



YOU can build a **NEIGHBORHOOD DISASTER PLAN** in just **5** steps

NEIGHBORHOOD MEETING FACILITATOR GUIDE

The City of Los Angeles Emergency Management Department developed this resource.
For additional information visit <http://emergency.lacity.org> or call 1-213-484-4800.





YOU can build a NEIGHBORHOOD DISASTER PLAN in just **5** steps

The purpose of this guide is to help you facilitate your neighborhood preparedness meeting and complete your neighborhood disaster plan. This resource provides talking points in *italics*, extra direction **[in brackets]** and other tips and helpful information to help you have a successful meeting.

BEFORE THE MEETING

1. Review this document.
2. Review *You Can Build a Neighborhood Disaster Plan in Just 5 Steps*.
3. Request **OK/Help** hangers from your Neighborhood Council or print them out online from [<emergency.lacity.org>](http://emergency.lacity.org)
4. Complete Steps 1-3 of *You Can Build a Neighborhood Disaster Plan in Just 5 Steps*.
5. Layout pencils, erasers, copies of *You Can Build a Neighborhood Disaster Plan in Just 5 Steps*, the *Neighborhood Survey*, a *sign-in sheet* and your sketch of the neighborhood.
6. Have 1 copy of the Neighborhood Disaster Plan

Template available for review.

7. Identify someone to take notes.

It is also nice (but not necessary) to have snacks, a fire extinguisher and CERT supplies (for demonstration), and information about CERT.

OBJECTIVES

During this neighborhood preparedness meeting, you and your neighbors will:

1. Review *You Can Build a Neighborhood Disaster Plan in Just 5 Steps*.
2. Identify persons with special skills, supplies or equipment who can help in a disaster.
3. Identify persons who will need additional help during a disaster, which may include persons with access and functional needs.
4. Confirm the neighborhood sketch.
5. Enhance the neighborhood sketch to include sequential numbering, contact information, hazards and risks, and persons with access and functional needs.

NEIGHBORHOOD DISASTER PLANNING IN 5 EASY STEPS

OPENING REMARKS

Welcome! This is the [state name of neighborhood] Neighborhood Disaster Preparedness Meeting. Thank you for coming. The purpose of this meeting is for us to identify ways that we can help each other during a disaster. Before we dive into the meeting, let's do some introductions. My name is [state first and last name] I live [attend or work] at [state address and describe it e.g., white house at the end of the cul-de-sac on Main Street]. Please introduce yourselves, starting here to my right [point to right]. Tell us your first and last name, and where you live, work, or attend. Please tell us something distinct about your place – like “the little church on the top of the hill” – so that we can picture each location. Thank you. Our meeting objectives are:

- 1. Review You Can Build a Neighborhood Disaster Plan in Just 5 Steps [hold it up].*
- 2. Identify persons with special skills, supplies or equipment who can help in a disaster.*
- 3. Identify persons who may need some extra help following a disaster with seeing, reading, walking, speaking, hearing, remembering, understanding, and/or responding.*
- 4. Confirm the neighborhood sketch.*
- 5. Enhance the neighborhood sketch to include sequential numbering, contact information, hazards and risks, and people who may need extra help.*

[Hold up Neighbor Survey]. Does everyone have a copy of the Neighbor Survey? We will go over this in detail during the meeting, but please start to complete this. We will collect this at the end of the meeting.

The purpose of this meeting is to talk about how we can help each other during a disaster. We do not have time at this meeting to talk about personal preparedness. If you would like information about personal preparedness, you can visit the City of Los Angeles Emergency Management Department website at www.readyla.org. We can also discuss this at a future meeting. I want to cover what a disaster is. A disaster is any event that overwhelms the capacity of 9-1-1 emergency responders. Look around the room. When disaster occurs, these are the neighbors who are likely to be our first responders.

GUIDE REVIEW

Let's start by doing a quick review of the Guide itself. Turn to page 3. As you can see, the Guide consists of 5 key steps. They are:

- ✓ **Step 1: Define your area.**
Identify a manageable area, your apartment building, one city block, a few small surrounding streets, etc., that you can organize with relative ease.
- ✓ **Step 2: Recruit leaders.**
Develop a team of leaders who can help build the plan and carry out emergency support activities when the time comes.
- ✓ **Step 3: Scout your area.**
Get to know the lay of the land: what resources you have, what the landscape is, and disasters or other emergencies likely to occur in your area.
- ✓ **Step 4: Build your team.**
Find out who lives in your area, how they can help in a disaster, and who may need extra help.
- ✓ **Step 5: Plan your strategy.**
Create a plan that outlines what your neighborhood will do before, during, and after a disaster!

In preparation for the meeting, we have completed steps 1-3. During the meeting, we will check and revise what we have started and start to outline our strategy for disaster response.

