

**Review of San Francisco Bay Area Public Education Initiatives:  
Lessons for New Zealand**

**Report to the Earthquake Commission**

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## **Executive Summary**

This report presents the findings from a visit to the San Francisco Bay Area to investigate current community-based preparedness initiatives being undertaken by relevant organisations. Staff from the following organisations were interviewed: Collaborating Agencies Responding to Disaster (CARD), San Francisco Neighborhood Emergency Response Teams, San Francisco Neighborhood Empowerment Network, Red Cross Bay Area Chapter, Disaster Resistant Berkeley and the Marin Office of Emergency Services.

Based on the overall findings from the visit, recommendations for future initiatives carried out in New Zealand are:

1. Offer free, non-committal, basic disaster preparedness training to everyone.
2. Make the training relative, efficient and accessible to all. Tailor information to specific needs and provide various education formats.
3. Encourage the distribution of cost-effective, essential 'to-hand' safety items such as whistles, flashlights and marker pens.
4. Work with established groups on education initiatives. Promote and grow initiatives such as Neighbourhood Support.
5. Gather community organisations and groups to work together on overall public safety and empowerment.
6. Keep programmes running for the long-term and in the public eye.



## 1. Introduction

From this side of the Pacific (e.g. New Zealand), San Francisco Bay Area organisations appear to be making incredible headway with increasing the preparedness of its citizens. However, from meeting with key people implementing these programmes, it turns out they face the same challenges in educating and preparing their four million residents as we do in New Zealand.

The following report outlines preparedness initiatives currently being undertaken in the Bay Area by the following organisations: Collaborating Agencies Responding to Disaster (CARD), San Francisco Neighborhood Emergency Response Teams, San Francisco Neighborhood Empowerment Network, Red Cross Bay Area Chapter, Disaster Resistant Berkeley and the Marin Office of Emergency Services.

This work follows up on recommendations made in an earlier report on community based public education initiatives (Finnis, 2007) to further investigate Bay Area initiatives due to the Bay Area's similar geological setting and perceived programme successes. This document presents discussion summaries from meetings, undertaken between the 4<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> September 2007, with the various staff responsible for implementing the programmes with key findings, lessons and recommendations for New Zealand reported. In many cases additional material was provided, such as training manuals and education materials. These materials are outlined in the text and, if required, available from the author.

## 2. Programme Reviews

### 2.1 Collaborating Agencies Responding to Disaster – First Victims

Contact: Ana-Marie Jones

[www.firstvictims.org](http://www.firstvictims.org)

CARD provides free specialised training to vulnerable populations in the Bay Area. Their aim is to make everyone they train able to respond to an emergency situation, by tailoring education to specific needs and using empowerment, critical thinking and communication exercises. CARD strongly believes in the use of NO fear tactics. Training exercises are aimed to be fun, mention disasters as little as possible and leave people feeling they have the skills and knowledge to deal with an emergency.

Groups they work with:

- |  |                        |
|--|------------------------|
| - low income   | - mobility impaired    |
| - developmentally disabled   | - drug-dependant       |
| - blind  | - isolated             |
| - limited English proficiency  | - latchkey kids        |
| - seniors  | - undocumented         |
| - single parents   | - pregnant women       |
| - battered women   | - owners of pets       |
| - medically fragile  | - homeless             |
| - registered offenders   | - infants and children |
| - people with disabilities   | - deaf                 |
| - lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex, queer and questioning |                        |

CARD is viewed as a reliable and safe place to seek information on preparing. There are many reasons people want to or do not want to prepare, such as religion, love, protection, however people can feel comfortable asking CARD for help. (Example given: In Mormon doctrine, they are to have a years worth of supplies, so telling them to prepare for 3 days is redundant. Muslim believe that life is in God's hands and the faithful will be saved. If they prepare, they are showing others they do not believe in God. Education needs to be sensitive to such issues).

Education material is tailored to every class/group. Only three copies of any piece of education material is kept. Training booklets/material can be changed and printed with hours notice (due to business agreement with local copy shop). They keep a 'palette' of different information which can be used to tailor the education to the needs of the group. CARD strongly believes that information has to be tailored to every group that asks for help as every group is different (e.g. child care centres may be similar in their business, but have different locations, parents with different demographic backgrounds, children with special needs etc.) Specific education material is developed by working with groups and research. CARD staff are constantly on the look out for ways to solve problems. They review previous disasters and find ways peoples lives could have been made better.

