

Here's a snapshot on how this chapter - and others in the Western Region

American Red Cross

have at least one Red Cross shelter open.





Watch the video and then get the full story here! http://www.oxfamamerica.org/.../in-a-race-against-time-oxfam.../

Oxfam America Typhoon Haiyan Relief

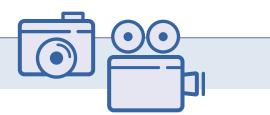
United Way Tornado Recovery

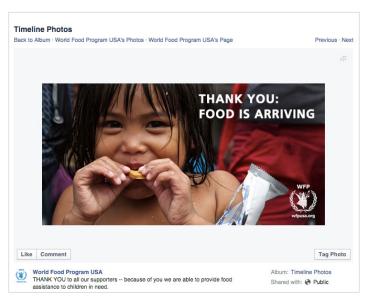
Learn More

facebook.com/help/sharing

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Photos and Videos





Photos and videos can make your posts more interesting and accessible, and are a great way to share authentic and engaging content.

Use Photos and Videos:

- To enhance and support text-based posts
- To better communicate the severity of particular emergency situations
- To show the progress of recovery efforts

Before

Make photos and videos a regular part of your Page posting strategy. This kind of authentic content can help engage your audience so that during a disaster your organization is a trusted source of information.

During

As a disaster develops, post photos and videos as a way to communicate what's happening and where.

After

Use photos and videos to help tell a compelling story about the recovery effort and your organization's role in it.

Examples



World Food Program USA Typhoon Relief



American Red Cross Earthquake Relief



UNICEF USA Water Supply Restoration

Learn More

facebook.com/help/photos/uploading



Groups





Use Facebook Groups to coordinate and organize different groups of people. Groups can be open, closed or secret, depending on how private you want a particular group to be.

Use Groups:

- For internal coordination
- To organize volunteers and their tasks
- As a dedicated communication channel for staff and local chapters
- To communicate privately with strategic partners and agencies

Before

Create a Facebook Group around a defined outcome or goal, like spreading the word about preparedness or recruiting volunteers, and invite people to join it.

During

Use Groups to quickly relay information to specific groups of people and connect members to each other.

A BOSS

Join this group to see the discussion, post and comment. + Join Group

ABOUT

Closed Group

After

Create and maintain Facebook Groups focused on particular concerns and needs that may spring up in the aftermath of a disaster.

Examples

New York City



Oxfam Action Corps American Red Cross Social Heroes

Red Cross Social Heroes



United Way of Greater Atlanta Young Professional Leaders

Learn More facebook.com/help/groups

Events





Facebook Events are a great way to bring people together, either on Facebook or in person, before, during or after a disaster. When people accept an invitation, they'll be able to participate in a conversation on the Event page, and will be reminded of the upcoming event through Facebook.

Use Events:

- To bring your community together for a common goal
- To raise awareness for a particular disaster
- As a way to promote online or in-person donation and volunteer opportunities

Before

Use Facebook Events to schedule and promote awareness and preparedness activities.

During

When your organization is working in a community affected by a disaster, create a Facebook Event as quickly as possible after the disaster strikes to help direct people to the closest place they can receive help.

After

Use Facebook Events to organize and coordinate in-person donations and collections like blood or food drives, or online initiatives.

Examples



UNICEF World Water Day Art Contest

Learn More facebook.com/help/events



American Red Cross Gabrielle Giffords Honorary Save-a-Life Saturday



Second Harvest Food Bank Food and Fund Drive

Hashtags





American Red Cross

March 2, 2014 · Edited · €

Tonight the #Oscars theme is "Heroes in Hollywood". This month we are proud to honor #EveryDayHeroes like you, our donors, blood donors, volunteers, #RedCrossers and other supporters who make our mission possible! Thanks to all who continue to #BeAHero for the Red Cross! http://www.redcross.org/about-us/red-cross-month



Red Cross Month | American Red Cross

Every nine minutes, the American Red Cross brings help and hope to people in need, thanks to heroes like you. Whether you donate funds, donate blood or volunteer, we depend on your...

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REDCROSS.ORG

Like · Comment · Share · Send · £ 506 € 10 € 62

Hashtags, indicated by a "#" in front of a word or phrase, turn those words or phrases into clickable links. This makes your post easily found when people are searching for a particular topic.

Use Hashtags:

- To provide updates on a specific emergency event
- To let people in the community know where they can get help
- To bring attention to your organization's activities
- As a way to lead or join a broader conversation about a particular disaster or topic

Learn More facebook.com/help/hashtags

Notes



Support Links for Areas Affected by Sandy

November 4, 2012 at 6:50pm @



The Red Cross isn't the only group of people using teams of digital volunteers to help the many, many people affected by Superstorm Sandy. There are thousands of people creating webpages, Facebook pages, Facebook groups and Twitter accounts to get the word out about need and assistance.

