

Neighborhood Preparedness

**Alert**

**Well-prepared**

**And**

**Ready for**

**Emergencies**

ESP "AWARE" Plan  
For All Communities!



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This plan is intended to be used in conjunction with the *ESP Focus Sheets* and *Bulletins* available from your local member of the ESP Coordinating Council or from [www.cert-la.com/ESP.htm](http://www.cert-la.com/ESP.htm).

## *Introduction*

FROM JULY 8, 1986 THROUGH JANUARY 17, 1994, seven damaging earthquakes—the North Palm Springs, Whittier-Narrows, Superstition Hills, Sierra Madre, Joshua Tree, Landers-Big Bear and Northridge—struck southern California. Each had a magnitude greater than 5.7.

Statistics indicate that the rate of large earthquakes in that eight-year period (.875 per year) was three times the rate in the previous 55 years (.290 per year). Seismologists and other experts aren't sure what the increased activity means. Several large earthquakes occurred in the San Francisco Bay area prior to the 1906 quake, but a similar-sized temblor has not followed a series of large quakes that occurred near Mammoth Lakes between 1978 and 1986.

Many southern Californians believe that the so-called “Big One”—a major earthquake on the southern San Andreas fault—is the one they need to fear most. But recent earthquakes have shown that magnitude 6 events in densely populated areas can be the “big one” to those living in the impacted areas. The Northridge earthquake, for example, was large in seismological terms, but it wasn't considered a major or great earthquake. Still, it had disastrous effects. The 6.7 temblor caused 57 deaths, more than 9,000 injuries and more than \$40 billion in property losses.

Some southern Californians might be thinking, “It won't happen to me!” And, perhaps some of those affected by the Northridge earthquake thought the same thing before 4:31 a.m. on January 17, 1994. But it can happen! Seismologists estimate that more than 200 faults in southern California are capable of producing earthquakes of magnitude 6 or more. You can be affected even if you don't live or work near the fault that ruptures. Residents and business owners in Santa Monica, Fillmore and other areas outside the San Fernando Valley also experienced strong ground shaking and considerable damage as a result of the earthquake.

Whether the next earthquake in southern California occurs on the San Andreas or a fault capable of producing only a magnitude 6 event, communications, transportation and utility systems in your area might be impacted. Police, fire and other agencies that normally provide emergency services in an efficient manner might be overwhelmed and unable to assist your neighborhood for at least 72 hours. Neighborhoods can greatly reduce the impacts of moderate and major earthquakes and other disasters by preparing and responding as a group.

This publication, the *“ESP Neighborhood Preparedness AWARE Plan,”* is designed to help you and your neighbors develop a neighborhood that is Alert, Well-prepared And Ready for Emergencies. The plan, developed by the Emergency Survival Program (ESP), is a step-by-step guide to help you start, organize and implement an emergency preparedness and response program in your neighborhood. The plan can be used in conjunction with existing community programs such as Neighborhood Watch or to start a program from scratch.



# Starting Your Program

It's easy to start a program such as the "ESP Neighborhood Preparedness AWARE Plan," but someone has to take charge and

organize your neighborhood if the effort is going to be successful.

## Step 1. Set a Meeting Date

Someone in the neighborhood who is interested in preparedness can get the ball rolling by setting a date and time for a neighborhood meeting. The objective of the meeting is to discuss the threat of earthquakes and other disasters in the area and how the neighborhood can become better prepared by working together. The meeting should be conducted when most residents can attend, but the organizer

should not let scheduling conflicts bog down the effort. The organizer should set a date and time and encourage as many members of the community as possible to attend.

After the date and time of the meeting have been set, a flyer can be developed and distributed to promote the meeting. (A sample flyer is included on page 12.)

January						
SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
			Holiday 1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	Holiday 20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

## Step 2. Contact Your Neighbors

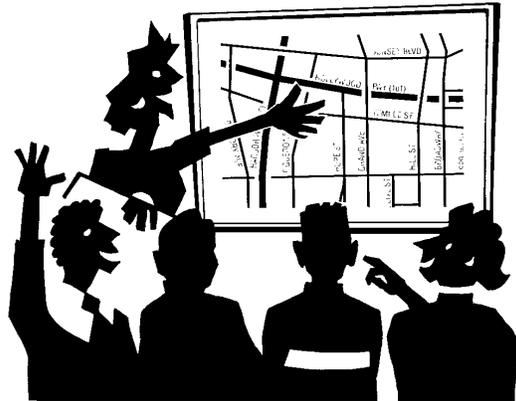
The meeting can be promoted through personal visits to neighbors by the organizers, flyer distribution or a combination of the two. Personal contact is the preferable choice since it provides the organizers with a chance to explain the disaster threats the community faces and the importance of increased neighborhood preparedness. It also provides the organizers a chance to win over reluctant neighbors. The organizers can use the following script or develop another:

“Hello, my name is \_\_\_\_\_.  
I live at \_\_\_\_\_.  
I recently read/heard that we probably will experience a major earthquake or another disaster during the next 30 years, and we may be on our own for at least 72 hours. Are you prepared? Some neighbors and I are somewhat prepared, but think we can be better prepared if we organize as a neighborhood. Do you know who in the neighborhood can help?

We’re holding a meeting on \_\_\_\_\_ at \_\_\_\_\_<sup>date</sup> to begin preparing as a neighborhood. The meeting starts at \_\_\_\_\_<sup>location</sup>. Are you interested in attending?<sup>time</sup> We’d appreciate it if you would. My telephone number is \_\_\_\_\_. Call me if you have any questions or need more information. Thank you very much.”

The organizers may encounter some reluctance or other problems in starting a neighborhood preparedness and response program. Following are some possible ways to reduce such problems:

- If the neighbor doesn’t plan to attend, try to reduce their anxiety and encourage them to attend;
- If the neighbor indicates he/she plans on attending, ask for their phone number so the organizers or a designee can call them if the meeting is postponed or canceled;
- If no one is home, leave the flyer, note the address and try to contact the neighbor later.



## Step 3. Plan & Conduct a Meeting

After the organizers have spoken to residents of the neighborhood or provided them with a flyer, plans for the meeting should be finalized. The plan should have identifiable goals that can be accomplished at the meeting. To ensure the likelihood of having a successful meeting, the organizer should develop an agenda that directs the neighborhood toward those goals. (A sample agenda follows on page 13.)

Some of the goals of the first meeting may include:

- Identifying the earthquake or disaster threats in your neighborhood;
- Explaining the importance of preparing as a neighborhood;
- Developing an inventory of supplies, equipment and tools in the neighborhood; and
- Assessing the skills of neighborhood members.

### **Identifying the earthquake or disaster threats in your neighborhood**

The organizers can include on the agenda a representative from the local Office of Emergency Services, fire department, law enforcement agency or local chapter of the American Red Cross to talk about the earthquake and disaster threats in the area. This information will help win the support of neighbors by increasing their awareness and personalizing the threat to the neighborhood.

### **Explaining the importance of preparing as a neighborhood**

Because California's emergency response system has proven successful during many recent disasters, many people may not take the threat seriously. "My fire and police departments will be here," they might think, without realizing that a major—or even moderate—earthquake or other disaster could damage or overwhelm transportation, utility and emergency response systems for several days.

A representative from the local Office of Emergency Services, fire department, law enforcement agency or American Red Cross chapter can reinforce the importance of personal and neighborhood preparedness to residents of the community. The local expert also can provide residents with information about the skills, supplies, tools and equipment that the neighborhood will need.

### **Developing an inventory of supplies, equipment and tools in the neighborhood**

Because residents of the neighborhood might be on their own for at least 72 hours after an earthquake or another disaster, the organizer should include on the agenda a survey to determine the skills, supplies, equipment and tools that neighbors have. Supplies, tools and equipment might include a camper or mobile home to serve as the coordination center command post for the neighborhood's response effort;

hammers, nails and plywood to cover broken windows; first aid kits and medical supplies for use in post-disaster first aid; crowbars, axes and other tools to assist in light search and rescue efforts; amateur or citizens band radios to assist in communications; and plastic bags to store trash or use as tarps.

### Assessing the skills of neighbors

It's important to know which neighbors have skills that will be useful after earthquakes or other emergencies. Everyone can help and is needed! Neighbors with management or leadership experience can serve as **block captains** or **team leaders** on your team; those with training in first aid and CPR can provide emergency medical assistance to those who are injured until they can be taken to a medical facility or until professional medical personnel arrive; residents with architectural and engineering backgrounds or experience can assess the safety of buildings in the neighborhood for occupancy; neighbors with citizens band radios and amateur radio (ham) licenses can serve as communications coordinators; and others can take on other assignments. (The Skills and Equipment Survey checklist on page 14 can provide guidance in assessing the skills of neighbors.)