They have re-written the Incident Command System (ICS) to make it accessible to everyone and easy to use. The aim was to eliminate thick manuals and replace them with business cards, and simple checklists and nametags with instructions for offices. The idea of the business card is that people can always have help at their fingertips (providing they are carrying the card), people feel empowered in a crisis situation by knowing what steps to take, and for those who cannot command a response they can provide able bodied people with simple instructions. The fold out business card reads:

**Disaster Response At-a-Glance**

**Incident Command:** Leads the response; appoints and empowers team leaders; sets the tone and standards for response. Encourages teamwork and communications.

- **Safety and Security Officer:** Focuses on the safety of all people responding to the incident.
- **Public Information Officer:** Works with media; distributes messages to public and local community.
- **Liaison Officer:** Links to and supports external partners and organisations.

**Operation Team:** Handles key actions including first aid, search and rescue, fire suppression and securing the site.

**Planning Team:** Gathers information, thinks ahead and keeps all team members informed and communicating.

**Logistics Team:** Finds, stores and distributes all necessary resources (supplies and people) to respond appropriately.

**Finance/Administration Team:** Tracks all expenses, claims and activities and is the record keeper for the incident.

CARD believes that whistles, lights and marker pens are the best tools to give people. Disaster preparedness kits are great, but not very useful if you cannot get to them. Having a whistle, light and marker on you can immediately make you feel safer, by being able to alert attention through the whistle or light, be able to see in the dark and leave messages or directions. These items are also very cheap – they can be bought for less than the cost of a colour brochure. These items are distributed with a "safety" message rather than a "disaster" message. For example, whistles are good for

“stranger danger” in youth and personal safety. Flashlights are useful for finding keyholes at night and again, personal safety. It is suggested that these types of items be given out/sponsored by businesses due to their practicality and ability to increase the “public good” image of the business.

Interest in receiving CARD training is generally by word of mouth. Employees trained by CARD that move on to new employers often recommend the training. Certain groups are given government funding to get CARD training.

CARD provides the following online resources for the public:

- Agency emergency preparedness tools – guides and signs
- “Preparedness Made Simple” – a highly accessible overview of measures to take
- Four things Seniors can do to prepare themselves
- Information for Parents to keep their children safe, secure and prepared
- Simple preparedness Actions for Businesses.
- Potty Training Initiative – Signs for bathroom stall doors
- Go Kits
  - A checklist of basic, easy-to-find items for an emergency Go Kit
  - Details about why simple supplies are so valuable
  - The Top Eleven Items for a Go Kit (print this mini-handout double-sided and cut it down)
  - Where to look for recommended supplies.
- Incident Command System
  - Nametag-style SEMS (Standardised Emergency Management System) Badges for using the Incident Command System
  - Wallet-sized Pocket Skills Training card showing the Incident Command System
  - The enlarged Poster-sized version
- Consider your clients -- Who Do You Serve? Matrix

## ***2.2 Neighborhood Emergency Response Teams – San Francisco Fire Department***

*Contact: Lt Erica Arteseros*

*[www.sfgov.org/sfnert](http://www.sfgov.org/sfnert)*

Following the 1989 Loma Prieta earthquake, San Francisco fire-fighters visited Community Emergency Response Teams (CERT) in Los Angeles to observe and learn how to create a similar initiative in San Francisco. On return, the Fire Department developed the NERT programme, in conjunction with emergency managers, to provide free training in disaster and emergency response. Since 1990 the NERT programme has trained more than 16,000 San Francisco residents to be self reliant in a major disaster. In San Francisco City and County, it is only fire-fighters who provide the training.

The goal of the programme is to teach as many San Franciscans as possible that, with basic training, they can make a difference in the lives of their families and others when, not if, they are affected by a disaster large or small. The premise being that a major disaster will overwhelm first responders leaving many citizens on their own for the first 72 hours or longer after the emergency.