The American Red Cross is currently doing its part to provide emergency services along with other major organizations. But

those big organizations can't do it alone. This is a team effort. Our Red Cross digital volunteers have started a collection of links that include groups and sites focused on helping in the aftermath of the storm. Please consider sharing additional links in the comments. This page will constantly change. Feel free to message, digital volunteer, Jen Reeves (http://facebook.com/jenleereeves), if you are interested in collaborating.

SANDY GROUPS, PAGES, WEBSITES (Facebook and Websites)

Hurricane Sandy 2012 Help and Resources Page https://www.facebook.com/groups/298882190227625/ Humanity Roadhttp://www.humanityroad.org/Sandy.htm

Breezy Point

Breezy Point Cooperative Hurricane Sandy Information: https://www.facebook.com/BreezyPointCooperativeHurricanSandyInformation Notes offer a way to communicate longer content, similar in length to a news article or blog post, to those who follow your organization on Facebook and to the broader community.

Use Notes:

- To provide in-depth details about preparedness activities
- As a way to update community members about recent emergency events

Learn More

facebook.com/help/notes

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Follow Other Pages



Following or liking similar Pages can help you build important connections and alliances with other organizations. It can also help people connected to those Pages find yours more easily.

Learn More facebook.com/help/follow

Tagging



Tagging another Page creates a link to that Page from within your post. Tagging other information sources can increase the reach of your content, help add credibility to your posts, and allow your Facebook followers to discover and access new resources on Facebook.

Learn More facebook.com/help/tagging

Page Messages



Your Page can use Messages, enabling you to receive direct communication from people on Facebook.

Messages are a great way for people to share information with your organization when they aren't aware of other ways to reach you.

Use Messages:

- To give people another way to share information with your organization
- As a supplemental communication channel for people looking for help or answers
- To receive and share time-sensitive information

Learn More

facebook.com/help/pagemessages

Key Takeaways





Post regularly to keep people engaged and informed so that your organization's Page becomes a trusted resource



Share photos and videos to help make your organization's posts more interesting and engaging



Be responsive: Answer questions and encourage community members to share the information they learn from you



Join the conversation: Engage with your Page followers in the comments section of your posts



Use Facebook Groups and Events to organize people locally



Highlight other experts and organizations by sharing their posts and links, and by tagging groups you work with in your posts



Use hashtags to lead or join broader conversations happening on Facebook



Tips for First Responders and Government Agencies

Knowing how to best use
Facebook can allow first
responders and government
agencies to engage the public as
part of their team, and to quickly
connect the community to help
people stay safe and informed.

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Pages





On Facebook, Pages are the foundation for your agency to open a two-way communication channel with your community. The different features of Facebook Pages — like Timeline, Cover and Profile Photos, the About section — allow your agency to tell a robust story and have engaging and enduring interactions with the people you serve.

To create an engaging Page:

- Choose a Cover photo that shows how your agency works to serve and protect your community
- Choose a Profile picture that easily identifies your agency to those who know you and those who don't
- Use the About section to outline your agency's mission, vision and values
- Post frequently with relevant and timely information
- Like and follow related and similar Facebook Pages, including community organizations, community leaders and other agencies, and share relevant posts, photos, videos and links with your followers
- Create "evergreen" content, such as disaster preparedness tips or useful contact numbers, that can be easily and reliably accessed

Examples



New South Wales Rural Fire Service



California Office of Emergency Services



Federal Emergency Management Agency

Learn More facebook.com/help/pages

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Page Posts





Page Posts are the primary way for your agency to communicate with people who follow your Facebook Page.

Use Posts:

- To increase community engagement
- To promote and support emergency preparedness and awareness activities
- For updating people on the status of a particular event, including the actions of first responders on the ground
- To inform people of how to access relief and aid

Before

Create a Page posting strategy designed to help keep people engaged and informed. For example, post timely preparedness tips related to potential disaster events (such as impending severe weather).

During

Timing is crucial — post and update your Page regularly with the latest information, relevant photos and videos, and links to more in-depth information. And don't forget to participate in the conversation happening on your Page by regularly responding to key questions in the comments section of the posts on your Page.

After

Post clear information about where community members can find official information, receive aid, or help in the community's recovery efforts. Invite people to share any information they have about citizen-led relief and recovery efforts.

