

# Information in a Disaster

Sunnyvale CERT Class 61

May 9, 2023

# Information Sources

- News media (TV, social media, websites, radio)
- Government (phone/text, social media, websites, signage, radio)
- Other social media
- Word of mouth

They have    different agendas  
                  different timing  
                  different reliability  
                  different authenticity

# Misinformation

Information about the disaster that is believable but not correct.

Usually sincere and well-intentioned.

- Speculation
- Prediction
- Selectivity (fitting an agenda)
- False expertise

# Disinformation

Intentionally deceptive or malicious information about the disaster.

Trying to make the problem worse.

- Fostering a political agenda
- Creating chaos to cover criminal activity
- Weakening society
- Spreading mistrust

# Trustworthy Sources

Before trusting any information in a disaster, you must understand:

- **Authenticity.** Are they actually who they say they are?  
It's very easy to create convincing fake accounts on social media.
- **Authority or Expertise.** Do they know what they're talking about?  
Movie stars and athletes are not good sources of disaster response advice.
- **Credibility.** Are they going to tell you the truth?  
Or are they trying to get you to do something you wouldn't choose?

# Trustworthy Sources

Connect to your trusted sources before a disaster.

In the stress of a disaster, you won't be able to evaluate sources fully.

- Have TV stations and radio stations preselected and programmed
- Have credible websites bookmarked
- Follow the authorized social media channels of trusted organizations

Treat any other sources with skepticism, especially if they trigger an emotional response.

# Suggested Local Sources

- AlertSCC
- 1680 AM (Sunnyvale), 560 AM or 740 AM (Bay Area)
- @SunnyvaleDPS
- @CityofSunnyvale
- @HealthySCC