



American Red Cross
Southern California Region

October 6, 2020

John Nienstedt, Sr.
Competitive Edge
1620 5th Avenue, Suite 825
San Diego, CA 92101

San Diego and
Imperial Counties
3950 Calle Fortunada
San Diego, CA 92123
858-309-1200

Orange County
600 Parkcenter Drive
Santa Ana, CA 92705
714-481-5300

Riverside County
6235 River Crest Drive,
Suite A
Riverside, CA 92507
888-831-0031

San Bernardino County
10600 Trademark
Parkway, Suite 406
Rancho Cucamonga, CA
91730
909-888-1481

Dear John,

I am writing to let you know how terrific it has been to work with you and the Competitive Edge team in the furtherance of the American Red Cross's goals to get more San Diegans prepared for emergencies. Since 2010, your company has been invaluable as a partner in the effort to not only benchmark how prepared our residents are for a disaster, but to understand the dynamics underlying preparation. Your research and analysis help our preparedness efforts pay off.

The personal emergency preparedness index (PEPI) you created as a foundational metric is light years ahead of simply asking someone whether they are prepared. The scaled approach of the PEPI gives us a much better look into preparedness levels. It is very useful when comparing geographic regions or demographic segments.

In 2019 I brought you a new challenge: how do we assess community preparedness? You responded by designing the community emergency preparedness index or CEPI. Your flexibility and ingenuity at developing this new metric, which operates off the same principles as the PEPI, shows you really understand your craft. The CEPI does its job by identifying preparedness levels in a given community. This in turn helps the Red Cross target its efforts at cities, towns and communities that are at-risk. Knowing, not guessing, where to put our resources and what programs to pursue are a huge benefit to our region and to delivering our mission.

Many firms talk about providing research and conducting surveys. However, the American Red Cross and most organizations need more than that. We need to *understand* the problem. That requires the researcher to bring all the resources and knowledge to bear on conceptualizing how to define and measure the problem and then analyzing the results using appropriate methods. The team here at the American Red Cross appreciates Competitive Edge's ability to deliver time and time again. We look forward to future research projects that help us to get more San Diego County families prepared.

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Malinda McDonald".

Malinda McDonald
Chief Administrative Officer
American Red Cross Southern California Region