Total time for this topic: 10 minutes

REVIEW STEP 1

Turn to page 4 of *You Can Build a Neighborhood Disaster Plan in Just 5 Steps*. In order for us to develop a disaster plan for our neighborhood, it is important for us to define an area that our plan will include. We have started this process but need to check the details with you. Here are a few questions that we need to discuss:

- ✓ What size area would be easy for you and a small team to manage? **25 to 40 households are ideal**; however, work within existing structures and networks when available, such as by determining if there is an active neighborhood watch program in your neighborhood.
- ✓ Will you be able to easily communicate with everyone? What languages are commonly spoken?
- ✓ Will the area allow you to practice “neighbor helping neighbor” so that you can quickly identify who needs help and provide it? If your area is larger than 40 households, divide it into smaller areas with a “block captain” for each area.

[Review your neighborhood sketch. Review the streets, homes and other facilities covered. Provide the estimated total number of homes and other facilities included in the defined area.] We need to make sure that we have everything correctly labeled. Are we missing anything? We need to show:

- ✓ *The number of homes, business, schools, churches, and other buildings in the area*
- ✓ *The number of people in the area*
- ✓ *The roads and other entrance and exit points, hills, and waterways*

[Ask everyone if there are any key facilities missing from the sketch.] Thank you.

Total time for this topic: 10 minutes

Key facilities could include:
Community centers
Schools
Hospitals
Parks
Fire stations
Police stations

REVIEW STEP 2

Turn to page 5 of *You Can Build a Neighborhood Disaster Plan in Just 5 Steps*.

This section talks about recruiting leaders to help with the disaster planning and response process. There are two groups of leaders we are looking for:

- 1. Those who can help us with disaster planning and disaster plan development*
- 2. Those who would have a leadership role in disaster response*

Of course, these two groups would need to work together closely before a disaster to help us plan as much as possible. In preparation for this meeting, we have already identified a number of people interested in taking on a leadership role. They are: [introduce your leaders and the type of help they will provide – planning or response. If you need more leaders, ask folks to volunteer at this time.]

Great, thank you. I also want to call to your attention the tip on the page about Community Emergency Response Teams (CERT). I encourage you all to consider taking CERT classes. The CERT or Community Emergency Response Teams program is led by the Los Angeles Fire Department and it is free. It provides instruction on community disaster preparedness. For more information, including the schedule of CERT classes, visit www.lafd.org/lafd-cert

Total time for this topic: 10 minutes

REVIEW STEP 3

Turn to page 6 of *You Can Build a Neighborhood Disaster Plan in Just 5 Steps*.

This section asks us to identify the threats and risks to our neighborhood. We need to determine what resources we have, what our landscape is like, what disasters or other emergencies we might be susceptible to, etc. This process has been started, but I'd like to review it with you. Then, at the end of the meeting, I'd like to walk the area to go over this.

First, we need to identify the threats. Threats are things like earthquakes and extreme weather. [Review the threats you have noted so far with the group.] Do we need to add any? [Document additions.]

Next, we need to list whether the disaster is highly, moderately, or not very likely to occur. [Review the risk levels that you have noted for the threats.] Does anyone have any changes or questions? [Document additions.]

Finally, we need to review how at risk our neighborhood is to injuries, death or property damage. We will classify these risks as high, medium or low. [Review the risk levels that you have noted.] Does anyone have any changes or questions? [Document additions.]

Perfect, thank you.

REVIEW STEP 3: SCOUT YOUR AREA

Now please turn to page 8 of *You Can Build a Neighborhood Disaster Plan in Just 5 Steps*.

Let's talk about assets. What assets does our neighborhood have that we can use? Neighborhood assets include anything that would be useful in responding to, or recovering from a disaster. Here are examples:

- ✓ Neighborhood Emergency Supply Bins (see page 26 for more detail)
- ✓ Physical assets like parks, schools, health/medical centers and fire stations
- ✓ Organizational assets like neighborhood clubs, fraternal organizations, radio clubs, local military organizations, and disability service providers
- ✓ Persons trained in CERT, medical care, first aid, search and rescue, carpentry, plumbing, or crisis counseling
- ✓ Businesses inside or close to the area that might be able to provide supplies or equipment
- ✓ Equipment and supplies for clearing debris, boats for rescue during floods, communication equipment, first aid supplies, generators and other items useful during or after a disaster
- ✓ Evacuation resources, like accessible vehicles

[Starting with each threat listed, ask folks to identify what asset they have for it, what the location is, what the contact information is to access the asset, what the asset is vulnerable to, and what can be done to make it less vulnerable. Document everything.]

REVIEW STEP 3: SCOUT YOUR AREA

We are now going to chart our neighborhood area and create a neighborhood contact list. Take a look at the sketch that's been created so far. Everyone should fill in the sketch so that we all have this important information. We may have already listed names and contact information for some of you. Please review and confirm this information or fill it in. We need your first and last name, contact information (email and 24 hour phone), the number of people at your location, and pets. Add street names if they are not shown.

Next, in sequential order, let's number all of the addresses. [Hold up your map and show this.]