In the basic training, individuals will learn hands-on disaster skills that will help them as members of an emergency response team and/or as leaders directing untrained volunteers during an emergency, allowing them to act independently or as an adjunct to City emergency services. The 20 hour training consists of six class sessions that are approximately three hours each. The curriculum for each class is as follows:

Class Session #1

- Earthquake Awareness, Preparedness, and Hazard Mitigation
- Earthquake type, magnitude, history and probability
- How to prepare before it happens
- What to do when the earth starts to shake

Class Session #2

- Basic Disaster Skills
- Natural gas, water and electrical controls, why, when and how to shut them off
- Types of fire, and using extinguishers to put it out
- Hazardous Materials awareness in the home, on the road, and all around you

Class Session #3

- Disaster Medicine
- Health considerations for the rescuer
- Opening airways
- Stopping bleeding and shock position
- S.T.A.R.T. triage
- Minor injuries and burns

Class Session #4

- Light Search and Rescue
- Different types of construction and where to look for damage
- How to classify damaged buildings
- Building marking system
- Interior search patterns
- Lifting heavy objects and mechanical advantage
- Victim carries

Class Session #5

- Team Organization and Management
- City Disaster Plan and where the NERTs fit
- NERT Incident Command System, managing the disaster
- Disaster Psychology
- Terrorism and NERT

Class Session #6

- Skills Development and Application
- Final Exam Review
- Hands-On-Training
- Extinguishing fires
- Triaging and treating moulaged victims
- Extricating a victim trapped by heavy timbers
- Interior search for reported missing persons
- Exterior building damage assessment
- Award of Achievement and course evaluation

Following basic training, advanced training in HAM communications, Incident Command System and NERT leadership/team skills are also offered. New 3 hour personal preparedness and block captain training workshops are also offered.

NERT Co-ordination, Lt. Arteseros, said that although there is continued interest from the community in the programme and the programme is well publicised, many San Franciscans are not aware that NERT exists. This provides a great challenge for trying to increase the number of residents trained. Low socio-economic communities are also hard to reach. Working with businesses, who make it compulsory for their staff (from minority/low socio-economic communities) to attend NERT training on work time helps to reach these populations. Subsidies are also provided for some groups who work with the homeless to provide them with NERT training.

NERT provides their trainees with quarterly newsletters and has online resources for the public, trainees and NERT teams. These include:

- Emergency Supplies and Planning Forms
  - Family Disaster Plan
  - Personal Emergency Contact Sheet
  - Home/Work/Car Kit List
  - Tips for Seniors
  - Home/Work/Car kit list Spanish
  - Home/Work/Car kit list Chinese
  - Pet Disaster Plan
- NERT Resources and Forms
  - NERT Student Manual August 2006
  - NERT Unit Log
  - Sample NERT Unit Log
  - NERT Personnel Resources
  - NERT Message Form
  - NERT Damage Assessment Form
  - NERT Incident Status Record
  - NERT Treatment Area Log

### ***2.3 Neighborhood Empowerment Network – San Francisco Mayor’s Office of Neighbourhood Services***

*Contact: Daniel Homsey*

*empowerSF.org*

The Neighborhood Empowerment Network’s vision is to create a collaborative platform that will serve as a central engagement point for communities to find and share information that empowers them to achieve their collective goals and potential.

#### ***Background***

There are over one hundred unique neighbourhoods in San Francisco. Many of them have neighbourhood associations that are in some form of activation. These are the entities that the outreach team members of City agencies/non profits engage and partner with to address local challenges and implement pro-active strategies. The more these communities are empowered with the knowledge of how the City and County of San Francisco operates and how to work with its agencies/non profits on a day to day basis, the more successful they are in partnering to build strong and vibrant communities for the long term. This capacity to participate in the day-to-day management and improvement of their community, translates into an important behavior that will ultimately help them prepare, survive and recover from a natural disaster.

### *Solution - The Neighborhood Empowerment Network (NEN)*

In order to engage the hundreds of neighbourhood and community groups that would benefit from capacity enhancement, it would be beneficial to create new entity to serve as the main channel that leaders and their partners will use to share information, that channel will be the Neighborhood Empowerment Network (NEN). NEN will be designed to create a community of passionate and committed neighbourhood leaders, non-profits, private sector, and government agencies that will engage in a variety of ways to accomplish the following...

