

Case Study: Kitsap County Department of Emergency Management Kitsap County Disaster Reporting Forms Available on PIER

Online forms make it easy for residents and businesses to report disaster damage greatly improving Kitsap County Department of Emergency Management's ability to respond following a severe storm.



Overview

Customer Profile

Kitsap County is located in the northwest corner of Washington State, and is home to more than 240,000 residents.

The Situation

In early December 2007, Kitsap County sustained a substantial amount of damage after being hit by snow, high winds, rain, and the resulting flooding. The Kitsap County Department of Emergency Management website began receiving a high level of traffic from local residents and business owners attempting to report damage from the storm.

The Solution

PIER employees created two surveys on the existing website where residents could report damage they had received from the recent storm in a simple and efficient manner.

Customer Profile

Kitsap County is located in the northwest corner of Washington State, and is home to more than 240,000 residents. The County includes Kitsap Peninsula, several islands and has more than 200 miles of saltwater seashore. More than 30 percent of the 566 total square miles is made up of water. As a result, the lowlands of Kitsap County often face flooding during periods of heavy rain.

The Kitsap County Department of Emergency Management (KCDEM) is responsible for meeting the emergency and disaster needs of the greater Kitsap County area. The agency works with local government, cities, state and federal agencies and volunteer organizations to prepare for, respond to, recover from and mitigate any emergency or disaster that strikes the county.

The Situation

In early December 2007, Kitsap County sustained a substantial amount of damage after being hit by snow, high winds, rain, and the resulting flooding. On Monday, December 3, Governor Christine Gregoire declared a state of emergency in Western Washington after the storm claimed the lives of two people and caused the closure of a section of Interstate 5.

The Kitsap County Department of Emergency Management website began receiving a high level of traffic from local residents and business owners attempting to report damage from the storm. In order to do so, people were copying questions listed on the website's disaster reporting forms into MS Word documents, responding to the questions, and then e-mailing the questions along with their responses back to KCDEM. This was a very inefficient process for residents and business owners, as well as the KCDEM employees who were responsible for managing this information.

The Solution

On Friday, December 7, employees from PIER Systems, Inc., provider of the online communication management platform used by KCDEM, noticed the time-consuming process KCDEM employees were using to gather disaster response information and suggested an alternative approach that would save time and stress for everyone involved.

PIER is designed to facilitate the creation of custom surveys. Within several minutes of receiving the list of questions from Kitsap County Department of Emergency Management, PIER employees created two surveys on the existing KCDEM PIER website (one for personal property, one for business damage), where residents could go to report damage they received from the recent storm. This implementation greatly improved the department's ability to gather, manage and respond to incoming disaster reporting information.

Once Kitsap residents and business owners submitted their information via the online survey forms, the information was automatically directed to the appropriate KCDEM personnel. In addition, by using PIER for this purpose, county personnel were notified via e-mail as soon as a form was submitted. After they receive the disaster reporting information, employees also have the option to export the data into MS Excel format for additional data sorting and compilation.

This method of utilizing surveys to interact with stakeholders, (residents and businesses in this case) allows for a quick, automated way for the department to receive vital information during the recovery of a disaster, and has vastly improved the Kitsap County Department of Emergency Management's ability to respond to disaster situations in Kitsap County.

Contact PIER Systems, Inc.
www.piersystems.com
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360-756-8080

Additional Information

Following are links to the Kitsap County Department of Emergency Management disaster reporting surveys created by PIER:

Personal: <https://www.piersystem.com/go/survey/1082/796/>

Business: <https://www.piersystem.com/go/survey/1082/797/>