

Meeting Summary

Philadelphia Alliance for Response
Kick-Off Meeting
Free Library of Philadelphia, Room 108
3/2/2015
9 am – 12 pm



The Greater Philadelphia Alliance for Response (AFR) held its first meeting of 2015 on March 2nd at the Free Library of Philadelphia. Despite inclement weather more than twenty representatives from the museum, library, archive, and commercial sector were in attendance. The meeting was a collaborative opportunity between the Conservation Center for Art & Historic Artifacts (CCAHA) and representatives from Philadelphia Department of Public Health (PDPH) to re-establish the Philadelphia Alliance and gain a wider audience.

Dyani Feige, Director of Preservation Services for CCAHA, kicked off the meeting by discussing the AFR initiative and presented an overview of the Pennsylvania Cultural Resilience Network (PaCRN). Funded through an Institute of Museums and Library Services National Leadership Grant, the goal of the PaCRN is to create a strong network and provide resources for effective emergency response and recovery for cultural institutions in Pennsylvania. Programs to support this goal include participation in AFR and the opportunity to gain in-depth collections recovery experience through the CCAHA Disaster Response and Recovery workshop. Through training and AFR activities there will be a diverse pool of experienced professionals from which CCAHA will recruit volunteers for the Pennsylvania Cultural Response Team, beginning in the summer.

Sarah Levin-Lederer, MPH, Library Project Coordinator from the Free Library of Philadelphia, Philadelphia Department of Public Health, discussed the 'Everybody Ready 3.0 Health and Emergency Planning Handbook for Individuals, Families, and Caregivers,' developed by a multi-agency taskforce in a five county area (Philadelphia, Montgomery, Bucks, Chester, and Delaware). A valuable resource for personal and home preparedness, the handbook contains easy-to-find, important information on what to do before, during, and after emergencies and an extensive list of local preparedness resources. Copies of the handbook were distributed at the meeting along with Health Information Cards.

Catherine Klinger, Manager of the Healthy Homes Program, and Leigh Anne Rainford, MPH, Sanitarian Supervisor from the Philadelphia Department of Public Health discussed mold, its health dangers, and how effective flood response can minimize the impact of mold growth. A Flood Risk Management Task Force was launched in Philadelphia, with an urban-specific strategy to better protect citizens from floods. A Map of Flood Prone Areas with potential shelter locations is accessible on the Philadelphia Office of Emergency Management website.

The meeting ended with an open discussion lead by Michelle Kinney, Preservation Specialist for CCAHA, on follow-up programs, events, and training that attendees would benefit most from. A variety of training needs were suggested and respondents showed interest and support in future activities. Next steps include the formation of the AFR Philadelphia Google Group, and a call-for-members to join the Steering Committee in early April. Two key messages that came out of the meeting were the need for more representation from the emergency management sector and how important it is to participate in the Alliance to help facilitate a readiness culture in the community.