

Could watching science fiction movies help prepare us for future disasters? As far fetched as this may sound, there are movies that show what a future disaster could be like. These sci fi movies also show the government's response to disasters. While these movies may be fictitious, the methods used by different governments give a semiaccurate prediction of how effective certain safety protocols could be. Specifically town governments play a very influential role in helping mitigate disasters. They can use what they have learned from the Covid-19 Pandemic and other disasters to better prepare for future disasters. Town governments can expand their emergency programs and help families and individuals prepare for an infectious disease like Covid-19 or other emergencies in the future.

As an Eagle Scout I have been required to complete an emergency preparedness program. I learned that there are five aspects to emergency preparedness; preparedness, response, recovery, prevention, and mitigation. My local government has not had experience with a worldwide pandemic recently, however they have had to deal with tornadoes and fires in our rural community. These incidents have inspired change in their emergency response procedures, allowing them to be prepared for many challenges. For example my community and local government learned from the 1992 tornado that they needed tornado shelters, better sirens, and to pay more attention to the weather forecast. My parents and family were in the 1992 tornado and therefore were better prepared for the other two tornadoes we have been in. They made sure that I knew how to be prepared for a tornado. Another example is the Crystal Lake fire that scorched over 500 acres. My community learned that they need to be vigilant of fires at all times, even smaller ones as they could be liable for damages inflicted by a fire. The local town government now makes announcements to let people know how safe it is to start a fire or burn brush. I know

to never leave a fire unattended and to have water available at all times. All of those situations allowed my local government to be more prepared for future emergencies.

With the Covid-19 pandemic, my mom, being an essential health care provider has been assisted greatly by our local government. They gave recommendations on how to continue her job in a safe manner and provided personal protective equipment needed to do so. The town government can use this opportunity to teach the community how to be prepared for future emergencies. For example, in Boy Scouts I prepared a family emergency plan that explained what each member of my family would do in the case of several different emergencies. I know that those plans will allow me and my family to be safe in an emergency. I think it would be a good idea for the local government to adopt a similar plan. The best plan is to have the citizens of each community be prepared for emergencies. If each family creates their own emergency preparedness kit and evacuation plan and reviews and updates it annually there would be less people panicking when an emergency situation arises.

In Boy Scouts I created an emergency kit that contained clean drinking water, nonperishable foods, blankets, candles and matches (and now toilet paper, n95 masks and hand sanitizer too). My family cans and freezes food from the summer garden and has a chest freezer to store food such as meats and vegetables. We also have dry baking goods and canned goods available. In our town we frequently experience power outages for a variety of reasons. The Boy Scout motto is Always be Prepared, and my family tries to be prepared for common emergencies that occur in our area, such as power outages. I hope citizens will be proactive and create their own emergency kits. The local government could mail information on how to create an emergency kit or have Youtube or other type of online video that citizens can access to learn emergency preparedness. Online courses that highlight what families could do to prepare for

basic emergencies would be very beneficial. The biggest lesson we can learn from Covid 19 is try to be prepared for an emergency. You never know when a situation will occur. The government will do their best to help us out but citizens must take some responsibility for their own emergency preparedness.

The second lesson that the local government can take away from the Covid 19 Pandemic is that often Science fiction movies or books can give ideas of what future emergencies might be. The movie Contagion parallels the Covid 19 Pandemic with a deadly virus being spread through inhalation and causing a high rate of fatalities. The Star Wars Clone Wars series also had an episode on a Blue Virus where the cure was an antidote and it was in short supply. If you are thinking that this idea is too odd to have any merit I will remind you that the US Marine airplane the Harrier is an attempt to mimic the airships in the Star Wars movies. The Harrier has a vertical take off and landing and can hover like the airships in the science fiction movie. The US Army has also admitted to trying to replicate some of the weapons created by George Lucas in the Star Wars saga.

When it comes to disasters, even though it is impossible to prepare for everything, taking steps to have a home emergency kit will help people stay safe. Town governments play a crucial role in helping and educating their community in order to be prepared for disasters. By expanding their emergency programs and helping individuals and families prepare for disasters like Covid-19, we all will feel safer. Always be prepared!