

SUMMARY OF PAM GROSSMAN'S EARTHQUAKE PREPAREDNESS TALK, August 2010

PERSONAL READINESS

Four most important things to have:

Water- 2 gal/person/day (extra for pets) stored in food grade water containers

Food- canned goods, freeze dried foods

Medication- have an extra stash (can refill Rx every 27 days; save the extra three doses for EQ kit)

Light - SATCO 8 hour plug in lights recommended plus lots of flashlights & lanterns

You must change your water (and add fresh bleach), get new batteries, rotate your food supply and medications **ONCE A YEAR**. It is also a good idea to air out sleeping bags and other supplies that are in your EQ kit once a year.

Think ahead about how you will get out of your house if your usual exits are blocked:

Chain ladder for upstairs rooms

Crow bar near each bed in case door is jammed

Have an old pair of shoes and gloves near your bed so you don't step on broken glass.

Before the disaster happens, make a list of items you want to take with you in case you have to evacuate (family photos, computers, tax records, fine arts, carpets, jewelry, medical records, keys, medications, address book, calendar, etc). Have this list where you can easily get to it.

Do you know how to turn off your **water, gas, and electricity** if need be? Consider getting an automatic gas shut off valve which will turn off your gas automatically if there is a big quake and/or a gas leak.

Water turn off valves:

Turn off your water main in the cement well near your street if there is a leak between the street and your house. Turn off the water valve where it enters your house (often a red or orange round flat handle) if there is a leak in your house.

Is your water heater bolted to a stud in the wall? All tall pieces of furniture (including refrigerators that are not enclosed in a cabinet) should also be bolted to a stud. Computers, TVs, DVDs, radios, etc should all be attached with straps to the furniture they sit on. These can become projectiles in an earthquake and can do a great deal of damage. Furniture hold-down straps can be purchased at any local hardware store. Loose objects should be secured to the surfaces they sit on with museum wax or putty, also available in most hardware stores. Earthquake resistant cupboard latches are a good way to keep your cupboards closed during a quake. These are expensive (about \$6 each), so get together with your neighbors and friends, and make a bulk order which can save you a lot of money.

TOILETING

After a disaster: your plumbing will probably not be working, so you will have two choices:

 Dig a hole in the back yard. This is hard for older people who can't squat.

 Get a 5-gallon plastic bucket from the hardware store and a toilet seat that is made to fit on it from an EQ supply store. Fill the bucket with a heavy plastic bag, pout kitty litter in the bottom to absorb smells, place the toilet seat on top, and you have a toilet. Every couple of days, remove the plastic bag and bury it. You will deal with it later. Refill the bucket with a fresh plastic bag and fresh kitty litter.

PERSONAL SUPPLIES

Some essential supplies you should have on hand:

 Several rolls of heavy duty plastic sheeting (4 mil thick) to cover broken windows

 A staple gun to attach the plastic sheeting to the walls

 A roll of quarters for pay phone (currently in Berkeley pay phones are at each fire station, each library, and all pharmacies)

 \$200-300 in cash (not just \$20s) because the ATMs may be out for weeks

 Medications

 Extra eye glasses and hearing aid batteries

 Goggles, gloves, masks

 Crow bar for jammed doors

 Tons of lights with **fresh** batteries

 Battery operated radio

 Manual can opener

 An ABC fire extinguisher for each floor of your house- 10# size is best

 Toilet paper

 Paper towels

 Tarps

 Sleeping bags, pillows, blankets

 A tent

 Food and water for at least 7 days

 Duct tape

 Heavy duty plastic bags

The more you plan ahead before the disaster happens, the easier it will be. Try to anticipate every possible scenario. In case you have to evacuate, make sure the gas tank in your car is always at least half full. Where will you go? Evacuating to the west toward the bay is not a good idea because liquefaction will cause major damage to west Berkeley and Hwy 80.

NEIGHBORHOOD READINESS

Each neighborhood should have an information sheet on each household that includes:

- Names and ALL phone numbers of adults
- Names of kids with birth month and year
- Names and type of pets
- Out of area contact's name, relationship and phone
- Names of two neighbors & their addresses who have keys to home
- Special equipment that can be shared after a disaster (i.e., hot tub, BBQ)
- Special skills of anyone in household (CERT classes, RN, MD, etc)

This list should be updated annually and be given in hard copy to every household in your group.

NEIGHBORHOOD COORDINATORS

A neighborhood group should have two or three coordinators in case someone is away when the disaster happens. Neighbors should sign up for free CERT classes given by the Berkeley Fire Department: fire suppression, disaster first aid, and light search and rescue. The classes are three hours long and are usually held on Saturday mornings from 9-noon. Google "Berkeley CERT classes" or call 981-5506 to sign up.

NEIGHBORHOOD TEAMS

There should be at least four people on each of four teams:

Communication Team: after a disaster, this group meets at a central meeting place for the neighborhood (away from overhead electrical wires and trees that might fall) and makes notes on a large pad of paper as households check in. As the other team members arrive, it is the communication team that dispatches the medical, fire, and search & rescue teams. When things have settled down, one person should deliver a summary of the neighborhood's situation to the neighborhood fire station. Walkie talkies are a big help in this situation but require practice to get familiar with them **before the emergency happens.**

Medical Team: must have basic medical supplies on hand (see American Red Cross list on the web). Triage the most severely injured and treat them first. Assist Search & Rescue as needed. Maintain the medical supply kit.

Light Search & Rescue Team: Identify signs of structural damage, perform basic damage assessment, search for and rescue people, apply basic rescue techniques, remove heavy objects from trapped victims.

Fire Suppression Team: Use fire extinguishers or hoses to put out small fires.