

Disaster Service Workers BE AWARE. PREPARE!

Do you know when the next big disaster will strike the Bay Area? Will it be an earthquake, terrorist attack or wildfire? It's hard to predict what the disaster will be or where you will be when it happens. According to the U. S. Geological Survey, recorded large-scale earthquakes take pressure off of earthquake fault lines and happen on average every 140 years. If history is a reliable predictor, we are due for an earthquake of 6.7 on the Richter scale, or greater, any time now. Will it happen? More than likely. Will it happen when you are at work, at home, or in your car? No one knows.

As a county employee, you along with other public service employees are in a unique position. Should a disaster occur, not only will you have responsibility for your own personal safety and that of your family, by law (California Government Code Section 3.100 et. Seq.), you also are designated as a Disaster Service Worker (DSW) . That means that you have the

responsibility to help in the response and recovery activities of the County of Marin government.

This DSW guide is to help you understand the organization's role during a disaster, your role as a Disaster Service Worker, and how to prepare you and your family in advance so when the time comes you will be ready to assist.

It is important that you take steps now to become informed, prepare your family and be ready as you may not have time to make decisions once a disaster strikes. If you are to be effective as a Disaster Service Worker, it is essential that you prepare now. Your first step is to make sure that your supervisor/manager has your up-to-date after hours contact information, including home telephone and cell phone numbers.

The message that every Disaster Service Worker should receive is:

BE AWARE. PREPARE!

In addition to natural and man-made disasters, there is the potential of a pandemic flu, and although less likely, bioterrorism. Mandates and community expectations leave the county with little choice but to ramp up efforts and create a state of readiness to discharge its responsibilities. The Emergency Operations Center (EOC), under the direction of the County Administrator, is a central command and control facility responsible for the "big picture" coordination of information, resources and priorities during a disaster. That includes protection of life and property: meeting the immediate needs of people (rescue, medical care, food, shelter, clothing); working toward temporary restoration

What is the County's role in a disaster?

The attack on the World Trade Center in 2001 and subsequent natural disasters culminating with Hurricane Katrina have created a nationwide focus on the efforts of governments to be prepared for the next disaster. This is especially true in California due to the likelihood of a major earthquake, which can occur without warning and has the potential to disrupt everyday life.

When a disaster, such as an earthquake strikes, the community may be in chaos - roads closed, buildings collapsed, phones down, electricity, gas and water unavailable, and many people in need of assistance and shelter.

What is your role as a Disaster Service Worker?

Disaster Service Workers assist in the protection of life or property or help lessen the effects of an emergency. In the event of a declared disaster, county employees may be required to perform duties outside of their normal job descriptions as directed by their supervisor, agency or department, or county administration.

County employees who are doctors, sheriff's deputies or assigned to work at the county's Emergency Operations Center have clearly defined roles in their duties as Disaster Service Workers. Other employees, not normally considered first responders, may be called in to assist with any of the county's response activities.



The type of duties county employees might perform includes: clerical support, drivers, food preparation, security, sorters/packers/loaders, and interpreters for non-English speaking residents. You may be assigned to a shelter location to help with food preparation, answer phones, check in residents that have evacuated or lost their homes, or hand out water and blankets. For some, specialized skills may prove very valuable to both the county and residents, including: language capability, licenses and certifications, first aid and CPR training and commercial driver's licenses. This list is not exhaustive. If you have specialized skills, make sure your supervisor knows.

Remember, the role of a Disaster Service Worker is to provide help as required.

For more information on being a disaster service worker, visit <http://mine/mine/SO/Main/disasterindex.cfm> and watch the video under featured information: County Employees as Disaster Service Workers.

Are you prepared to be a Disaster Service Worker?

The best time to prepare yourself and your family for an emergency is before it happens. Lessons from Hurricane Katrina and the Loma Prieta earthquake, teach us that when the disaster happens, being prepared can make all the difference. Don't wait until it's too late: "Be Aware. Prepare!"



Emergencies will strike with little or no warning. You may not have access to water, food, electricity and other utilities for days. Do you have enough food, water and supplies to be self sufficient for 72 hours or more? Where will your family meet? Who is the out-of-state contact you and your family members will phone to let each other know that you are okay?

Adequately preparing your family for a disaster includes creating a family emergency plan and assembling emergency supply kits for home and on the go. This will help you and your family prepare for a disaster and for your role as a Disaster Service Worker. The more prepared you and your family are, the easier it will be for you to step into your role. The following checklists for your home disaster supply kit and your portable *Ready-to-Go* bag, should help you prepare.

Employee Emergency Readiness

If a disaster strikes make sure your family is safe. Grab your *Ready-to-Go* bag and contact your supervisor. Your department may have a call back system in place. If so, follow the instructions you've been given. **The directions you have received from your department supersede the information provided in this guide.**

Here are some general instructions if your department has not provided you with emergency instructions.

