

Community REPORTER

SERVING WEST END NEIGHBORHOODS, DOWNTOWN ST. PAUL TO FORT SNELLING SINCE 1972

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PRACTICAL MATTERS

ECHO: Emergency & Community Health Outreach

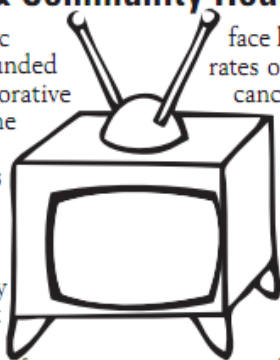
In 2004, local and state public health and safety agencies founded ECHO Minnesota as a collaborative project designed to address the growing health, safety and emergency information needs of Minnesota's rapidly expanding limited English speaking communities. A dozen bilingual community leaders became ECHO's first team of community spokespeople, bringing vital information to African, Latino and Southeast Asian residents.

ECHO launched ECHO TV in partnership with St. Paul Neighborhood Network (SPNN) and Twin Cities Public Television (TPT) as the first and only series in the country dedicated to presenting health, safety, civic engagement and emergency readiness programs in multiple languages.

The mission of ECHO is to leverage partnerships to deliver vital health, safety, emergency and civic engagement information to help the ever-changing, diverse population integrate and become successful in our communities. ECHO's vision is that all people are provided quality health and life saving communications.

As a leader in multilanguage health, safety, civic engagement and emergency readiness communication, ECHO bridges the gap for immigrants and refugees in Minnesota. Through close collaborations with health and safety experts, bilingual community leaders and talented spokespersons, ECHO crafts high quality programming for television and radio broadcast and phone, print, web, DVD and partner relay distribution designed to:

Reduce disparities in health care for immigrant and refugee communities that



face higher infant mortality, higher rates of diabetes, heart disease and cancer, and shorter life spans.

Promote preventive care by raising awareness of some of the most serious and costly diseases facing all Minnesotans. Increase access to life-saving emergency information by facilitating efficient mass-media messaging in multiple languages.

Facilitate the transition to life in Minnesota for immigrants and refugees, by providing civic engagement to help new Americans integrate successfully into our communities.

Ensure that over a half-million limited English-speaking Minnesotans have access to the information they need to make informed decisions affecting their well-being.

ECHO's communication tools also function as an emergency infrastructure available to public health and safety agencies during a crisis. In the event of an emergency, such as a flood or a disease outbreak, ECHO has a proven system in place to deliver critical messages in the most urgently needed languages rapidly and effectively through television, radio, print, web and partner relays.

ECHO is supported by dedicated community volunteers, the generosity of its public health, safety, sponsorship and media partners, and with broad community support. This enables ECHO to work to ensure that everyone is fully informed and empowered with the tools that they need to be healthy, be safe and be ready.

For information and access to ECHO's resources see echominnesota.org, 651-789-4342 or info@echominnesota.org.