

# NEIGHBORHOOD DISASTER PLAN TEMPLATE

[Insert neighborhood name]  
[Insert plan version number]  
[Insert date of last revision]

# TEMPLATE INSTRUCTIONS

This Neighborhood Disaster Plan Template is meant to serve as a framework for planners to build or refine a disaster plan for their neighborhood. This helpful resource provides direction **[in brackets]** where you can add neighborhood specific information.

This template is a simple tool that may be used in conjunction with the *5 Steps to Neighborhood Preparedness*, which is a robust resource that contains detailed information regarding the type of information that should be included in a neighborhood disaster plan. *5 Steps to Neighborhood Preparedness*, as well as several supplemental resources, can be accessed here: <http://www.5Steps.LA> or call 1-213-484-4800.

# PLAN MAINTENANCE

## PLAN MAINTENANCE AND UPDATE

\_\_\_\_\_ is responsible for maintenance and update of the plan. The plan will be updated annually and in response to lessons learned from exercises or actual disasters. The contact person for plan updates is \_\_\_\_\_.

## PLAN DISTRIBUTION

Printed copies of the initial plan and any future updates will be distributed to all residences of the area for which this plan was developed. The plan will also be posted on the \_\_\_\_\_ website.

## PLAN MODIFICATION REGISTER

Changes made to the plan are reflected below.

DESCRIPTION OF CHANGE	PAGE NUMBER	DATE OF CHANGE	AUTHORIZED SIGNATURE

# ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

[Include information regarding the people, agencies, and organizations that were involved in the development of your neighborhood disaster plan.]

This plan was developed by members of the (Name neighborhood council, or other group(s):

\_\_\_\_\_

The following people participated in development of the plan (List Name & Organization):

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

(Name)

(Organization)

The plan was completed on:

\_\_\_\_\_

(Month, year)

\_\_\_\_\_

(Signature of Chair, or Leader of plan development team)

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

[Insert a table of contents once the plan is complete.]

# 1. INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 BACKGROUND

As community members, we recognize that preparing for disasters and catastrophic events is not a luxury, it is an imperative. It is often said that disasters are not a matter of “if”, but “when”. Nowhere is this truer than in our own City of Los Angeles with its dense web of earthquake fault lines just under the surface, its miles of beaches susceptible to tsunamis, and its place atop the nation’s terrorist target list, among other natural and human-caused hazards.

[Insert information about the area covered by the plan, the bureau and city council district, and the locations of the nearest fire station, police station, and hospital.]

## 1.2 PURPOSE

The primary purpose of the plan is to outline strategies that our neighborhood members can take to support ourselves in the event of a disaster. It is meant to cover large-scale disasters as well as smaller emergencies. The plan is based on the recognition that the first priorities in a disaster are self, family and neighbors. It is built on the concept of “neighbor helping neighbor” until outside help arrives. We hope that this plan will provide a mechanism for our neighborhood to sustain itself until City services and outside support can be obtained.

## 1.3 HOW THE PLAN WAS DEVELOPED

[Discuss how the plan was developed (e.g. through a series of meetings), when it was developed, who it was developed by (general descriptions of those who worked on it, or specific names), and who led the project.]

## 1.4 ABOUT OUR NEIGHBORHOOD

[Insert specific descriptive information about your neighborhood, to include its location in Los Angeles, the general addresses or blocks of the area, square mileage, the date the neighborhood was founded, the number of homes covered by the plan, the number of people residing in the neighborhood, its ethnic and cultural makeup, languages commonly spoken, and any community centers or significant landmarks.]

## 1.5 ORGANIZATION OF THE PLAN

This plan is organized into three parts:

- A **Basic Plan**, which identifies threats and risks to the neighborhood, neighborhood assets, and a community disaster response strategy. The basic plan applies to all hazards.
- **Functional Annexes** that detail how specific tasks, such as Communications, or Search and Rescue will be performed.
- **Hazard Specific Annexes** that describe responses to specific hazards such as floods or earthquakes.









## **Make a Map**

**(See pages 9 and 10 of the 5 Steps Guide)**

[Add detail to the map of your area prepared in Step 1 to include things like a Neighborhood Gathering Place, Triage area, and other important information that can be easily displayed on a map.]

## **STEP 4 – BUILD YOUR TEAM**

**(See pages 11, 12, 13 and 14 of the 5 Steps Guide)**

Using the list of people with special skills and experience you identified in Step 1, or others you may have identified in Step 3 as Neighborhood Assets, build teams that can help the neighborhood prepare for disaster and respond effectively if a disaster strikes. Using the organization chart on page 14 of the 5 Steps Guide, determine who might fill which of the roles depicted on the chart. Be sure to identify alternates in case the primary person(s) is unavailable.

## **STEP 5 – PLAN YOUR APPROACH**

**(See pages 15, 16 and 17 of the 5 Steps Guide)**

[Detail how your neighborhood will respond. Write it down.]

