***Use the press release to aid the organization:***

*Solicit public support through friendly appeals for time, talent, resources, and objects.*
*If you need volunteer and professional assistance identify where people should go or call to help*
*If you need money identify where people should send it*
*Give complete descriptions of stolen objects. Have photographs available for distribution.*

***Maintain control of the building and grounds following an emergency.***

*Be alert for the members of the media. The museum has the right to ask them to leave the museum property. Their safety may be at risk.*

*Check credentials of media before allowing them into the museum or away from the command center check in point.*

*Always escort media representatives around the museum and the site.*

## SAMPLE INITIAL PRESS RELEASE *No one talks to the press or outsiders except you.*

The _____had a _____ at _____o'clock on _____ (day)_____(date). All staff and visitors were evacuated safety. No one was injured. The collections in the _____ building were affected. The cause of the _____ is still under investigation by the _____. Recovery activities may take a long time. Volunteers are sought for immediate and longer term assistance. The cost for recovery is unknown and further information will be available after damage assessments are completed. Donations may be sent to _____. Volunteers can call_____ at _____ or go to _____ and ask for the Recovery Logistics Officer, _____. Press inquiries should be directed to: _____, the Museum Media Officer at the following telephone number:_____.

**Potential press questions and suggested answers:**
Note: Be courteous, professional and cautious. Do not give out confidential information. Instead, use the disaster as an opportunity to educate the public. Make sure you control the media. Do not let them go anywhere you do not want them. Do not answer question you do not want to answer. If a question is inappropriate, say **"You do not know."** If an answer is known, but you can't or don't want to give it out, say **"it is under investigation."**

**How much will it cost to reopen the museum?** *Never give a money figure. Say you do not know. Emphasize that community contributions are needed and will be gratefully accepted. People can send money to_____.*
**When will or Will the Museum reopen**? *We do not know. We are assessing the damage. Reassure the public that the museum has the situation under control and is working as quickly as possible to resume normal operations. Give an estimate of the time frame if known. Stress the museum's preparations to prevent or contain an emergency and emphasize the effectiveness of preparations.*
**What was the extent of damage?** *(They are looking for a monetary figure; do not give them one) We are assessing the damage. It will take some time to determine the extent of damage. All of our collections have research value and/or are irreplaceable.*
**What caused the incident?** *We do not know. Investigators are examining the scene and will let us know as soon as possible. (This is a dangerous question, if you indicate any cause someone will be blamed. Be careful and considerate; never give a cause until one has without reason for doubt, been established.)*
**What were the most important items affected?** *The entire collection is important. It is too early in the assessment process to know the scope of damage to collections. The area within the building that was damaged contained the* _____.