Now, we need to identify the following together:

- ✓ All entrance/exit routes to/from the community that are accessible by foot, wheelchair/scooter, and car
- ✓ Obstacles that could make entry/exit difficult, such as collapsed over/under passes, downed trees, or power lines
- ✓ Finally write the names of those who may need extra help during disasters. This includes neighbors who may need extra help following a disaster, to include children, older adults and persons with difficulty seeing, reading, walking, speaking, hearing, remembering, understanding, and/or responding; and children who may be home alone. Writing the names here will help us remember to check on these specific neighbors soon after disaster occurs. Please know that all information will be kept confidential by [neighborhood leaders/block captains] and is only for our use as neighbors. Of course, sharing information is voluntary.

List all of these on your sketch.

REVIEW STEP 3: SCOUT YOUR AREA

We also need to identify a Neighborhood Gathering Place. The Neighborhood Gathering Place is a space for neighbors to meet after a disaster to organize, check that no one is left behind, and to coordinate response activities. Pick one large central area (e.g., park, recreation area, porch, covered car port) to gather and organize the next steps in your neighborhood's response plan.

Here is what to look for:

- ✓ Easily seen so others will recognize this as the main gathering point
- ✓ Set in an area that is easy for everyone to get to
- ✓ Safe from flood, fire, fallen trees and power lines
- ✓ Has nearby accessible toilet facilities
- ✓ Be well lit in case of night evacuation
- ✓ Can accommodate service animals and pets
- ✓ Big enough for planned number of persons and vehicles
- ✓ Is accessible to children and adults with disabilities

We also need to identify a Neighborhood Care Center. The Neighborhood Care Center is a place where those who may need extra help following a disaster, including children, older adults and persons with disabilities or other access and functional needs, can be brought and cared for. So, what locations can we identify for these? List all of these on your sketch.

Last, let's identify a triage location, where the injured can be given first aid or assessed for medical treatment. Where should this be? List this on your sketch.

Total time for this topic: 45 minutes

REVIEW STEP 4

Turn to page 11 of *You Can Build a Neighborhood Disaster Plan in Just 5 Steps*.

*This section asks us to form a group, which is what we are doing today! Please take a look around the room. We want to make sure our group represents the diversity in our neighborhood and includes people with disabilities and others with access and functional needs, homeowners, families, businesses, churches, nonprofits, schools, and local organizations **in our defined area**.*

Are there any nearby human service organizations, disability service providers, or residential, community care, and assisted living facilities that may be important during a disaster that we should include? Do we need to reach out to anyone else not here? [Document recommendations and assign them to someone to carry out.]

Now, we need to identify the skills and equipment each neighbor has that are useful in disaster response.

Who has CERT or first aid training, the ability to lift heavy objects, or experience caring for children or working with people who may be confused when dealing with unfamiliar activity during an emergency due to age, loss of sense of direction, not understanding what is happening, etc.? [Document this on your contact sheet.]

Sometimes during a disaster we need to get key information via phone. A phone tree has a list of people, with their phone numbers, arranged to facilitate a chain of calls in an emergency. For example, the person who gets the first call contacts a designated small group of people, who then contact others on the list. Who is interested participating in a phone tree? [Document this on your contact sheet.]

Total time for this topic: 15 minutes

REVIEW STEP 5

Turn to page 13 of *You Can Build a Neighborhood Disaster Plan in Just 5 Steps*.

Let's talk about what we need to do in a disaster. Before you do anything else, make sure that things are OK where you are. Once you have confirmed everyone's safety, prepare to go to the Neighborhood Gathering Place. Wear protective gear if you have it – a hardhat or bicycle helmet, steel-toe or other study shoes, and leather or study gloves.

TIP: Keep these items together in an easy to get to location. If needed, shut off main valves to your water and gas.

Post the **OK/Help** hangers on the front door or in a front window so that it is easily seen from the street. Place the green side facing out if no help is needed. Place the red side facing out if help is needed. These hangers help us to know who to aid first.



Once disaster has occurred, and people have ensured that themselves, their family, and homes are safe, and have moved to the Neighborhood Gathering Place, the first task is to get organized. We need to:

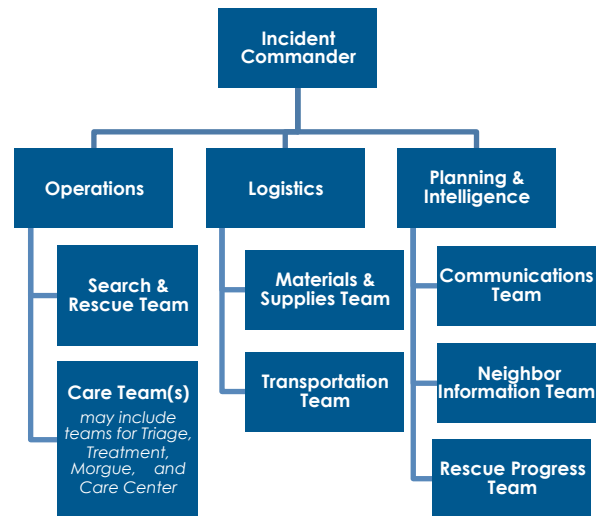
- ✓ **Select a leader to direct the overall effort**
- ✓ **Develop an Action Plan.** Decide what you want to do, how to do it, and what timeframe you are going to do it in
- ✓ **Organize into teams, with a Team Leader for each team.** Each team should have 3-7 people and a Team Leader

A practice used by first responders and CERT is to organize using the Incident Command System. With the Incident Command System, the Incident Commander is responsible for deciding what is to be done. 'Operations' carries out the decided actions. 'Logistics' coordinates resources (transportation, supplies).