*“To help neighbourhoods become safer, greener, cleaner, stronger, and better prepared to prepare, survive, and rebuild after a natural disaster.”*

NEN will manage several channels of engagement for its members to participate in:

- The NEN website – EmpowerSF.org
- The Neighborhood Empowerment Summit – Saturday, September 8<sup>th</sup> 2007
- Neighborhood Empowerment Forums
- Neighborhood Empowerment Network Leadership Academy
- Neighborhood Empowerment Collectives

### *EmpowerSF.org Website*

The NEN’s website will be called “EmpowerSF.org” and will serve as the largest online resource for neighbourhood leaders to find and share information that will help them increase their overall capacity to transform their communities. The website will be an online clearinghouse of information that will ultimately potentially include:

- A database of best practices that will be key word searchable
- A robust FAQ centre that will help communities get answers right away to common and uncommon questions such as...
  - How do I throw a block party?
  - Who do I have to contact to plant a tree?
  - How do I organize a park cleanup?
- A city wide calendar of events that will be searchable by neighbourhood or area of focus
- An online registry of NEN membership organisations that is available to members
- Free customizable EmpowerSF.org neighbourhood association websites. Many neighbourhoods pay and have to manage their own websites. EmpowerSF.org will provide them with their own website (ie [www.empowersf.org/CSFN](http://www.empowersf.org/CSFN)) as an added benefit to membership.

EmpowerSF.org will serve as the backbone of the Network and expedite the flow of information and ideas throughout its members at an unprecedented rate. By offering unique content that is based on real life success stories and opportunities, EmpowerSF.org will become an invaluable tool for all parties involved in helping communities become healthier safer and better prepared places to live.

### *The Neighborhood Empowerment Summit (NES):*

*Saturday, September 8<sup>th</sup> at Bill Graham Civic Auditorium*

Many neighbourhood leaders who have volunteered at the City’s Project Homeless Connect (PHC) have remarked that they were so impressed by the format and the one stop shop capability of the event, that it would be great to develop a similar type of

experience for the neighbourhoods. NES will be modelled after the PHC single day event methodology with an additional “break-out” session component.

#### The Format

- Empowerment Resource Fair featuring tables and exhibits of agencies and non-profits committed to partnering with the City’s neighbourhood and communities.
- Empowerment Sessions – during the day there will be two sessions where break out groups will meet. Sessions include:
  1. How to organize your neighbourhood to succeed in the event of a natural disaster
  2. How to revitalize your local park
  3. How to organize your community to make your neighbourhood streets greener and cleaner
  4. How to write the perfect Community Challenge Grant
  5. How to build stronger communities through neighbourhood associations
  6. How to fight global warming in your neighbourhood by applying for a new Dept of Environment grant
  7. How to organize your community to make your streets safer for families and their children

NES will convene membership organisations from the NEN. They will include neighbourhood leaders, non-profits, private sector stakeholders, and government agencies. Sample partner participation could include:

- Focus Area: Make Your Neighbourhood Cleaner
  - Gov Agencies - DPW, PUC, 311
  - Non-profits – Graffiti Watch, Clean City Coalition
  - Neighborhood Org. – Miraloma Park Neighborhood Association
- Focus Area: Make Your Neighborhood Greener
  - Gov Agencies - DPW
  - Non-profits – Plant SF, Friends of the Urban Forest
  - Neighborhood Org. – Clementina Neighborhood Association

#### *Additional NEN components*

##### Neighbourhood Empowerment Forums

Throughout the year NEN will hold NEN Empowerment Forums throughout the City that focus on timely and relevant subject matter for community members to participate in. Subjects could include...

- The City Neighborhood Beautification Grant process and how to apply
- Neighbourhood Watch Programmes and how to launch one in your neighbourhood
- Creating your own Neighborhood Park Community

By offering year round information exchange events, the network will add value year round as well as offer more targeted and focused support to partners.

##### Neighborhood Empowerment Network Leadership Academy

Leadership is a key criteria for neighbourhood capacity development. Managing an inclusive and dynamic dialogue, and motivating and engaging people are essential skills for neighbourhood leaders. This multi-session workshop will focus on working with community members to become catalysts for change in their neighbourhoods.

