

How to Organize a Neighborhood Emergency Preparedness Meeting

"This meeting could be the first of many to organize an earthquake drill or other neighborhood activity. The following tips can be modified for a neighborhood meeting called for any reason.

I. PURPOSE OF MEETING

- Educate neighbors about the potential for a major earthquake, flood or other natural disaster
- Learn how to prepare your home and family in order to prevent injury, damage, and needless losses due to a major disaster.
- Bring neighbors together through an activity that is mutually beneficial.

II. SELECT STREET/S TO BE INCLUDED

- Limited by geography/topography -- Area may be divided by a major street; by a creek or flood control channel; by a commercial area, etc.
- Limited by amount of people you can accommodate in meeting place.

III. SELECT DATE, TIME AND PLACE FOR MEETING

- Discuss your plans with some of your neighbors. Get their opinions as to the most advantageous time (AM or PM?), date, and place for the meeting.
- In some neighborhoods, a weeknight activity is best, in others a weekend is better.
- A meeting held in a home encourages more interaction among the participants and promotes neighborhood cohesiveness.
- A meeting held in a public meeting room can usually accommodate more people.
- Contact Al Dorsky at epvolunteers@paneighborhoods.org for help in presenting the program. Be sure he will be available to assist your neighborhood that day.

IV. ENCOURAGE INVOLVEMENT - INSURE A GOOD TURN-OUT

Enlist the help of people in the neighborhood to:

- Hand out flyer/invitations
- Bring coffee, tea, cookies
- Bring chairs
- Call to remind people about the meeting
- Bring equipment

V. INVITING PEOPLE

- Begin 2 weeks prior to the meeting. People need time to plan their schedules.
- Develop a flyer inviting people to your meeting. Include:
 - the purpose of the meeting
 - date, time, and place
 - cost - FREE!!
 - benefits - information, hand-outs, meet neighbors
- Personal contact is the BEST method.
 - Ask others to help you contact your neighbors.
 - Knock on the door. If no one answers, go back another time.
 - Speak only to an adult occupant, don't leave your message with a child.
- Make a list of each family contacted. Include name, address and phone number.
- 1 - 2 days before the meeting call everyone as a reminder. Ask someone to help you.
- Post signs in the neighborhood the day before the meeting.

VI. THE MEETING

- Supplies needed
 - Name tags, attendance sheet, pens
 - Map of neighborhood or streets (get from recorders office)
 - Chairs
 - VCR, Overhead projector, screen (depends on presentation)
 - Refreshments, cups, spoons, napkins etc.
 - Paper and pencils for note taking
 - Hand-outs (get originals from AI and make copies)
 - Emergency Supply Checklist
 - Plans to Make (Individual, Family, Home and Community Planner)
 - Steps to Take (Earthquake - Duck, Cover and Hold Tips)
 - Steps to Take (Foundation Bolts, Cripple Walls, Water Heater, Furniture)
- Agenda
 - Welcome
 - Personal introductions by guests.
 - Where they live in the neighborhood.
 - Length of time in area.
 - Employment, family, interests etc.
 - Where they were during the Loma Prieta Quake (Oct. 17, 1989)
- Program
 - Geological information
 - Video of earthquake damage
 - Family preparations
 - Emergency supplies
 - Home hazards
 - What to do during an earthquake
 - What to do immediately after an earthquake
 - What to expect after a major disaster ie: "The Big One".
 - Hand-out lists
 - Questions and Answers
- Refreshments and conversation