REVIEW STEP 5: PLAN YOUR STRATEGY

The chart on page 14 of your guide is an example. Do we want to use this system or another one? Who is a good candidate to be the leader? [Document responses.]

Now, let's talk about the specific teams! Examples of team roles are:



✓ **Communications Team.** The Communications Team listens to the Emergency Alert System, handheld radio, and/or National Weather Radio. The Communications Team is responsible for communicating information within the neighborhood, and to/from the neighborhood and first responders and other City agencies (like fire and police). Who is interested in being on this team? [Document names.] Do you have a handheld radio? [Document if they do.]

✓ **Search & Rescue Team.** This team will look for the **OK/Help** signs, as well as check on those listed as needing extra help. They begin with a damage assessment to identify hazard areas and prioritize Search & Rescue operations. Ideal members have completed CERT Search & Rescue training. One or two Disaster Animal Rescue Team (DART) members should accompany each Search & Rescue team to ensure that animals are rescued and cared for. Who is interested in being on this team? [Document names.] Are you CERT trained for search and rescue? [Document responses.] Are you trained in animal rescue? [Document responses.]

✓ **Care Teams.** Care Teams can consist of **Triage Team** – those who determine the priority that injured survivors will receive care; the **Treatment Team** – those who tend to the injured; the **Morgue Team** – those who manage the deceased; and the **Care Center Team** – those who provide extra care during disaster. Members of these teams ideally have experience in healthcare. Who is interested in being on these teams? [Document names.] Do you have any experience or expertise with providing care or aid? [Document responses.]

REVIEW STEP 5: PLAN YOUR STRATEGY

- ✓ **Materials and Supplies Team.** This team coordinates needed materials and supplies from within the neighborhood.
- ✓ **Transportation Team.** This team coordinates transportation for supplies, equipment and people.
- ✓ **Neighbor Information Team.** This team coordinates information about survivors and relays information about rescue progress and survivor status (injured, missing, etc.) from the Command Post to the Care Center.
- ✓ **Rescue Progress Team.** This team keeps track of the rescue progress of survivors.

Another important part of response is communications. Turn to page 15 of *You Can Build a Neighborhood Disaster Plan in Just 5 Steps*. Take a moment to review the various communications methods available.

[If your neighborhood has a webpage or social media account, talk about how this can be used in a disaster to communicate information. Identify people to carry out related action items.]

I encourage everyone to sign up for Alert LA County, which is a community mass notification system that will provide recorded phone messages, text messages, and email. Register at www.alert.lacounty.gov and click on the link to "Alert LA County".

I also encourage you to register on the Red Cross "Safe and Well" website <https://communityos.safeandwell.org>. During a disaster, this is a tool that you can use to let friends and family know that you are OK.

Anyone with access and functional needs may consider signing up for SNAP. This is a voluntary web-based registry for persons with access and functional needs who could potentially have difficulty evacuating in an emergency or critical event. Register at <http://snap.lacounty.gov/>

REVIEW STEP 5: PLAN YOUR STRATEGY

We have made excellent progress in preparing our neighborhood for disaster!

Next, we need to put it in writing! This where our group of planners comes in. [Review the names of the people who volunteered as planners.] Are you still up for this? Great. We need to use the plan template [show the template] to create a simple disaster plan. Can you meet outside of this meeting to put together what we talked about today? A summary of the plan contents is provided on pages 16-17 of You Can Build a Neighborhood Disaster Plan in Just 5 Steps.

Last, I want to call everyone's attention to the Disaster Resources on page 18-19 of You Can Build a Neighborhood Disaster Plan in Just 5 Steps. I encourage you to familiarize yourselves with the sources provided.

Please pass the sign-in sheet and the surveys to me. [Gather these.] Thank you.

Let's talk about what we need to do next.

First, [look at planners] can you make the plan available for review at next month's meeting? [Review the date, location, and time of the meeting.]

Perfect. Once we have a plan and have assigned roles, we will need to review and clarify these roles at every other neighborhood meeting to accommodate for new people and to maintain our preparedness for disaster.

At this time, let's all head outside and review our maps. [Lead everyone outside and walk your neighborhood area together.]

Thanks for coming.

Total time for this topic: 30 minutes

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. How big should my neighborhood be?
25 to 40 households are ideal; however, work within existing structures and networks when available (like neighborhood watch programs, homeowner associations, etc.). If you live/work in a high-rise or multiple-unit building, you can organize by floor or number of units.
2. Who should I invite to the meeting?
 Invite people from your area who can help plan for or respond to a disaster. Leadership from existing organizations and persons with disaster training are great candidates.
3. How can I best help persons who need extra support during the disaster, such as access and functional needs populations?
 Ask people at your meeting who identified themselves as needing additional support what you can do to assist them.

Additional guidelines are provided below.

