

How we handle breaking news on the Web York Daily Record/Sunday News

When local news breaks, we respond in a variety of ways on the Web, depending on the nature of the event, time of day and staffing available.

For example, an explosion in the city warrants a different response than a routine fire. Web viewer numbers are larger by far during the day than at night, and fewer on weekends. More editors/staff are available at certain times than others, such as deadline when we're producing three papers.

For responding to news, we are dividing events into four categories:

Major – Large explosions, Harley closing, severe weather such as paralyzing blizzard or major flood

Medium – weather such as severe windstorm, heavy snow, big fire

Minor – an arrest, low weather event, low-level business news, routine fire

Planned events – Harley contract, presidential visit, major court case.

How we respond:

Major

Up to four editors or more, duties:

Lead editor – posting, coordinating coverage (and photos with visual editor), updating, alerting to need for more resources, make sure any headline/readout changes are made in edit for display as needed in viewer (or delegate to 3rd editor if needed)

2nd editor – tweeting, create exchange topic, facebook posting, google+, monitor public submissions (comments, photos, etc.). Consider Storify, cover it live.

3rd editor – setting up viewer, posting photos, google map, related freeforms

4th editor – news alert, layering of documents or news releases, links from archives, links to other media coverage, related blogs

If needed, a 5th editor would handle other news, call in extra resources if needed, alert sister papers to applicable news, arrange for food

Managing editor – coordinate/promote any livestreaming opportunities with visual editor and interactive department and use of red bar, assess space for print

Note that staff can perform some of the tasks if needed, and often does already.

The preferred chain of events: post to editors picks, tweet (and continue once get link), news alert, facebook, photos asap (file or from scene), post any news releases or documents, viewer, remove or push down in editors picks, continuous updates, video asap, map, freeforms, storify/cover it live, Exchange topic, online submissions, live blogging. Additional layering: link from archives, other media coverage, related blogs.

Medium

■ Same chain of events (some items may not be warranted).

■ Two editors/staff (or more if needed).

Minor

■ One editor – posting, tweeting, photo, delegating, viewer, facebook. Rest of the list is optional, depending on event.

Planned event

■ Same chain of events. The size of the news will dictate number of editors involved and if all items are needed.

In advance: post pre-story, to be quickly updated; assess livestreaming and live chat possibilities (appoint moderator in advance); prepare background, links, maps and any other layers.