Examples



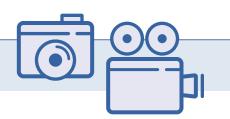
California Office of Emergency Services

Learn More facebook.com/help/sharing



Federal Emergency Management Agency Tornado Safety Tips San Francisco Fire Department Neighborhood Emergency Response Team

Photos and Videos





Photos and videos can help "put a face on" your agency, make your updates more interesting and accessible and are great for sharing authentic and engaging content.

Use Photos and Videos:

- To increase the community's understanding of first responders and their roles and duties
- As a way to help communicate the severity of emergency situations
- To demonstrate ways people can prepare for, respond to and/or recover from a disaster

Before

Photos help put a face on your agency, which can reinforce and increase your connection with the public. Routinely posting them can help you build and engage your audience, making you a more trusted resource.

During

As a disaster develops, post photos and videos to help tell the story about what's happening and where. Share Facebook photos and videos from other sources like news outlets, other response agencies and organizations, and citizens — to help tell a more robust story of unfolding events.

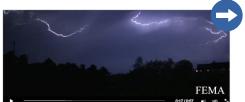
After

Use photos to let the public know what first responders are doing to help communities recover and rebuild after a disaster.

Examples



New South Wales Rural Fire Service Fire Updates



FEMA Video About Thunderstorm Safety



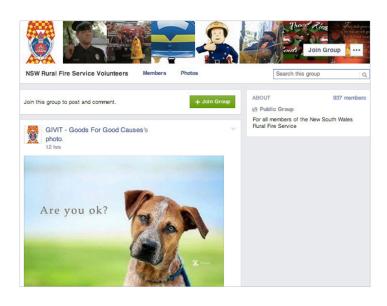
San Francisco Fire Department Neighborhood Emergency Response Team

Learn More

facebook.com/help/photos/uploading

Groups





Use Facebook Groups to coordinate and organize people. Groups can be open, closed or secret, depending on how private you want the group to be.

Use Groups:

- To create a dedicated communication channel for family members of first responders
- For internal coordination among shifts and crews
- To organize volunteers and tasks, such as a team to manage and monitor your agency's different social media channels
- To communicate privately with strategic partners and agencies

Before

 $\label{lem:condition} Create a Facebook Group around a defined outcome or goal — like organizing or coordinating community activities — and invite people to join it.$

During

Use Groups to quickly relay targeted information to relevant people responsible for specific tasks or activities.

After

Create and maintain Groups focused on particular concerns and needs that may spring up in the aftermath of a disaster event.

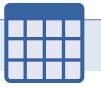
Example



FEMA Reservists

Learn More facebook.com/help/groups

Events





Facebook Events are a great way to bring people together, either on Facebook or in person, before, during or after a disaster. When people accept an invitation, they'll be able to participate in a conversation on the Event page, and will be reminded of the upcoming event through Facebook.

Use Events:

- To bring your community together on Facebook or in person — for a common goal
- As a way to raise awareness for a particular disaster
- To create and promote donation and volunteer opportunities
- To organize Community Emergency Response Teams, First Aid and CPR Training

Before

Use Facebook Events to schedule and promote preparedness trainings.

During

If your agency is outside of an area affected by a disaster, it can immediately offer help by hosting Facebook Events, like a food or clothing drive.

to bring relief to communities impacted by the disaster.

After

Use Facebook Events to organize and coordinate relief and recovery teams.

Examples



New South Wales Rural Fire Service Open Station Day

Learn More facebook.com/help/events



San Francisco Fire Department Neighborhood Emergency Response Training



California Office of Emergency Services California Day of Preparedness

Hashtags





FEMA Federal Emergency Management Agency August 7 ats

#Iselle water tip: If stores are out of bottled water, you can store water at home so you have it for drinking/sanitation. Fill clean pots or large, clean containers with water so the water is ready to use if needed. Each person should have at least one gallon of water allocated to them per day, so store accordingly.

Like · Comment · Share





FEMA Federal Emergency Management Agency

August 6 @

Who we're following for #Iselle and #Julio updates in Hawaii:

- Hawaii State Civil Defense
- Hawaii Red Cross
- Honolulu Department of Emergency Management

Hashtags, indicated by a "#" in front of a word or phrase, turn those words or phrases into clickable links. This makes the post easily found as people are searching for a particular topic.