Vision - May be unwilling to leave familiar surroundings when the request for evacuation comes from a stranger. A service animal could become confused or disoriented in a disaster. People may have to depend on others to lead them and their service animal to safety during a disaster.

Hearing - May need help getting and receiving warnings and directions.

Mobility - May need assistance to get to a shelter or neighborhood gathering area.

Single working parent - May need help to plan for the safety of their children.

Non-English speaking persons - May need assistance in understanding warnings and directions. The following agencies provide detailed information on individual, family, and community preparedness on their respective websites:

American Red Cross of Greater Los Angeles

City of Los Angeles Emergency Management Department

County of Los Angeles Office of Emergency Management

Illness/sensitivities – People who have allergies and chemical sensitivities may not be able to manage in certain gathering areas or shelters.

4. How can neighborhoods support the City and Red Cross with shelter operations?

Neighborhoods can assist City and Red Cross shelter operations by locating and providing transportation for those who do not have a way to evacuate.

FEMA (www.fema.gov/plan/prepare/specialplans.shtm) has published a useful summary for use in emergency planning, which is adapted below:

Some persons may require assistance. In addition to those with visible disabilities, people with hidden disabilities and activity limitations may also need assistance. Some persons may need assistance in evacuating buildings where elevators have stopped working. These people include those who: have limitations that interfere using stairs, tire easily due to temporary or permanent conditions, have breathing conditions like heart problems, asthma, emphysema, or other conditions made worse by stress or contact with small amounts of dust or smoke, who may become confused when dealing with unfamiliar activity during an emergency due to age, or loss of sense of direction, or not understanding what is happening.

People with mobility disabilities are encouraged to make pre-arrangements for emergency transportation and include this information in their family emergency plan. In addition to persons with specific mobility disabilities, people with other disabilities and access need may require assistance. People without vehicles may need to make arrangements for transportation. People with specific dietary needs should have tailored emergency food supply, if possible. People with chronic conditions should plan for and know the location and availability of more than one facility if dependent on a dialysis machine or other life-sustaining equipment or treatment. People with intellectual disabilities, limitations in understanding, remembering, some psychiatric disabilities, dementia - May need help responding to emergencies and getting to a shelter, may be disoriented or confused; may react negatively to attempts to assist.

FUTURE MEETING TOPIC: HOUSEHOLD DISASTER PLAN

Don't just cross your fingers and hope - get a plan! Good preparation is essential for surviving disasters of all types. Because so many emergency situations can happen without warning, the proper preparations need to be made far in advance. Think ahead. What will you need when disaster strikes, who will you need to contact, how will you avoid injury or even worse? Here are some important recommendations that you should discuss with all family members. Contact your local emergency management team to learn about your community's warning signals and how you should respond to them.

1. Store all emergency contact numbers (fire, police, ambulance, etc.) in a place that all family members know.
2. Teach children how and when to call 9-1-1. Practice with them periodically so they remember what to do when disasters happen.
3. Enroll in First Aid, CERT and CPR classes.
4. Pick two places to meet for emergencies: right outside your home in cases such as a fire, and outside your neighborhood if you can't return home.
5. Make sure every family member knows the phone number of your out-of-neighborhood meeting place.
6. Ask an out-of-state friend or relative to be your family contact, and make sure everyone in your family knows the phone number.
7. Organize your important documents and put them in a fireproof container that is easily accessible.
8. Inventory and, ideally, videotape or photograph your valuables. Place the tape or photos in a safe deposit box or waterproof container.
9. Install smoke detectors on each level of the home and hallways near bedrooms. Check them each month and replace batteries when necessary.
10. Keep a fire extinguisher in your home and show everyone how to use it...check and recharge it according to manufacturer's specifications.
11. Replace stored water every three months and stored foods every six months.

Visit one of the websites below for additional tips and guidance regarding household preparedness.

Ready LA

<http://readyla.org/>

American Red Cross

Prepare SoCal

<http://preparesocal.org/>

Safe and Well

<https://disastersafe.redcross.org/>

Emergency Survival Program

www.espfocus.org

Other preparedness websites

www.daretopreparesocal.org

www.moreprepared.org

FUTURE MEETING TOPIC: ANIMAL PREPAREDNESS

TIPS AND GUIDANCE

1. Keep a list of emergency numbers such as the nearest veterinarian office, animal shelters, police departments, fire departments.
2. Keep a travel carrier ready for fast evacuations. If you cannot take your pet with you, arrange to send your pet to a veterinarian, animal shelter, or with a friend temporarily, if possible.
3. Make sure your pets are wearing identification collars, complete with your telephone number and address, as well as the address of the nearest shelter. If possible, make sure your pet is wearing an identification microchip on their collar so they can be traced if missing after a disaster.
4. Evacuate your houses as soon as an evacuation warning (a public warning message issued by local officials) is given. You must not wait until an evacuation order (a mandatory order to evacuate issued by local officials) is given, as you may not have enough time.
5. If you cannot evacuate your large animals before an evacuation order was issued, you will have to create a safe space for your animals until the danger passes. This should only be done as a last resort! However, if you must Shelter-in-Place, here are some helpful strategies:
 - Keep your horses confined in a safe space, specifically a corral clear of brush/trees and made of metal pipes.
 - Maintain a 200 foot clearance around your property.
 - Keep these items near the corral: fire hose, generator, shovels, rakes, brooms, axe, hoe, ladders place near entrances/exits and near barn, portable AM/FM radio and extra batteries, walkie-talkies, safety gear such as working gloves, masks, and goggles.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