### Other considerations

The organizers can consider the following to help increase the success of the first meeting:

- Event promotion is a key to participation. In addition to personal contacts and the distribution of flyers, consider placing an article in your community newspaper, homeowners' association bulletin or other publications. (A sample press release is included on page 15.)
- A social period before the meeting allows neighbors to relax, acquaint themselves with others and talk to experts.
- Brief self-introductions provide each neighbor with an opportunity to acknowledge their interest in and support of the program and its goals.
- Handouts on preparedness and the earthquake and disaster risks in your area help reinforce the messages from your meeting: the risk your community faces and the importance of being prepared. Information on the local earthquake risk is available through libraries and universities, the United States Geological Survey (USGS) and the California Department of Conservation. Preparedness information is available through the Governor's Office of Emergency Services (OES), local Offices of Emergency Services and local chapters of the American Red Cross. (Phone numbers for these agencies are available in your telephone directory.)

## Step 4. Meeting Follow-up

After the meeting, the organizers should review the questionnaires completed by everyone who attends the meeting. The organizers can use the questionnaires to form a planning committee and select a block captain, team leaders and branch coordinators. The questionnaire also can be used to determine the types and quantities of supplies, tools and equipment that might be used in an emergency.

### Leadership and organization

Leadership is the key to implementing a successful neighborhood preparedness and response program. From the meeting and the information provided in the surveys, volunteers should be sought to serve on a planning committee. The planning committee will ensure that responsibility for projects is spread among the group and that goals and objectives are met.

The planning committee should designate a **block captain**, who will work with **team leaders** and **branch coordinators** to implement the plan before and after a disaster. The **block captain** has overall responsibility for the neighborhood response team. **Team leaders** oversee the activities of branches assigned to their sections. **Branch coordinators** oversee the efforts of residents assigned to branches with specific responsibilities, including first aid and CPR, light search and rescue, damage assessment and other jobs. Because an effective response requires decisiveness, the planning committee should delegate to the block captain the authority to make decisions and set priorities when a consensus can't be reached.

It's important that only a limited number of people report directly to the block captain, team leaders and branch coordinators. No one should directly oversee more than 5-7 persons. The planning committee and block captain should establish and maintain a chain of command that all residents respect.

### Resources and assignments

A review of the questionnaires completed by residents will help the planning committee and block captain know what resources and skills are available. For example, someone with carpentry skills and tools can reduce hazards before the emergency and help make minor repairs afterward. Someone with a two-way radio system can report injuries and damage in the neighborhood to local officials.

### Needs assessment

The planning committee's review of the questionnaires also will help identify the supplies, tools and equipment that are available for use by the neighborhood response team and those that are still needed. To obtain additional resources, the planning committee might consider the feasibility of:

- Donations from local businesses or residents;
- Raising money through fundraisers; and
- Pooling money together to purchase such items.

The planning committee also should assess how well each neighbor is prepared and help them develop a strategy to reduce hazards.

# Step 5. The Next Steps

Depending on how well the neighborhood response team has done and how comfortable neighborhood leaders are with the preparedness level in the neighborhood, the planning committee, block captain and other leaders might want to take the next steps. They include hazard reduction, ongoing training and drills. Detailed information on these and other aspects of neighborhood preparedness are available through the Governor's Office of Emergency Services (OES) at [www.oes.ca.gov](http://www.oes.ca.gov), the ESP Focus sheets and other programs sponsored by local Offices of Emergency Services.

## Neighborhood/community response team training sources

Additional information about neighborhood or community response team training in California is available through:

### Community Emergency Response Team (CERT)

Disaster Preparedness Unit  
Los Angeles Fire Department  
5021 N. Sepulveda Boulevard  
Sherman Oaks, CA 91403

### Citizens of Oakland Respond to Emergencies (CORE)

475 14th Street, 9th Floor  
Oakland CA 94612

### Neighborhood Emergency Response Team Training

San Francisco Fire Department  
260 Golden Gate Avenue  
San Francisco, CA 94102

### Sunnyvale Neighborhoods Actively Prepare (SNAP)

(Residential Emergency Preparedness)  
Department of Public Safety  
700 All American Way  
Sunnyvale, CA 94088