**Individual and Family Disaster Response Actions.** Discuss the responsibilities of individuals and families in disaster response. Make sure to emphasize that the first priority is to ensure the safety of families, pets, property, and neighborhoods. Consider discussing such things as:

- ✓ The need to check for unsafe conditions, such as downed power lines and gas leaks;
- ✓ The procedure for shutting off valves that are not automatic (by turning the valve so that the “bar” is perpendicular to the gas line; also keeping a wired wrench to the gas meter);
- ✓ The importance of tuning into the radio to emergency frequencies to obtain information and instructions;
- ✓ The importance of donning protective gear such as a hard hat or bicycle helmet, steel-toe or other sturdy shoes, and leather or sturdy gloves.
- ✓ During earthquake incidents, individuals should “drop, cover, and hold on.” Individuals who are unable to drop should cover their head and neck with their arms.

After ensuring one's safety, regardless of the incident type, households should place the **OK/Help** hanger on their front door or window so that it can be easily seen from the sidewalk or street. The red side means that help is needed; the green side means that everyone is OK. It is for use only after a disaster when 9-1-1 help is unavailable. Families should lock their doors, secure their belongings, and proceed to the Neighborhood Gathering Place.

**Neighborhood Response.** Once the neighborhood has gathered at the designated Neighborhood Gathering Place, the first task is to get organized. Then, a leader will be selected to direct the overall effort. An Action Plan will be developed to help the neighborhood decide what to do, how to do it, and what timeframe to do it in. Finally, the neighborhood should organize into teams, with a Team Leader for each team. Each team should have 3-7 people and a Team Leader.

- ✓ [List the communications systems you plan to use. For radios, be sure to list the frequencies. Designate one person to collect all radios once response efforts have concluded.]
- ✓ [Prepare a notification chart and “call down” procedures, as shown in the Notification Annex on the following pages. There should be a “master” notification chart to make sure the leaders you have identified are notified, and each Block Captain should develop and maintain a notification chart for residents in his/her area. It is a good idea to include email addresses, too. ]
- ✓ [Create a list of capabilities needed for each area of response, and designate people to fill those roles. For example, the Triage and Treatment area will need people who are trained in first aid , and the Animal Evacuation Site will need someone to conduct a formal check-in with written documentation and photographs. Roles should be reviewed and confirmed at every other neighborhood meeting to accommodate for new people and to maintain preparedness for disasters.]
- ✓ [List Key Locations:]
  - Our Neighborhood Gathering Place is:  
[Include primary and alternate]
  - Our Neighborhood Care Center is:  
[Include primary and alternate]
  - Our Triage Area is:  
[Include primary and alternate]
- ✓ [List Key Personnel. Include primary and alternates for each position, and 24/7 contact information:]
  - Our Incident Commander is:
  - Our Block Captains are:
  - Our Communications leader is:
  - Our Mass Care leader is:
  - Our Materials and Supplies leader is:
  - Our Search and Rescue leader is:
  - Our Transportation leader is:
- ✓ [Determine which Support Annexes and Hazard Specific plans should be prepared and added to the basic plan in the future (see pages 16 and 17 of the 5 Steps Guide)]
- ✓ [Describe how your neighborhood will maintain your plan, and document special considerations in the planning process. Include specific training and exercise recommendations (e.g., types of training/exercise events, frequency, etc.)]
- ✓ [Describe the way that you will share this plan (e.g., distribute door to door, post on website, etc.)]

## FUNCTIONAL ANNEXES

[These annexes focus on specific responsibilities, tasks, and actions. An early and very important planning task is to identify the functions that are critical to successful emergency response. These core functions become the subjects of the separate annexes.]

[Planners should ensure that specific concerns of population segments, such as children and individuals with access and functional needs, are addressed.]

[Include information that you prepared as part of the Put it in Writing section in step 5 of the *5 Steps to Neighborhood Preparedness*. Consider functions such as Communications, Search and Rescue, Animal Care, Triage and Treatment, and Neighborhood Care Center. Examples of functional annexes are provided on the following pages, Annexes A.2, A.3, and A.4]

## **A.1 NEIGHBOR SURVEY**

### **A.1.1 SUMMARY OF SURVEY RESULTS**

[Summarize the results of the Neighborhood Survey that was distributed and collected from neighborhood residents. This Survey is part of the Toolkit that contains the *5 Step Guide* and other documents.]



## A.3 SEARCH AND RESCUE ANNEX

### A.3.1 PURPOSE

The purpose of this annex is to detail procedures that will be followed once it is determined that there is a need to perform a search and rescue mission in the area following a disaster or emergency incident.

### A.3.2 GENERAL PROCEDURES

Search and Rescue is really two separate activities. During the Search phase, the team systematically inspects the area for victims. In the Rescue phase, the team aims to free victims from confinement.

The objectives of Search and Rescue include:

- Maintain rescuer safety
- Rescue the greatest number of people in the shortest amount of time
- Rescue the lightly trapped victims first

If the neighborhood has members trained in CERT, then CERT teams will be responsible for initiating Search and Rescue procedures and assigning teams to specific areas.

