SUNCOAST DIGITAL CONNECT

A "Learning Thursdays" Webinar Series by Digital Access for All

Tom Kitchen Jr

Thursday, December 5th, 2025
11–11:30 am EST
Optional 15 min Q&A afterwards

The Future of Emergency Management: Integrating Technology Across the Disaster Lifecycle

5 Takeaways

1 **Using Next Gen Tools**: Next gen tools can analyze large datasets from multiple sources to more accurately predict the path and impact of natural disasters, allowing for optimization of our emergency response efforts.

2 **Examples of Emerging Tech in Managing Emergencies:** Automated platforms can be used to reach key staff, essential partners, and members of the community prior to or during an emergency. Integrated software can quickly alert us to transportation, electricity, or oxygen dependencies highlighting special, functional, or access needs. Tools with intelligent algorithms can rapidly compile data from multiple sources to update stakeholders on the progress of actions being taken.

3 **The Goal of Using Chatbots & Virtual Assistants:** The goal is to assist affected and vulnerable populations in times of crisis. These tools provide real-time information and support to the public during emergencies. They can share evacuation procedures, answer frequently asked questions, and provide guidance on accessing critical emergency services.

4 **Ways Non-emergent Software Systems, like AI, Are Used In Day-to-day Operations**

- **Scheduling Tool:** These can leverage HR data to determine or evaluate scheduling needs and create recommendations for staff and volunteer assignments. Smarter software systems can coordinate disaster recovery assistance appointments and provide reminders.
- **Mapping and Routing:** Algorithms can evaluate locations of disaster impacts and resource availability to create plans that minimize time in transit, limit fuel costs, account for traffic delays, and increase efficiency.
- **Professional Development:** For managers, intelligent programs can track staff trainings, in-services, and community engagement metrics that can lead to plan improvements and updates.

5 **Practical Next Steps to Consider:** Evaluate tools that could be implemented into your day-to-day operations and approach their deployment in a structured way. Ensure your company's existing technology infrastructure can support advanced tools (e.g., hardware, software, and data storage). Keep up-to-date with technology developments and use cases to leverage innovative new tools effectively.

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ChatGPT Scenarios: Emergency Management

Question Prompt: I live in Manatee County Florida. As I get ready for Hurricane Season, where are some shelters I can go to if needed?

1

ChatGPT Response: Manatee County typically opens a range of shelters to accommodate the needs of the community during hurricane season. Some of these shelters include:

1. Bayshore High School | Location: 5401 34th St W, Bradenton, FL 34210 | A designated shelter for local residents during emergencies.
2. Southeast High School | Location: 1200 37th Ave E, Bradenton, FL 34208 | A hurricane shelter providing safety and accommodations.

Manatee County also has pet-friendly shelters for those who need to bring their pets. You'll want to check the county's emergency management website or call ahead during hurricane season for specific details on which shelters are accepting pets at the time.

Question Prompt: What's the difference between my Flood Zone and my evacuation zone?

2

ChatGPT Response: The flood zone and evacuation zone are two different designations used by emergency management agencies to help residents prepare for and respond to potential natural disasters, particularly hurricanes. Here's the difference between them: A flood zone is a geographic area that is categorized based on the likelihood of flooding due to rain, storm surge, or other water-related factors. These zones are determined by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and are often used for insurance purposes, building codes, and floodplain management. Flood zones are used to assess risk and determine flood insurance requirements. They help identify areas that are at higher or lower risk for flooding during heavy rainfall, hurricanes, or other weather events.

An evacuation zone is a designated area determined by local authorities that may be at risk for dangerous conditions during an emergency, particularly during a hurricane or storm surge. These zones help officials plan and direct evacuations during a crisis. Evacuation zones are used to determine who should evacuate and when. They are typically based on factors like storm surge predictions, road access, and the proximity to coastal areas or rivers.

It's important to be aware of both your flood zone (for insurance and long-term safety) and your evacuation zone (for immediate safety during a storm). Both can affect your safety during hurricane season.