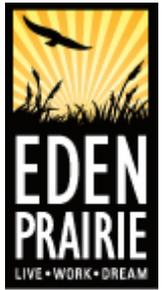


NEWS RELEASE

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CITY OF EDEN PRAIRIE LAUNCHES PARTNERSHIP FOR EMERGENCY READINESS

Local Government-Business Partnership Among the First of its Kind in U.S.

EDEN PRAIRIE, Minn. — If a disaster strikes the community, The City of Eden Prairie’s Police and Fire departments are now better able to respond and help businesses and residents recover more quickly due to the Partnership for Emergency Readiness (PER).

The program, which is a public-private partnership and among the first of its kind in the United States, was introduced in late 2006, and is now being activated within the business community.

One of America’s top homeland security experts, Stephen Flynn, Ph.D., recently highlighted Eden Prairie’s initiative in his just-released book, “The Edge of Disaster: Rebuilding a Resilient Nation.”

Flynn says Eden Prairie’s PER is “an outstanding example of a community-based initiative that is a model for how cities and towns around America should be fostering the kind of preparedness we must have to deal with 21st century hazards.”

According to George Esbensen, Eden Prairie fire chief, recent disasters and acts of terrorism have illustrated the need for a new approach to emergency preparedness, which is why the PER was formed in 2006 between the City of Eden Prairie and several Eden Prairie businesses. The purpose of the partnership is to work together towards the prevention of, response to and recovery from disasters and acts of terrorism.

“After 9/11, the awareness that the world’s commerce was susceptible to exploitation by terrorists became apparent at the federal level,” said Esbensen.

As a result, U.S. Customs and Border Protection worked with the international trade community that it regulates to create the Customs-Trade Partnership Against Terrorism (C-TPAT). This program is now widely considered the most successful program of its type in the world with more than 14,000 companies participating. Eden Prairie’s PER is a local version of C-TPAT.

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City of Eden Prairie

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“We want our business community to have comprehensive and well-designed disaster response and recovery plans, and be able to return to normal operations as soon as possible following a disaster” said Rob Reynolds, Eden Prairie police chief.

The City is able to assist affected businesses and/or residents by working with PER members who volunteer to share their resources and expertise including technology, hard goods, water, office space or staffing.

Reynolds said in return, the City of Eden Prairie provides a number of services to member organizations including comprehensive safety inspections, site security inspections and pertinent crime information bulletins.

Eden Prairie’s PER charter members include Cima Labs, Community Banks, Department 56, Digital River, MasterCraft Labels, Supervalu and Wooddale Church.

Now that the foundation for the program has been laid, Esbensen and Reynolds are actively recruiting new members. The PER has also launched a Web site, **edenprairieper.org**, that provides more information about the program and why it’s beneficial to join.

Businesses interested in learning more about PER should contact Esbensen at **952-949-8336** or **gesbensen@edenprairie.org**.

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