

NEWS



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For Immediate Release:

Social Networking with Emergency Management

The Philadelphia Managing Director's Office of Emergency Management (MDO-OEM) announced today that it has launched a social networking initiative to reach the public before, during, and after disasters.

MDO-OEM has established a presence on Blogger, Facebook, MySpace, Twitter, YouTube and LinkedIn. Additional social networking websites are being explored and may be added at a later date. Links to all these pages can be found at www.phila.gov/ready.

These sites will be used to provide weekly emergency preparedness tips and to broadcast advisories before, during and after emergencies to update the public on preparation activities and the response effort. MDO-OEM is also exploring how these sites can be used to obtain important information from the public, such as gathering data on damaged areas following a severe storm.

Deputy Managing Director MaryAnn E. Tierney noted, "In addition to ReadyNotifyPA, our region's emergency text and e-mail alert system, social networking sites are another tool for us to supplement traditional methods, such as television, radio and print media, get preparedness and critical emergency messages to the public."

According to the Pew Internet and American Life Project, sites such as these have rocketed from a niche activity into a phenomenon that engages tens of millions of internet users.

“Social networks are being used more and more by many professionals and large corporations. It’s important for government agencies to take advantage of these opportunities, as well, to convey important information to a wider audience and build relationships by inviting others into our online network or community to give us a better understanding of their needs and concerns,” noted Tierney.

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