### Neighborhood Empowerment Collectives

In communities that are experience long-term challenges within a NEN area of focus, such as safety, a community can in collaborate with its public and non-profit partners on a regular basis to address challenges and increase organizational cooperation. For example, a group could comprise:

Lower Haight / Public Safety – Collective Partners include:

- Police Captain
- MOCJ – Community Coordinator
- MONS Liaison
- Assistant DA
- City Attorney Regional Lead
- Community Leader
- SF SAFE Representative

By creating micro-teams of field-deployed personnel, more targeted coordinated efforts from both the community and the public sector side, the community will most likely see an improvement in their level of confidence and issue resolution.

### *Summary*

The Neighborhood Empowerment Network Suite of Programmes will greatly empower San Francisco community organisations and leaders to participate in the design and the implementation of quality of life and public safety strategies that will ensure the long- term health and preparedness of the city as a whole.

### **2.4 Red Cross Bay Area Chapter**

*Contact: Madelyn Mackie*

[www.redcrossbayarea.org/pba/](http://www.redcrossbayarea.org/pba/)

The Red Cross Bay Area Chapter is currently undertaking a three-year disaster preparedness campaign “Prepare Bay Area”, which was launched in April 2006. At the start of the campaign, Red Cross surveyed the Bay Area and found that 6% of residents had a disaster plan, built a kit and received training. The goal, therefore, of campaign is to train one in four (over 1 million people) in the Bay Area, with a concerted effort to reach vulnerable groups. The motto of the campaign is “3 steps to preparedness – Make a Plan, Build a Kit and Get Trained”. Over a year later, results show that 17% of Bay Area residents claim to have undertaken the “3 steps”.

As part of RCBAC’s commitment to training, they provide free preparedness training to individuals, neighbourhood groups, community agencies and businesses through disaster preparedness presentations, materials and workshops. The RCBAC offer a range of training programmes tailored to different needs. These include:

- On-site training courses
  - “Be Red Cross Ready” – 1 hr
    - Learn key actions to prepare you and your loved ones for all types of disasters, such as earthquakes and fires. Learn how to make a disaster plan, assemble disaster supplies, and how to stay safe when disaster strikes. Some course components can be tailored further to meet audience needs.
  - “Be Red Cross Ready, COMMUNITY”

- Course content is appropriate for wide range of audiences, such as neighborhood groups, PTAs, service clubs, community agency clients, and faith communities.
- “Be Red Cross Ready, SENIORS”
  - Course emphasizes immediate disaster safety and personal preparedness, including some health and mobility considerations and the need for personal support networks. Course can be presented in participatory discussion format or as “R-E-A-D-Y” bingo game in which the squares on the bingo cards include disaster preparedness tips (with host-provided small prizes).
- “Be Red Cross Ready, WORKPLACE”
  - Course focuses on steps that employees can take to prepare themselves for disasters, addressing personal needs and safety if disaster strikes when employees are at work, at home, at play, in transit, etc. During the course, host business/agency may mention workplace plans, supplies, essential personnel requirements, and disaster supplies on site. Course is an important part of business continuity planning for any organization. Businesses/agencies hosting this course can request complimentary copy of our Guide to Business Continuity Planning CD-ROM (*while supplies last*).
- “Basic Aid and Preparedness Training for Youth” – 1 hr
  - Offered to Grades K-5. Covers basic skills and knowledge necessary for children to identify and prevent potentially harmful situations, to be able to treat common injuries, and to prepare and respond in emergency situations. The programme emphasizes prevention to highlight its importance in reducing injuries. Some course components can be tailored to meet the needs of your audience.
- “First Aid and Preparedness for Youth” – 1 hr
  - Offered to Grades 6-12. Learn emergency preparedness steps, and basic first aid tips for responding to injuries, sudden illness, and life threatening emergencies. Some preparedness components can be tailored to meet the needs of your audience.
- 10 minute online preparedness module –  
[http://www.bayarea-redcross.org/beredcrossready/movie\\_intro\\_page\\_2.html](http://www.bayarea-redcross.org/beredcrossready/movie_intro_page_2.html)
- 20 minute preparedness podcast or DVD, with downloadable participant materials, focusing on preparing home and family for disasters
- Course-in-a-box – 20 minute DVD and participant materials for businesses

The latest phase in the campaign, launched March 6, 2007, is entitled “What do we have to do to get your attention?”. The most aggressive campaign to date is designed to drive Bay Area residents to immediate action. Together with Publicis & Hal Riney advertising agency they created an edgier, bolder and louder message by adding provocative billboard images (see Figures 1), attention-grabbing TV and radio spots, and some innovative street marketing. The campaign was launched with the unveiling of mobile billboards that depict what busy downtown areas might look like after being ravaged by an earthquake. In August, the RCBAC ‘cracked’ Union Square in half. ‘Super Crack’ was a 60-foot sticker designed to simulate a crack caused by earthquake damage, showing a window through to crumpled cars in the parking lot below (see Figures 2 and 3). Photographs taken of cars parked in the lot were used to

enhance realism. Both launches received large amounts of media attention and increased interest in training and Red Cross Disaster Kits (offered at 20% off over the course of the campaign).



