

Regional Collaborations

After surveying the community, you are reassured that the community will support your organization, but their expectations involve planning and response to all types of emergencies ranging from cutting their finger to protecting them from a hazardous materials release to saving them from any type of rescue scenario. After reviewing the community survey, the city manager explained that despite the overwhelming community support, you must to hold your budget and make contingencies for a slight reduction. You reach a quandary after these experiences; how do I provide every possible service needed to keep your community support, but be within budget? Enter collaboration.

The average cost of just the equipment needed to provide technical rescue could top 2 million dollars. The costs of equipment to provide hazardous materials response including CBRNE can be over 3 million dollars. Next, you must train responders for these specialties that can range in hours from 40 to 225 hours with at least 50 hours of continuing education to remain proficient. This type of investment in personnel and equipment would be impossible for every fire department in the country to maintain.

So, what's the answer? Collaboration. By building specialized teams both the company and division level fire department officer can build and maintain a regional response team in conjunction with other fire department officers. Three steps to collaboration:

1. Identify the goal- What is the desired outcome?

2. Delegate responsibilities- Every officer should know what key component they're responsible for.
3. Work together- Well executed responses require practice of the desired execution. Work together to ensure the collaborative efforts will work if and when they are needed.

For more on the tactical issues, strategies necessary and overall success measures for creating collaborative teams check out the FRI session, "Regional Collaborations: Strategic and Tactical Actions Needed to Make it Happen" as part of the Chief Officer track at FRI.

This session will be held on Wednesday, August 26 at 10:30 am.

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