### Community Emergency Response Team (CERT)

City of Rancho Cucamonga  
10500 Civic Center Drive  
Rancho Cucamonga, CA 91730

### Community Emergency Response Team (CERT)

Long Beach Fire Department  
925 Harbor Plaza, Suite 100  
Long Beach, CA 90802

### Community Emergency Response Team (CERT)

Riverside County Fire Department  
4080 Lemon Street  
Riverside, CA 92501

## Sources for this publication included:

*Organizing Neighborhoods for Earthquake Preparedness*  
Governor's Office of Emergency Services

*Putting Down Roots in Earthquake Country*  
United States Geological Survey

Southern California Earthquake Center  
Governor's Office of Emergency Services

# Quick Reference

Families should complete and use the form provided below as a quick pocket reference about vital information and documents

Name: _____	
Social Security #: _____	
Auto Policy #: _____	
Company: _____	
Phone: _____	
Home Policy #: _____	
Company: _____	
Phone: _____	
Health Policy #: _____	
Phone: _____	
<b>Family Members</b>	
Name	Social Security #
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Use this quick reference form for your family's personal record. This information will be critical in your personal family recovery.

# ESP Emergency Supply Checklist

## Less than \$5

- Bottled water: For drinking. (One gallon per person, per day for at least 3 days.)
- Local maps: To help guide the user if an alternate route is needed.
- Manual can opener: To open canned goods in an emergency food supply.
- Nonperishable food: Dried fruit, unsalted nuts and other high-energy foods to provide nourishment and energy.
- Safety lightsticks: To provide light, especially good for use by children.
- Whistle: To signal, attract or call for help in an emergency.

## \$5-10

- Books, games, toys: To provide comfort to children after an earthquake or another disaster.
- Comfort and personal hygiene kit: Surgical gloves, mouthwash, toothbrush and toothpaste, wet wipes, bar soap, shampoo, toilet paper, feminine and infant supplies, etc.
- Flashlight, spare bulb, and batteries: To provide light if power is out or the user needs to walk home at night.
- Heavy leather work gloves: To protect hands from sharp objects and debris.
- Pocket knife: To cut rope or other materials.
- Portable battery-operated radio: To provide access to information and instructions if power is out.

## \$10-20

- Duffel bag or backpack: To store items that comprise an emergency kit.
- Multipurpose ABC-type fire extinguisher: To help combat small residential fires that might result from downed power lines, damaged wiring in appliances, or other causes since firefighters may not be available for at least 72 hours.
- Hand tools: Adjustable wrench, crowbar, pliers, screwdrivers, hammer, shovel, etc., to help turn off utilities, remove debris, etc.

## Over \$20

- Camp stove or barbecue: To facilitate outdoor cooking should gas leaks or other factors make cooking indoors impractical.
- Commercially made emergency kit: For home, office or car.
- Emergency cash: Include enough cash to begin repairs, etc. Small bills—ones, fives and tens—are best. Also include change to make calls.
- First aid kit and book: To treat cuts, burns, abrasions.
- Lantern: To provide emergency lighting.
- Portable generators: To provide emergency power.
- Sleeping bag: To provide warmth and comfort if outside sleeping is required due to a damaged home.
- Sturdy shoes: To protect feet from broken glass and other sharp objects.
- Tent: To provide protection from rain, wind, and other environmental elements.

Let's make our neighborhood...

**A**lert  
**W**ell-prepared  
**A**nd  
**R**eady for  
**E**mergencies

Learn how we can prepare  
together.

Attend our organizing meeting:

\_\_\_\_\_

(Date)

\_\_\_\_\_

(Time)

\_\_\_\_\_

(Location)

\_\_\_\_\_

(Address)

**For more information, contact:**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

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# *Neighborhood Emergency Preparedness Committee*

## **Organizational Meeting**

### *Agenda*

1. *Social Period* 7:00 - 7:10 p.m.
2. *Welcome and Introduction* 7:10 - 7:20 p.m.
3. *Presentation on the risk of an earthquake or another disaster* 7:20 - 7:30 p.m.
4. *Presentation on importance of neighborhood preparedness* 7:30 - 7:45 p.m.
5. *Survey of skills, supplies, tools and equipment* 7:45 - 8:00 p.m.