Figure 1. "Post-earthquake" image on a billboard parked in front of the Ferry Building



Figure 2. "Super Crack" in Union Square



Figure 3. Looking down to cars “below” on the Super Crack sticker in Union Square

Other recent work by the RCBAC includes work with faith-based organisations from around the Bay Area to prepare them for times of major disaster, as these organisations will be on the frontlines when their communities are affected by such emergencies. Faith-based organisations can help by: distributing food and supplies; meeting spiritual care needs; providing information and collecting donations for those affected, as part of a call centre; becoming a liaison or community outreach worker to organize neighbourhood efforts; providing facilities for shelters, office space, training rooms, support centres, and feeding sites.

Initial funding of \$600,000 for the campaign was provided by the Pacific Gas and Electric Company. Other major stakeholders include United Way Bay Area, Catholic Healthcare West and The Chlorox Company. The disaster preparedness department of the RCBAC has six full-time staff, nine Americorps members and over 2000 volunteers.

## ***2.5 Disaster Resistant Berkeley***

*Contact: Dory Ehrlich*

*<http://www.ci.berkeley.ca.us/disasterresistant/>*

Following the 1989 Loma Prieta Earthquake and the 1991 East Bay Hills Fire, the City of Berkeley Office of Emergency Services began a concerted effort to assist their city and citizens prepare for future disasters. In July 2000, Berkeley received a \$300,000 grant from FEMA (Federal Emergency Management Agency), officially becoming a Project Impact Community. Disaster Resistant Berkeley was the name that Berkeley chose to give its Project Impact grant programme, and the name has continued, although the grant money has been spent. Project Impact's goal was to reduce the personal and economic costs of disasters by bringing together community leaders, homeowners, and businesses to prepare for and protect themselves against natural hazards. Berkeley's designation as a Project Impact Community helped in increasing the community's preparedness efforts.

DRB offers free CERT training courses to individuals, neighbourhoods, groups and businesses throughout the year. The training courses are three-four hours in duration and cover the following topics:

- Basic personal preparedness
- Disaster First Aid
- Fire suppression
- Search and rescue
- Disaster mental health

Throughout the training, DRB promote “Five critical steps to take to prepare for an earthquake” and “Nine steps to becoming a disaster resistant neighbourhood”. The five critical steps are:

1. Make a plan for yourself, your family, or your household on how to evacuate your home, and where to meet following an earthquake
2. Arrange for a long distance telephone contact that everyone in your family can use to tell where and how they are
3. Prepare an emergency supplies kit for you and your family, enough for five days for each person
4. Prepare your home to survive an earthquake
5. Get to know your neighbours and organize your neighbourhood

The nine steps for a disaster resistant neighbourhood are:

1. Set a regular meeting date, time and place
2. Identify at least one group coordinator
  - i. At least one coordinator for each block of 20 – 40 households/or apartment units.
  - ii. Role of coordinator:
    - Calls meetings
    - Distributes information
    - Builds CERT response teams
    - Keeps track of preparedness developments, identifies needs
    - Signs up for CERT class announcements.
3. Develop a Group/Group Communication Plan
  - Phone tree/e-mail list of who lives where
  - Include special needs and skills
  - Identify communication devices: Ham/CB radios, walkie-talkies, operators
4. Develop Response Teams with Team Leaders and take City provided CERT classes
  - Medical/First Aid Team
  - Damage Assessment/Light Search and Rescue Team
  - Fire Suppression Team
  - Logistics/Shelter/Food Team
  - Communication Team
5. Identify an assembly point:
  - Identify assembly point for everyone if needed
  - Safe, away from overhead wires and other hazards
  - Identify closest fire station and SBC telephone
6. Conduct group/building hazard assessment tour