Use Hashtags:

- So that updates on an evolving emergency event are searchable
- To potentially expand the audience for your posts
- As a way to lead or join a broader conversation about a particular disaster or topic

Learn More facebook.com/help/hashtags

Notes





A Total Fire Ban has been declared across parts of NSW for Wednesday 5 September, due to forecast warm and

The Total Fire Ban covers the following fire weather

- · Greater Sydney (including Blue Mountains and Central Coast)

 Illawarra/Shoalhaven
- Greater Hunter
- Southern Ranges
 Far South Coast
- North Western
- Monaro Alpine
 Upper Central West Plains
- Lower Central West Plains
- Central Ranges
 Far Western

NSW BES Commissioner Shane Fitzsimmons said the higher temperatures and gusty winds.

"The wind is going to be the main concern across a large part of the state, with gusts of around 100 kilometres an hour forecast," Commissioner Fitzsimmons said.

"Under these conditions, any fires which do start have the



Smoke expected as hazard reduction activity increases

Fire agencies will step up their preparations for the bush hazard reduction burns scheduled.

NSW Rural Fire Service (NSW RFS) Commissioner Shane Fitzsimmons said around 170 burns are scheduled this week, with 90 this weekend alone.

NSW RFS volunteer firefighters will join with NSW Fire and Rescue, NSW Parks and Wildlife and Forests NSW

"This is important work ahead of bush fire season which Commissioner Fitzsimmons said.

rainfall which has made hazard reduction difficult and we currently have a window of opportunity to complete as

"Smoke will be noticeable across many areas this weekend, particularly Sydney."

Notes offer a way to communicate longer content, similar in length to a news article or blog post, to the public and those who follow your agency.

Use Notes:

- To explain and highlight severe weather warnings
- To provide in-depth details about preparedness activities
- For long-form updates about recent emergency events

Learn More

facebook.com/help/notes

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Follow Other Pages



Following or liking similar Pages can help you build important connections and alliances with other agencies and community leaders. It can also help people connected to those Pages more easily find yours.

Learn More facebook.com/help/follow

Tagging



Tagging another Page in a post creates a link to that Page from within your post. Tagging other Pages can increase the reach of — and help add credibility to — your posts, and allow your Facebook followers to discover and access new resources on Facebook.

Learn More facebook.com/help/tagging

Page Messages



Pages can use Messages, enabling your agency to receive direct communication from people on Facebook.

Messages are a great way for people to communicate with you when they don't know how else to reach your agency, or when phone lines are down but internet access is uninterrupted.

Use Messages:

- To enable your community another direct communication channel to your agency
- As a way to provide direct support to people in the community looking for help or answers
- To receive and share time-sensitive information

Learn More

facebook.com/help/pagemessages

Key Takeaways





Create a Page — managed by agency staff and/or volunteers — to facilitate a dialogue between your agency and the public — not just as a one-way communication tool. This dialogue will help you keep the public informed and quickly address misinformation



Post regular updates so that your Page becomes a trusted resource during a disaster



Share photos and videos to help you better communicate important information and to make your posts more engaging



Organize a volunteer social media staff to help manage your agency's Facebook presence, especially during a disaster when people are turning to your Page for information and answers



Include hashtags in your posts to join the broader conversation happening on Facebook, and to make your content more easily searchable



Tag other organizations you are working with in your posts



Use Facebook to learn what's going on in your community and re-share any content your agency thinks might be helpful



Allow followers to message your Page for quick assistance and answers to time sensitive questions



Tips for Individuals and Communities

Individuals and communities use Facebook to stay connected to each other, share important information and organize activities. These kinds of activities are especially important during times of disaster, and knowing how to make the most of Facebook's different tools and features can help people put Facebook to work for them during these difficult times.

Share Information

Posts and Status Updates





Posts and Status Updates are the primary way people share information on Facebook.

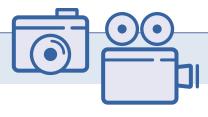
Use Posts and Status Updates:

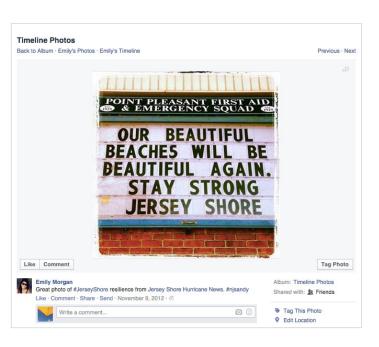
- To share what you're seeing and feeling with family, friends and your community
- To let people know you're safe and where you are
- As a way to communicate with organizations and first responders about what is happening around you

Learn More

facebook.com/help/sharing

Photos and Videos





Photos and Videos help you better express to people on Facebook what you're seeing and experiencing.

Use Photos and Videos:

- To communicate the severity of emergency situations
- To help people, including organizations and first responders, get on-scene, visual information
- To help connect people with items and pets lost during a disaster

Learn More

facebook.com/help/photos/uploading

Share Information

Hashtags





Vivian Laird

February 12, 2014 · @ · 48

Snowed Out Atlanta just posted these numbers to help people in the City with the next few days of cold and ice! Friends and family in Atlanta, keep warm and dry and stay off the roads!