City of Los Angeles Department of Animal Services

www.laanimalservices.com

Small Animal Rescue Team

http://www.laanimalservices.com/about_us/SmART.htm

County of Los Angeles Department of Animal Care and Control

www.animalcare.lacounty.gov

Emergency Survival Program Bulletin on Pet Preparedness

www.espfocus.org

Humane Society of the United States

www.humanesociety.org

National Association of Professional Pet Sitters

www.petsitters.org

The National Lost Pet Hotline

1-900-535-1515 to report lost pets, 1-800-755-8111 to report found pets

Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals International

www.spcai.org

FUTURE MEETING TOPIC: RECOVERY

The financial aftermath of a major disaster is almost as bad as the disaster itself. Communities' members may have drained wallets trying to rebuild homes and businesses.

Here are a few tips to help ease the financial impact:

1. Check with local businesses to see if they have "continuity of operations plans" that allow them to restore business activities as soon as possible.
2. Encourage local businesses to, encourage their employees to have family emergency plans and emergency supplies.
3. Encourage residents and businesses to include cash reserve in their emergency response plans to cover immediate needs in the event that banks are closed and ATMs do not work.
4. Help in distributing information about which businesses and financial institutions are "back in business."

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

FEMA

www.fema.gov/assistance/

General Government Assistance

www.disasterassistance.gov/

Small Business Administration

www.sba.gov/

U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development

www.hud.gov/info/disasterresources_dev.cfm

FUTURE MEETING TOPIC: MITIGATION

Preparing for a disaster helps you survive and help others. When you prepare yourself, you lessen the impact a major event has on your life. This is called mitigation; disasters and events are unpredictable and can happen to anyone, but their effect on you can be lessened through what you do before the event.

PERSONAL/INDIVIDUAL MITIGATION PREPARATION

As discussed in the Risks and Threats Section, it's important to take note of the events most likely to occur in your community, that way you can plan against them!

EARTHQUAKE

Businesses and residents should seek to maintain or live in buildings “up to code” for earthquakes – and/or ask the property owner for help.

Use earthquake tie-downs and locking mechanisms for items on shelves or on walls that can fall. Falling objects can be deadly!

If possible, sign up for text alerts with the USGS to receive update texts on earthquake or aftershock notices.

INTERRUPTION OF UTILITIES

As resources allow, invest in a backup generator for electricity. Keep water in the home (or business), occasionally changing that supply (as it ages).

FLOODING

Unlike other disasters, you usually have time to prepare for a flood. Take advantage of this time by locating and keeping information on the nearest sandbag distribution center. Take note of the natural flow of water on light-rainy days to map out a sandbag plan. Buy and keep a simple or heavy-duty water pump (and generator). Keep gloves, boots and floatable devices handy, always, in flood plains and high-risk areas.

FIRE

Residents and businesses near the foothills and brush should create and upkeep a “firebreak” line that acts as a road (for emergency responders) and put distance between your home and the fuel for the fire (vegetation).

Residents and businesses must keep their smoke detectors working; they are lifesavers! All buildings should keep fire-extinguishing devices with easy instructions on them. Create and keep plans for fire evacuation inside and outside of a building or home.

If you live in a multi-dwelling unit, apartment, condo, or very close to your neighbor's home, contact your neighbor to help them keep their fire monitoring systems up to date.

DISEASE OUTBREAK

Create and keep medical supply cache of your medications (in case hospitals are too busy). Create and keep food supplies (in case travel restrictions or quarantines are set-up). Maintain a healthy lifestyle and diet to maintain a strong immune system. Remember "an apple a day?"

TSUNAMI

Extremely rare but potentially devastating, tsunamis' impact can only be mitigated by planning swift evacuation routes. If possible, register for text alerts with the USGS (earthquake notice).

TERRORIST ATTACK

Be a vigilant citizen, report suspicious activity and devices (like unattended packages). Businesses can create strategic security adjustments. The Los Angeles Police Department's iWatchLA program educates the public about terrorist behaviors and activities: <http://lapdonline.org/iwatchla>

SEVERE WEATHER

Take note of local hardware stores for necessary items (boards for windows, etc.) Locate house utility box control (for turning power off and on). Pre-plan a location in the house when a Wind Storm Warning is issued, and take cover! This area should not have windows and be located in a low area of the home.

EXTREME HEAT AND COLD

If your location gets very hot, as it does in the valley, have an adequate amount of fans and/or air conditioning, if possible. As resources allow, buy and keep a backup generator (for heat or air conditioning). Keep a location list of nearby stores (for ice, water and other items). Keep chimneys clean and always have fuel (wood) and items to start a fire.

LANDSLIDES

As with flooding, take note of the direction of water-flow as it might indicate. Call authorities to occasionally check the land's foundation after major rain and heat. You can't be too careful! Keep evacuation plans up to date!