- Identify potential hazards: power lines, chemicals, flooding, repairs, lighting, etc.
- Make note of possible problems on map/plan
- 7. Identify gas, electric, water shut off valves
  - Locate and mark on plot map:
    - i. Gas meters: turn off valves next to meter on inlet pipe with meter wrench
    - ii. Electric panel or box – main switch or breaker
    - iii. Water – locate “angle stop” or “curb cock” on street side of water meter – shuts off water to meter. Tool: “curb-cock key”
  - Assign a team to check utilities and turn off, if necessary
- 8. Special Needs Check-In
  - Identify people/children with special needs to check on if needed
  - Register electrically/oxygen dependent people
- 9. Supplies and Materials Stored
  - Determine supplies needed for neighbourhood or building
  - Develop plan for purchasing supplies and equipment
  - Identify site and containers for storing
  - Develop a plan for maintaining perishables

In addition to CERT training, neighbourhoods that demonstrate a high standard of readiness may apply for a neighbourhood supply cache. Groups must have been organised for at least three years, have satisfied six of the nine steps to becoming a disaster resistant neighbourhood and have at least eight people trained and formed into disaster first aid, fire suppression and light search and rescue teams. The cache supplies the neighbourhoods with items such as generators, first aid kits, lighting, communication equipment, protective wear, tools and fire suppression equipment.

“Get Ready, Berkeley” was launched in May 2006. On May 6, 2006 the City sponsored a door-to-door “Get Ready, Berkeley” day to inform residents about disaster preparedness. Hundreds of volunteers delivered door hangers with safety information and lifesaving tips to thousands of residences in Berkeley. The second “Get Ready, Berkeley” day was held at on April 28, 2007. Once again volunteers delivered door hangers to residences throughout town; this year's door hangers had flu preparedness information.

Ms Ehrlich stated that although the efforts are on going and there is great interest in the programme, there is still a large group unprepared and with no interest. This group is largely a low socio-economic community who do not have the means to prepare and/or find day-to-day issues more of a concern. The more affluent ‘hills’ community are very active as they have the resources and also had direct experience with the 1991 firestorm.

Interest in training is purely promoted through word-of-mouth and exposure during exercises or Get Ready Berkeley Days. Success of the programme is attributed to continued work with community since the early 1990’s. Next year (2008) is the 140 year anniversary of the Hayward Fault Rupture, and as earthquakes occur on the Hayward Fault on average every 140 years, it will be an opportune time to promote earthquake preparedness.

## **2.6 Marin Operational Area Emergency Management Summit**

*Contact: Bruce Stahley*

*marinsheriff.org*

On the 5<sup>th</sup> of September, Marin Office of Emergency Services had its first Annual Emergency Management Summit, bringing together emergency managers from across the county to discuss key issues including:

- Current regional, state and federal emergency management programme and project initiatives (see appendix)
- “Get Ready Marin”
- Emergency training and exercises
- Automated emergency notification systems
- City and Town MOU’s

Key initiatives that were discussed were the Catastrophic Earthquake Plan, National Preparedness System and the Bay Area Preparedness Initiative. The Catastrophic Earthquake Plan stems from the Catastrophic Events Plan which had three original scenarios 10yrs ago; these being a terrorist attack on New York, a hurricane hitting New Orleans and an earthquake in San Francisco. As two of these three events have occurred and ended in devastation, the focus is now on preventing a disaster in the San Francisco Bay Area. The effort will develop a Concept of Operations Plan (CONOPS) for integrating federal response efforts for the state of California. Additionally, the effort will produce a Contingency Plan (CONPLAN) for the San Francisco Bay Area response to a major earthquake, based upon a 1906 San Andreas earthquake scenario.

The National Preparedness System is a capabilities planning, assessment and resource inventory tool that will provide a picture of preparedness. NPS will help to define roles in building capabilities, identify sources of capabilities and support strategy development and investment justifications to fill capability gaps.

The Bay Area Preparedness Initiative, launched in April 2007, is a programme designed to identify gaps in preparedness and bring public, private, nonprofit and philanthropic agencies together to develop solutions. Initial focus is on research to assess vulnerability of San Francisco’s most at-risk populations and the response capabilities of CBO’s that serve them.