#snowedoutatlanta #icestorms #atlanta #staysafe

Key Contact Numbers

Report a Power Outage 1-888-891-0938 24hrs/7 days

Residential Customer Service

1-888-660-5890 24hrs/7days

Business Customer Service

1-888-655-5888

M-F/7am - 7pm EST

Like · Comment · Share · Send

Hashtags, indicated by a "#" in front of a word or phrase, turn those words or phrases into clickable links. This makes the post easily found as people are searching for a particular topic.

Use Hashtags:

- To bring attention to what you're experiencing
- To provide updates on a specific emergency event
- To lead or join in a broader conversation about a disaster by using existing hashtags. You can find topical hashtags by using Facebook Search

Learn More

facebook.com/help/hashtags

Search



Search the Help Center
 by location, people

Search

Search Basics

Using the Search Bar

- ▶ How do I search for something on Facebook?
- ▶ What can I search for on Facebook?
- ► How do I look for posts in search?
- Does search use keywords?
- Does my search history appear when I enter something into the Fac
- ▶ How do I clear my recent searches?

Use Facebook Search to find out specific information by location, people, news organizations and key words.

Learn More

facebook.com/help/facebooksearch

Share Information

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Messages



Facebook Messages (or the Messenger app on your mobile device) is one of the fastest ways to reach friends and family. It can be a great alternative when phone lines are down but internet access is uninterrupted.

Learn More

facebook.com/help/messenger

Use Messages:

- To easily and quickly communicate with an individual or a small group of people
- To share time-sensitive information

Tagging



Tagging other Facebook Profiles and Pages creates a link to that Profile or Page from within your post. This allows your Facebook friends and those who follow you to discover and access new sources of information.

Learn More facebook.com/help/tagging

Organize

Pages





Pages are a way for people to share stories and information, communicate what's happening around them and organize communities on Facebook. You can create a Page about a specific disaster or topic, or more generally for your community. Pages can be customized by posting stories, hosting events, adding apps and more.

To create an engaging Page:

- Choose Cover and Profile photos that help tell the story of your Page
- Use the About section to explain the purpose of your Page
- Post frequently with relevant and timely information
- Like and follow related or similar Facebook Pages, including nonprofits and NGOs, community leaders and other agencies
- Share relevant posts, photos, videos and links from other Pages with your followers

Examples



Jersey Shore Hurricane News



Typhoon Haiyan Relief for Northern Palawan – Tao Philippines



Colorado Wildfire Information

Learn More facebook.com/help/pages

Organize

Groups





Use Facebook Groups to coordinate and organize people. Groups can be open, closed or secret, depending on how private you want the group to be.

Use Groups:

- To share information to prepare for a severe weather event
- For organizing volunteers and tasks
- To bring people in your community together to recover and reconnect after a disaster

Examples







Oklahoma Tornado Photo Recovery

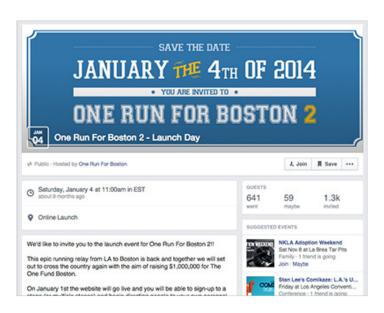
Boston Strong

Drought Help Group

Organize

Events





Create a Facebook Event as a way to gather people in person or online before, during or after a disaster. When people accept your invitation, they can interact with other people on the Event page, and get related Facebook reminders and notifications.

Use Events:

- To bring your community together for a common goal
- To raise awareness for a particular disaster
- To create and promote donation and volunteer opportunities

Examples



One Run for Boston 2



#SFStrong San Francisco in Support of Isla Vista



Jersey Shore Hurricane News

Learn More facebook.com/help/events

Key Takeaways





Use Facebook to share what you're seeing and feeling, and to help people gain a better understanding of what's happening around you



Include photos and videos in your status updates as a way to help communicate the severity of emergency situations



Use hashtags as a way to lead or join in a broader conversation about a particular disaster or topic. You can find out what hashtags other people are using by using Facebook Search



Like and follow Pages so that updates about emergency preparedness, specific disasters and recovery efforts related to events you care about appear in your News Feed



Use Facebook Groups to organize volunteers and tasks related to disaster preparedness and recovery



Use Facebook Events to create and promote donation and volunteer opportunities

facebook

facebook.com/disaster