



One of the main reasons to have a solid neighbourhoods system in place, is to ensure that everyone gets timely assistance during a natural disaster.

The aim is that everyone survives.

There are many reasons that a person might fall through the cracks and not get the assistance they need.

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| 1. Power outage | 2. Mobile phone outage | 3. Car breakdown |
| 4. Landslide | 5. Isolation | 6. Injury |
| 7. Vulnerability e.g. age, disability | 8. Not connected with neighbours | 9. Other... |

It is at these times that having a 'check in' system is important.

Which check in system a pod/ neighbourhood goes with will depend on a number of factors that include accessibility, fitness, available communications... and more.

There are many 'check in' systems that a pod could use. Here are 5 ideas with pros and cons for each idea

#	System	Pros	Cons
1	Neighbourhood Watch App: Create a dedicated 'neighbourhood watch' app or group chat where neighbours can regularly check in, report their status, and request assistance if needed. Someone would need to be overseeing to make sure all residents have checked in and follow up those who have not.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Real-time communication: allowing for instant updates. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dependent on technology: relying on stable internet or cellular networks. • Privacy Concerns: some residents may have privacy concerns about sharing their status on a digital platform.
2	Buddy System: Establish a buddy system within the pod/ neighbourhood, where each household is paired with another. Neighbours can check on their assigned buddy's well-being during and after a disaster, ensuring that no one is left unattended.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personal connection: fostering a strong sense of community and personal responsibility for one another. • Easy to Implement: simple and low-tech approach that everyone can participate in. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited Reach: doesn't account for neighbours outside of the assigned buddy pairs. • Potential buddy unavailability: if a buddy is away or also affected by the disaster, the system may break down.
3	Round Robin: Set up a circular flow chart of the names of the people in your pod. The first name on the list would be the pod leader. They check	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Structured communication: ensuring a systematic way of checking in. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delay in communication: taking time to pass around the circle,



	<p>in with the next person on the list (their adjacent neighbour). Then that person checks in with the next person on the list and so on until the end. If a person cannot contact the next person, they report it to the pod leader and then move to the next person on the list. The Pod leader makes extra efforts to check in with the people that weren't contactable.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personal touch: allowing for a more personal connection 	<p>delaying check in.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complexity: managing a 'round robin' can be cumbersome, especially in larger pods or neighbourhoods.
4	<p>Color-Coded Flags: Develop a color-coded flag system that residents can display outside their homes to communicate their status. For example, green may indicate all is well, yellow may signify a need for assistance, and red may signal a medical emergency. This could be combined with the buddy/ round robin system</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quick visual communication: providing a clear and easy-to-understand way of signaling one's status. • No technology dependence: not relying on technology or internet access. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited Information: flags can convey basic information but lack details about specific needs or emergencies. • Visibility issues: flags may not be visible in certain weather conditions or in densely populated areas. • Consistency: a person's status may change and they may not have the ability to change the flag resulting in a miscommunication.
5	<p>Check-In stations: designating specific check-in stations within the neighborhood, such as a community hall or safe house. Residents can go to these locations to register their status and receive updates on available resources.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physical Gathering Points: Offers a central location for neighbours to gather, share information, and receive assistance. • Resource Distribution: Can serve as distribution points for emergency supplies. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mobility Issues: Some residents may have difficulty reaching check-in stations, especially if roads are blocked. • Resource Constraints: The station itself may be affected by the disaster, limiting its effectiveness.

Each system has its own set of advantages and disadvantages, and the choice of which one to implement should consider the specific needs, technological capabilities, demographics and preferences of the neighbourhood in question.



A combination of these systems may also be effective in addressing various aspects of communication and assistance during a disaster.

Ideally a pod will sit down together and come up with the system that best suits. You might like to follow these steps to achieve a good result.

1. Discuss: why do we want a check in system? what do we want to achieve?
2. Brainstorm the following:
 - What are the strengths that we have to work with? e.g. most people have a UHF radio, most people can walk to each others homes even during a disaster.
 - What are the challenges we have to consider? e.g. many households in our pod get isolated, we have many vulnerable people who have difficulty walking distances
 - What's most important to us when considering a system? e.g. self responsibility, sharing the load
3. Devise the right system
 - Present the 5 systems
 - Identify any ideas for other systems
 - Discuss which model best takes advantage of your strengths; addresses your challenges; and takes into consideration what is most important
4. Plan
 - What needs to be done?
 - Who will do it?
 - By when?
 - What resources are needed?
5. Practice
 - Plan a trial
 - Plan to reflect and adapt the system
 - Schedule 3 practice runs and reflections per year.