“Get Ready Marin”, a disaster survival programme for Marin County, was launched on the 29<sup>th</sup> of September 2007. The programme is mirrored on a “Get Ready” plan designed and implemented successfully by the towns of Belvedere and Tiburon in Marin County (approximately one quarter of the residents attended disaster preparedness training). As other towns within the county were considering putting in separate bids for government grants for disaster education and training programmes, they decided to get together and undertake a county wide programme.

The aim of the programme is to train at least one member from each household in disaster preparedness and how to survive the first 72 hours of a disaster. The county is offering free two-hour courses on basic disaster preparedness to all those interested, which will be available of the public until mid November. The course training manual was originally created by Susan Moxan for the City of Mill Valley, and has since been

edited and reformatted for the Citizens of Marin County. The guide has been prepared for direct dissemination to the general public and is based on the most reliable hazard awareness and emergency education information available at the time of publication, including advances in scientific knowledge, more accurate technical language, and the latest physical research on what happens in disasters.

The guide has been designed to be used as a reference source or as a step-by-step manual. The focus of the content is on how to develop, practice, and maintain emergency plans that reflect what must be done before, during, and after a disaster to protect people and their property. Also included is information on how to assemble a disaster supplies kit that contains the food, water, and other supplies in sufficient quantity for individuals and their families to survive following a disaster in the event they must rely on their own resources.

An evaluation of the programme's effectiveness will be undertaken by Dr Matt Davis of the Dominican University, which is located in Marin County.

### **3. Key findings, lessons and recommendations**

The one common factor across all the programmes is free training. Each programme offers some form of training for any individual or group that is interested. The training programmes vary in length and course content, with shorter courses apparently being received better by the public due to time commitments. Training provides the public with detailed information on the benefits of preparing and planning, how to undertake home mitigation measures, neighbourhood organization, actions to take after a disaster (such as accessing water, digging latrines, etc.) and encourages critical thinking, knowledge and skills that cannot be gained through brochures, TV advertising or websites. Free preparedness training is not as accessible for New Zealanders. Those interested in training usually have to register as a volunteer with a civil defence group and then attend training sessions when they become available. There is no option to receive some basic training without the commitment of becoming a volunteer.

Where possible, the education and training initiatives are aimed at established groups. These can be interest, sporting, religious or groups, workplaces, schools, elderly care facilities, neighbourhoods, apartment tenants, families etc., wherever a collective already exists. On a larger scale, San Francisco City and County is aiming to empower its residents by working with organisations and groups already focused on increasing public safety and well-being in the area. Established groups are effective vectors for initiatives as common issues and knowledge are shared by the members and a sense of community already exists.

Two of the organisations interviewed offer programmes tailored to specific needs and time commitments. Providing targeted education is essential for vulnerable populations, and practical for other groups, to ensure they get information relevant to their needs, location, abilities etc. CARD showed that it was not overly time consuming or costly to provide tailored information for each group that came to them for training. Having a ready palette of information to design a programme from and producing materials only as they are needed at the required number make this process efficient. The Red Cross offer programmes on various media, in various formats.

Preparedness education training that can be undertaken in home, at work, on the move, and independent of a class makes it more accessible and convenient, and therefore more appealing to the public.

All the organisations commented on the challenge of increasing household preparedness in the Bay Area, with no foreseeable solution other than to keep programmes running, being visible in the community and using windows of opportunity (e.g. small earthquake events, emergencies in other regions) to publicise their work and need for preparedness. Success of these programmes is generally measured by the number of people attending training every year and over the past 18 years these numbers have been steadily increasing. By having a reliable, consistent source of training and education it is possible for the programmes to gain public credibility and maintain momentum through word of mouth.

Recommendations for future community based-public education initiatives in New Zealand based on the overall findings from the study are:

1. Offer free, non-committal, basic disaster preparedness training to everyone.
2. Make the training relative, efficient and accessible to all. Tailor information to specific needs and provide various education formats.
3. Encourage the distribution of cost-effective, essential 'to-hand' safety items such as whistles, flashlights and marker pens.
4. Work with established groups on education initiatives. Promote and grow initiatives such as Neighbourhood Support.
5. Gather community organisations and groups to work together on overall public safety and empowerment.
6. Keep programmes running for the long-term and in the public eye.