Key strategies and themes include:

- Designate rescuer safety as a priority
- Be alert for hazards
- Wear safety equipment (hard hats, goggles, sturdy shoes)
- Never enter an unstable structure

Following a disaster or during an emergency, the CERT team or other designated leaders will assemble at the Neighborhood Gathering Place and designate Search and Rescue Teams. One or two Disaster Animal Rescue Team (DART) members should accompany each Search & Rescue team to ensure that animals are rescued and cared for. Consider assigning a scribe to each Search and Rescue Team to ensure that the proper forms are completed and that important information is documented.

#### ***Simple steps for conducting a Search***

- Check for red or green door tags. Red tags mean that residents are requesting assistance.
- Use the lists of "persons needing assistance" created by the neighborhood.
- Conduct an initial damage assessment to identify hazard areas and prioritize Search & Rescue operations. Search & Rescue teams should notify victims they pass during the damage assessment that they will return to rescue them.
- Call out. Begin by shouting "If you can hear my voice, come out!"
- Be systematic. Use a search pattern to ensure that all areas of a building are covered. For example, start searching on the bottom floor and work up, or move from the right to left across a house.
- Listen carefully. Stop frequently and listen for voices or tapping sounds.



- Use the buddy system. Work together -- two rescuers can search a structure more effectively and safely.
- Mark searched areas. Make a single diagonal slash on or next to the door just before entering. Make an opposite slash (creating an "X") when all occupants have been removed and the search of that area is finished.
- Document results. Keep records of removed victims and victims who remain trapped.

Effective rescue operations have three functions: (1) Create a safe rescue environment, (2) Triage and stabilize victims and (3) Remove victims to safe rescue zone.

***Simple steps for conducting a rescue***

- Gather necessary tools and equipment. This can be anything that will be helpful to move debris and large objects.
- Remove debris and lift objects out of the way. Wear gloves to protect your hands.
- Remove victims. Some will be able to move on their own once the path is cleared. Others will need assistance.

***The following procedures should be followed regarding deceased victims***

- Deceased victims found in unoccupied residences should be left undisturbed, and information as to the number of deceased victims and location marked on the front entry.
- Deceased victims in residences that will continue to be occupied should be moved to a separate area of the dwelling.
- If possible, deceased victims should be wrapped in plastic sheeting (e.g., paint drop cloths, tarps, etc.) and secured with rope or twine.

## A.7 NEIGHBORHOOD CARE CENTER ANNEX

### A.7.1 PURPOSE

The purpose of this annex is to detail procedures for the activation and operation of a Neighborhood Care Center.

#### Definition

A Neighborhood Care Center is a neighborhood location established during/after a disaster where children, older adults, persons with disabilities and other functional needs and others needing non-clinical care can be provided a safe, secure environment and care.

#### Location Criteria

While it is understood that emergencies create an imperfect environment, emergency response leadership should choose the Care Center location with the following general criteria in mind:

- The Care Center should be physically separated from areas housing the general population.
- Since HV/AC systems may not be operable following an emergency, Care Center locations should have natural light and ventilation.
- Locations should meet Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) access requirements and have the capacity to accommodate access and functional needs populations.
- If possible, children should be separated from adults.
- Neighborhoods should strive to create a safe atmosphere within the Care Center to promote relationship building.

#### Staffing Criteria

Care Centers should ideally be staffed with trained professionals. However, in a disaster situation, Centers will have to be staffed with available personnel. In selecting persons for staffing centers, response leadership should look for the following:

- Use the list of personnel assets from CERT leaders and Block Captains to identify persons with experience in child care, older adult care, and care for persons with disabilities and other functional needs.
- If trained/experienced personnel are not available, select persons who are known to the neighborhood.
- Assign at least one person to provide constant supervision to the children's area and at least one person to the adult area. If a supervisor needs to take a break, another person must be temporarily assigned to fill his/her role. Without constant supervision, children in particular could wander from the Center and become lost, could put themselves in danger to exposed hazards, or could put themselves at risk of abduction and/or pedophilia.
- Assign observers with no care responsibilities to observe operations and report any concerns or issues.
- Designate 1 entry/exit for the Center and assign someone to provide security for it. A display board should be situated near the entry/exit that lists peoples' names who are within the Center to provide timely information to relatives who come looking for their loved ones.
- Consider assigning someone with a mental health or psychology background to the Care Center to provide support services to those within.

- Assign a liaison to communicate information from the Command Post to the Care Center regarding that status of victims.

## HAZARD THREAT AND INCIDENT ANNEXES

[The contents of hazard-, threat-, or incident-specific annexes focus on the special planning needs generated by the subject hazard. Include information that you prepared as part of the Put it in Writing section in step 5 of the 5 Steps to Neighborhood Preparedness. Consider hazards such as a power outage, wildfire, flood, earthquake, and any other hazard that threatens your community.]