Disaster Preparedness Tips

- Ask an out-of-state friend or relative to be your family contact. Local phone lines may be tied up.
- Plan to change voice mail message to say you are safe - include date and time.
- Keep at least one hard wired phone at home. Cordless phones need electricity which may not be available.
- Kitty litter isn't just for cats! It can come in handy if sewer lines are down and toilets out of commission.



What to Do During a Disaster

If you are at work:

- Take actions to protect yourself.
 - If possible, assist clients and coworkers.
 - If required to evacuate a building, follow emergency safety instructions and check in at your designated assembly area.
- If you are in the field:*
- Take actions to protect yourself.
 - If you have pre-assigned emergency duty, report immediately.
 - If you do not have pre-assigned emergency duty, attempt to return to your office and report to designated assembly area.
 - If you are unable to reach your office, call your local emergency employee phone line.

If you are at home:

- Take actions to protect yourself and your family.
- If you have pre-assigned emergency duty, report immediately. Do NOT wait to be called.
- If you do not have pre-assigned emergency duty, call your local emergency employee phone line for instructions and periodically call for updates.
- Stay tuned to television and radio news broadcasts – ABC7, NBC3, CBS5, 740 AM KCBS, 88.5 FM KQED, 100.1 KZST
- Be prepared to report for assignments.

Assemble your Work *Ready-to-Go* Bag

In the event of a disaster, you may be called back to work immediately, and at a time when vital services have not yet been restored. In order to perform the duties you may be assigned, you'll need to make sure you're prepared. You'll need to bring a *Ready-to-Go* bag with you, which, as a rule, should include at least the following:

- ☐ Flashlight
- ☐ Radio – battery operated
- ☐ Batteries
- ☐ Whistle
- ☐ Dust mask
- ☐ Pocket knife
- ☐ Sturdy shoes, a change of clothes, and a warm hat
- ☐ Local map
- ☐ Some water and food
- ☐ Permanent marker, paper and tape
- ☐ List of emergency contact phone numbers
- ☐ List of allergies to any drug (especially antibiotics) or food
- ☐ Copy of health insurance and identification cards
- ☐ Eye glasses, hearing aid or other vital personal items
- ☐ Prescription medications and first aid supplies
- ☐ Toothbrush and toothpaste
- ☐ Any special-needs items
- ☐ Emergency cash in small denominations and quarters for phone calls

TIP: BE READY. BE SAFE.
have a *Ready-to-Go* bag:
at home
at work
in your car.

Build your Home Disaster Supply Kit

Top 10 Essentials:

- ☐ Water (1 gallon per person per day)
- ☐ Radio (separately packaged, extra batteries)
- ☐ Flashlight (separately packaged, extra batteries)
- ☐ Raingear (lightweight)
- ☐ Blanket/Clothing (warm)
- ☐ Food (canned with can opener)
- ☐ Shoes (sturdy)
- ☐ First Aid Kit
- ☐ Cellular Phone
- ☐ Fire Extinguisher

Miscellaneous:

- ☐ Crowbar
- ☐ Tool Kit
- ☐ Hygiene Kit
- ☐ Plastic Garbage Bags
- ☐ Mess Kit (eating)
- ☐ Clothing (extra)
- ☐ Duct Tape
- ☐ Shovel
- ☐ Dust Mask
- ☐ Gloves (with leather palm)
- ☐ Eye Protection-Sunglasses
- ☐ Fire Extinguisher
- ☐ Writing Kit
- ☐ Documents (important copies)
- ☐ Photos of each family member
- ☐ Waterproof Sack
- ☐ Bleach (household, unscented)
- ☐ Whistle
- ☐ Sleeping Bag
- ☐ Money (small denominations)/ Credit Cards

Special Needs:

- ☐ Medication
- ☐ Lenses
- ☐ Hearing Aids
- ☐ Walking Stick/Cane/Walker
- ☐ Babies/Children's Special Needs Items
- ☐ Seniors/Handicapped Special Needs Items
- ☐ Pets' Special Needs

Alert Marin Notification System

The county has a public and employee notification system that may be used to send targeted messaging to county employees by land line, cell phone, email and pager during a disaster. In addition, the county has a hotline just for employees to call in and get high-level instructions. Employees should follow their department's call back system.

Emergency Employee Hotline 415-499-6000



Marin County Continuity of Operations (COOP) Program

After a disaster hits, the county will need to get essential services up and running quickly by having the necessary resources in place. Many departments are developing plans for Continuity of Operations (COOP) which will ensure that the county will continue performing essential functions. The Office of Emergency Services (OES) supports COOP efforts. For more information contact OES at 499-6584 or oes@co.marin.ca.us

finalized COOP plans. For more information contact OES at 408.808.7800 or e-mail jennifer.ponce@oes.sccgov.org.