CHEMICAL EMERGENCIES

Sign-up to LA City emergency alerts for possible or necessary details on major accidents.

FUTURE MEETING TOPICS: NEIGHBORHOOD EMERGENCY BINS

If you would like to establish an emergency supply container for your neighborhood, you can refer to the following for guidance. While not a final recommendation, these guidelines provide a good picture of what should be contained in a Neighborhood Emergency Supply Container, and how it should be maintained.

EMERGENCY SUPPLY SUGGESTED CONTENTS

EACH BIN SHOULD CONTAIN	QUANTITY
Storage Container: 20 foot (roll up or cargo)	1
Combination Padlock	1
Multi-person, First Aid Trauma Medical Unit - 500 Person - OSHA Certified	1
5000 Watt Generator	1
5 Gallon - Gasoline Containers with Gas ¹	4
10 x 10 Pop-up Canopy	1
Bottled Water Cases	25
8 foot folding tables	2
Plastic folding chairs	4
Plastic Container with Basic Office Supplies (note pads, pens, pencils, etc.)	1
LIGHTING	
Utility Lamp 500 Watt	4
7' Tripod Light	1
Power Strip	2
12/3-50' Extension Cords	4
COMMUNICATION EQUIPMENT	
Portable Radios	6
AM/FM Hand Crank Radio	1
BASE OF OPERATIONS TOOLS AND SUPPLIES	

¹ Store gasoline in a sealed container.

FUTURE MEETING TOPICS AND OTHER RESOURCES

EACH BIN SHOULD CONTAIN	QUANTITY
Ladder (minimum 10 foot)	1
3" X 1000' rolls caution tape	2
Rope – ½ inch 50 foot Nylon	3
Shovels – Flat Nose	3
Shovels – Spade	3
Duct Tape – Rolls	4
Plastic Sheeting – 50 foot roll	2
Hammers (Claw)	3
Flashlights with Batteries	6
Hand Carry Stretchers	10
Pet Carriers – Capable of holding small animals up to 50 lbs.	2
Pet Leashes	10
Caution Tape Rolls	10
<p>Search & Rescue Portable Kits (Accommodates 4 persons each) These are portable supplies in a backpack or duffle bag. There are many versions on the market. The goal is to select one with as many similar contents as applicable for use away from the supply bin.</p> <p>(1) Saw - to help free trapped survivors. (1) Pair of Pliers - additional rescue/camp tool. (1) Roll Caution Tape - to restrict access to dangerous areas. (1) Steel Pulley Block/Tackle - to aid in immediate rescue efforts. (1) Flathead Screwdriver - additional rescue/camp tool. (1) Phillips Screwdriver - additional rescue/camp tool. (1) Tarp 10' X 12' - provides emergency shelter and ground cover. (4) Safety Goggles - protective eye cover for disaster relief teams. (4) Safety Vests - fluorescent orange to identify rescue team leaders. (1) Hammer/Hatchet - additional rescue/camp tool. (1) Roll Duct Tape - for everything and anything. (1) Vise Grip - additional rescue/camp tool. (1) Folding Shovel - additional rescue/camp tool.</p>	2

FUTURE MEETING TOPICS AND OTHER RESOURCES

EACH BIN SHOULD CONTAIN	QUANTITY
(1) Pry/Crow Bar - 24"- additional rescue/camp tool. (1) Nylon Cord - 50 ft. - to set up camp and rescue efforts. (4) Triage Tags - for identifying and prioritizing levels of sustained injury. (4) Whistles - blows loud to attract rescue attention. (4) Pair Work Gloves - leather palmed to help escape and sift through debris. (4) Pair Latex Gloves - provides protection for treating others. (4) Shake Lights - No batteries or bulbs required. Shake for 30 seconds for up to 10 minutes of light! (4) Hard Hats - OSHA approved for dangerous conditions. (4) Green Light Sticks - 12-hour, high-intensity yellow for brilliant, instant, and reliable light. (4) Yellow Light Sticks - 12-hour, bright-green, reliable light at the snap of the fingers. (1) AM/FM Solar & Hand-Crank Powered Radio, Flashlight, & Cell Phone Charger - to provide lighting and the latest news/reports. (1) Survival Knife Kit - sharp 6" stainless steel blade with jagged edge blade for cutting on opposing side, survival contents in handle (waterproof matches and fishing hooks/weights/line) compass, sheath, and sharpening stone. (1) Packed in durable duffel bag - with easy-to-grab hand and shoulder carrying straps.	
FIRE SUPPRESSION	
ABC Fire Extinguishers	6

Pre-disaster

Identify a site to house your emergency supplies that is free of known hazards in your community. Site should not be located in areas that are regularly flooded, areas prone to brush fire, etc. Maintain emergency supplies on a quarterly basis. Replace supplies when used. Hold regular sub-committee meetings to plan for emergencies. Identify up to three individuals responsible to hold keys and who will be responsible for opening the container.

Complete regular CERT training to maintain skills and ability to use equipment, refreshing every three years. Maintain a list of at least six (6) CERT trained individuals who will be the designated responders. Hold annual neighborhood/building based disaster drills.