# *Neighborhood Emergency Preparedness Committee*

## **Skills and Equipment Survey**

Please provide the following information so that we can assess the skills, tools, equipment and supplies that might be available after an earthquake or another disaster.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Work Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Family Member Names:

1. \_\_\_\_\_

5. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

6. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

7. \_\_\_\_\_

4. \_\_\_\_\_

8. \_\_\_\_\_

Identify special needs your family may have:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Please check the appropriate box if you have the following items:

- |                                       |  |  |                                      |
|---------------------------------------|--|--|--------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ham radio    | <input type="checkbox"/> Fire extinguisher | <input type="checkbox"/> First aid kit | <input type="checkbox"/> Generator   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Winch        | <input type="checkbox"/> Chain saw         | <input type="checkbox"/> Ladder        | <input type="checkbox"/> Strong Rope |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bolt cutters | <input type="checkbox"/> Crow bar          | <input type="checkbox"/> Axe           | <input type="checkbox"/> Shovel      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Heavy jack   | <input type="checkbox"/> Power drill       | <input type="checkbox"/> Walkie-talkie | <input type="checkbox"/> Gas grill   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |  |  |                                      |

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Please indicate if you or other family members have training or skills in the following:

- |   |   |  |
|---|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> First Aid/CPR    | <input type="checkbox"/> Mental Health, Counseling      | <input type="checkbox"/> Architecture, engineering |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Plumbing         | <input type="checkbox"/> Electrical Wiring              | <input type="checkbox"/> Childcare                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Carpentry        | <input type="checkbox"/> Management/leadership          | <input type="checkbox"/> Cooking                   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fire Suppression | <input type="checkbox"/> Radio/communication operations | <input type="checkbox"/> Light Search and Rescue   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____     |   |  |

\_\_\_\_\_

# *Neighborhood Emergency Preparedness Committee*

## **Press Release**

Contact: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

## **For Immediate Release**

### **Neighborhood Emergency Preparedness Committee to Host Community Organizing Meeting**

The \_\_\_\_\_ will host a meeting on \_\_\_\_\_ to organize a neighborhood emergency preparedness and response program. The one-hour meeting will be held from \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_ at \_\_\_\_\_.

“Emergency services agencies may be overwhelmed after a large earthquake or another disaster,” said \_\_\_\_\_, meeting organizer and chair of the organizational committee. “Residents of \_\_\_\_\_ may be on their own for at least 72 hours. This meeting is the first step toward self-sufficiency.”

The meeting will include \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_.

Additional information about the meeting is available by calling \_\_\_\_\_ at \_\_\_\_\_.

# # #

## *ESP Coordinating Council*

Contact your ESP Coordinating Council member for additional information regarding the Emergency Survival Program (ESP).

### **OES**

Governor's Office of  
Emergency Services  
(562) 795-2900

### **Imperial County**

County Office of  
Emergency Services  
(760) 355-1486 or  
(760) 355-1191

### **Inyo County**

County Office of  
Emergency Services  
(760) 878-0238 or  
(760) 876-5606

### **Kern County**

County Office of  
Emergency Services  
(661) 391-7099

### **Los Angeles County**

County Office of  
Emergency Management  
(213) 974-1166

### **Mono County**

County Sheriff's Department  
(760) 932-5234

### **Orange County**

OCEMO (Orange County  
Emergency Management  
Organization)  
(949) 724-7148

County Sheriff's Department/  
Emergency Management  
(714) 628-7055

Orange County Fire Authority  
Community Relations and  
Education  
(714) 532-7266

### **Riverside County**

City of Riverside Police  
Department Emergency  
Management Bureau  
(909) 826-5550

Riverside County Fire  
Department Office of  
Emergency Services  
(909) 955-4700

### **San Bernardino County**

City of Rancho Cucamonga  
Disaster Preparedness Division  
(909) 477-2700 Ext. 3006

### **San Diego County**

County Office of  
Disaster Preparedness  
(858) 565-3490

### **San Luis Obispo County**

County Office of  
Emergency Services  
(805) 781-5011

### **Santa Barbara County**

County Office of  
Emergency Services  
(805) 681-5526

### **Ventura County**

County Sheriff's Department  
Office of Emergency Services  
(805) 654-5152

### **City of Azusa**

Azusa Police Department  
(626) 812-3265

### **City of Los Angeles**

Emergency Preparedness  
Department  
(213) 978-2222

Community Emergency  
Response Team - Los Angeles  
Los Angeles Fire Department  
Disaster Preparedness Unit  
(818) 756-9674

### **City of Santa Monica**

Santa Monica Fire Department  
(310) 458-2221

### **Yuma, Arizona**

County Emergency Management  
(520) 783-5960