

ESP FOCUS

Lend a Hand

Learn About Community Resources and How to Participate



The ability of your neighborhood, workplace, or school to respond effectively after an act of terrorism, a large earthquake, or another disaster might depend on how well you use resources available in your community **now**.

Local fire, law enforcement, medical services, and other personnel might be overwhelmed and unable to assist you after a disaster. But they can help you prepare to be self-sufficient if you use their services before the next emergency.

The Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) program can also be a useful resource. It is a nationwide all-risk, all-hazard training program. This valuable course is designed to help you protect yourself, your family, your neighbors, and your neighborhood in an emergency situation, such as a terrorist attack. CERT is a positive and realistic approach to emergency and disaster situations where citizens may initially be on their own and their actions can make a difference. One goal of the CERT program is to help people respond effectively and efficiently to others in need without placing themselves in unnecessary danger. You can be a CERT volunteer. Information is available at www.cert-la.com or call your local Office of Emergency Services.

There are other ways you can become a volunteer in your community. Check with your local Red Cross or Salvation

Army chapter, or with your religious center. Start a Neighborhood Watch program. Check with your local Office of Emergency Services or local police.

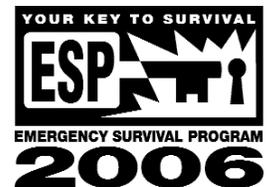
Another helpful resource to find out what's available is 2-1-1 INFOLINE, an integrated system of help via the telephone. 2-1-1 INFOLINE is a single source for information about community services, referrals to human services, and crisis intervention. It is toll-free and operates 24 hours a day. Multilingual caseworkers and TDD access is available. In Southern California the number is 2-1-1 for area information services. The number may be different in other states.

Learning about these and what other resources are available in your community and using them now is an important step in preparing for future disasters.

On the other side of this Focus Sheet you will find useful information on additional resources that may be available. Don't let events catch you by surprise. The preparations you make today will increase your peace of mind in any emergency, even a terrorist attack.

Check These Websites

- www.espfocus.org (Emergency Survival Program)
- www.redcross.org (American Red Cross)
- www.cert-la.com (Community Emergency Response Team)
- www.2-1-1INFOLINE.org (State of Connecticut and Connecticut United Ways)



D E C E M B E R

What You Can Do Now

Find Out What's Available

Local government is usually the first to respond to emergencies. Additional assistance from neighboring cities and the impacted county might be available if your city uses all of its resources. As resources from the surrounding cities and the county are used up, personnel and equipment from communities outside the impacted area might be brought in to assist.

A disaster in a heavily urbanized area might temporarily overwhelm the emergency response system, leaving you, your neighbors or co-workers on your own for several days. Be prepared to:

- Provide food and water to those who don't have or cannot get to their own emergency supplies.
- Provide basic first aid to family members, neighbors, co-workers or classmates who are injured.
- Conduct light search and rescue operations to account for everyone and remove those who are trapped.
- Assess obvious external damage to homes and other buildings and report information to local officials.
- Listen to the radio for safety information from government officials and details about available resources.

Neighborhood Resources

Prior to the next emergency it's important to determine what skills you might be able to draw from your own neighborhood. Among your neighbors, there might be:

- Emergency planners
- Firefighters
- Health care professionals
- Police officers, deputy sheriffs or other law enforcement officers
- Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) members
- Citizen Corps Councils members
- Others with helpful skills

These individuals or groups can be useful resources for information, planning, training and other aspects of your preparedness and response efforts.

City of West Covina Office of
Emergency Services
(626)-338-8800

Government Resources

Local, state, federal, and volunteer agencies such as the American Red Cross are other sources for information about individual, family, community, business, and school preparedness. Before the next emergency, get information that will help you better prepare.

Ask these agencies to provide speakers and training on emergency preparedness and response for your business, or place of worship. Involve experts from these organizations in any planning, training and exercises in which your neighborhood, workplace or school is involved. Their observations and input will help improve your response to an actual emergency.

The American Red Cross recommends that you:

- Get trained. The Red Cross provides first aid/CPR and other preparedness training.
- Volunteer. Few Americans are untouched by Red Cross services. There are many needs and ways to serve.
- Give blood. Blood is needed in times of emergency, but the ongoing need is also great.

Give a Gift of Life

A great way to lend a hand to your family and friends preparedness is to give a survival gift for the next holiday, birthday or other occasion. Items such as flashlights, portable radios, first aid kits, etc. are great gift ideas. They might also be "Gifts of Life" after the next disaster.

A checklist of agencies that might be able to assist you with resources before and/or after a major disaster includes the following:

- American Red Cross
- Salvation Army
- City/County Office of Emergency Services
- Community Emergency Response Teams

Sources for this document include the OES publication "Organizing Neighborhoods for Earthquake Preparedness" and the American Red Cross publication "Together We Prepare—5 Actions for Emergency Preparedness."



This focus sheet is produced as part of the Emergency Survival Program (ESP). ESP is an awareness campaign designed to increase home, neighborhood, business and school emergency preparedness. ESP was developed by the County of Los Angeles. The California Governor's Office of Emergency Services (OES) and representatives from Contra Costa, Imperial, Inyo, Kern, Los Angeles, Marin, Mono, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, San Diego, San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara, Santa Cruz, and Ventura counties; Southern California Edison; the Southern California Earthquake Center and the American Red Cross assist in the development of campaign materials and coordination of the campaign.