Post-Disaster

Use container supplies to support the response efforts in a coordinated manner. Use equipment to serve the greatest number of residents in your neighborhood. Develop teams to assess neighborhood/building needs and provide equipment for teams to use, e.g. search and rescue, fire suppression, medical, sheltering, etc. Use communication equipment to communicate with each other (two way radios), with other cache sites. Maintain a situation status board to track activity and location of resources and responders. Maintain a Command Post until no longer needed. Communicate with the Los Angeles Fire Department when they are able to come and assist with rescue efforts.

Can additional supplies be added?

Yes, each community is different and may have focused needs such as supplies for areas with large animals. This is to be determined by your neighborhood council.

RESOURCE: CATASTROPHIC EMERGENCY DOOR HANGER

The City of Los Angeles has created emergency door hangers that can be used. Following a disaster, hang the green side of the door hanger facing out to the street if you are OK. If you need help, hang the red side of the door hanger facing out to the street. Additional instruction, along with the hanger itself, are provided on the following pages. Additional copies may be requested through your neighborhood council or your City Emergency Management Department <www.emergency.lacity.org>.



ANTONIO R. VILLARAIGOSA
MAYOR

Dear Resident:

In the aftermath of a catastrophic emergency, such as a large earthquake, brush fire, or flood, emergency communications services may be severely impacted and immediate help may be delayed. There is NO guaranteed timeframe for public safety agencies to reach your residence. To help individuals receive assistance from neighbors and/or other community resources following a catastrophic emergency, the City of Los Angeles is distributing the "Catastrophic Emergency Door Hanger." **The attached door hanger is for use ONLY after a catastrophic emergency and ONLY WHEN 911 ASSISTANCE IS UNAVAILABLE.** Please keep this letter attached to the door hanger until you need to display it.

The door hanger should be used to identify whether you are "OK" or if you need "HELP." The **red side** of the hanger identifies that you need **HELP**; the **green side** means you are **OK** and do not need assistance. If you elect to use the door hanger following a catastrophic emergency, please place it on the front door or in a window of your home so that it can be easily viewed from the sidewalk or street by neighbors and/or other community resources, like your local Neighborhood Watch representatives or Community Emergency Response Team (CERT).

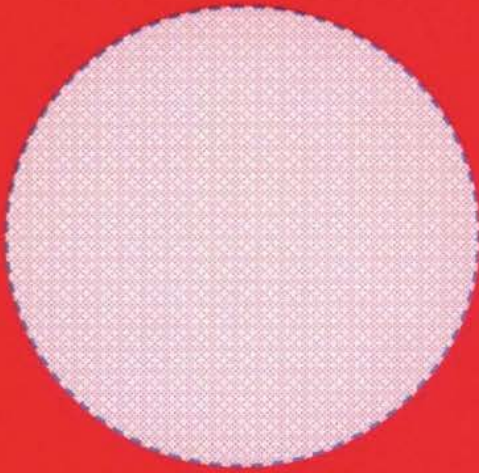
Please be aware that **this sign should not be used in place of actively seeking assistance** from neighbors or local emergency service providers, which are nearby to your residence and where you can attempt contact in person, in the event of a catastrophic emergency. Use of this sign is intended to provide an additional "tool" for neighbors to identify and provide assistance to fellow neighbors in need of help following a catastrophic event. The City of Los Angeles does not guarantee that you will be assisted by using this door hanger during a catastrophic emergency, nor is the City responsible for the actions taken by private citizens associated with the use of this door hanger. The door hanger is intended to provide residents, neighborhood groups, and first responders an additional means of communicating following a catastrophic emergency.

It is strongly suggested that this sign be used as part of a larger Neighborhood Emergency Plan that includes identification of neighbors with skills and/or equipment which may be useful following a catastrophic emergency, as well as maps detailing the locations of natural gas meters, propane tanks, and the homes of persons who may require additional assistance (i.e., elderly, disabled, children alone) following such an event.

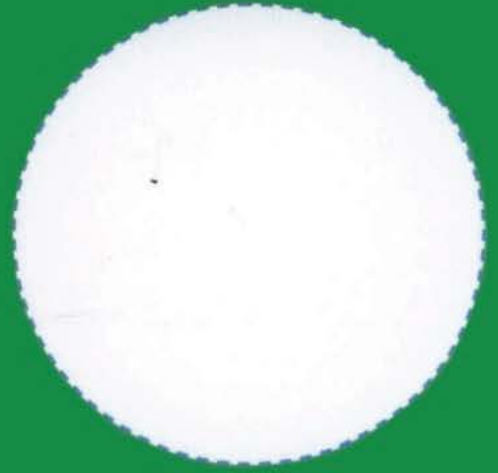
If you have any additional questions regarding the use of these door hangers, please contact the City of Los Angeles Emergency Management Department (EMD) at (213) 978-2222 or EMD's websites at www.emergency.lacity.org and ReadyLA.org.

Sincerely,

JAMES G. FEATHERSTONE
General Manager



**NEED
HELP
AYUDA**



OK

