Forming a Neighborhood Association

Get Connected for Emergency Preparedness and Crime Prevention

A major disaster will be a giant wake-up call to those of us who are used to instant communication. With a little advance planning, you'll have a good chance of remaining connected with your family and your city when the usual communication methods fail.

Get Connected With Your Family

- How will members of your family get in touch with one another after a catastrophe? Agree on two emergency meeting places for your family: one near your home and one outside your immediate neighborhood. Also decide on an out-of-state contact for everyone to check in with.

- Program the names and numbers of key emergency contacts into your cell phones under "ICE," which stands for "in case of emergency." Also include emergency contact information in your wallet.
Get Connected With Your Neighbors

- Get to know your neighbors and learn who may need extra help during a disaster because they are elderly or disabled.
- If you own a pet, ask a neighbor if he or she will care for the animal in your absence.
- Start a Neighborhood Network to work cooperatively with your neighbors to prepare for disasters.

To start a Neighborhood Watch program to focus on crime prevention, contact your local Police Department.

Get Connected With Your City and County

Here are other free services your city and county provide:

- San Mateo County’s emergency notification system, SMC Alert, will notify you of emergencies via your cell phone or other text-based devices. Sign up at www.smcalert.info/register.php. The county offers emergency preparedness information at smcsheriff.com link to OES.

- Contact your local Police Department website for any events or information.

Communicating During an Emergency or Disaster

- To report an emergency, dial 911 from a landline. If using a cell phone, dial the 10-digit equivalent of your police department’s 911 number. (Program the number into your cell phone.) To report a non-emergency, dial the normal business line.

- Immediately following a disaster, tune in to a local radio station for ongoing emergency reports in the area. In San Mateo County, those stations are KCBS (740 AM) and KQED (88.5 FM). Be sure you have a battery-powered radio and extra batteries.

- If you usually use wireless or cell phones, purchase an inexpensive landline phone that you can plug directly into your phone jack when power is not available.

- In the event of a disaster, citizens with Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) training will be deployed to assist in neighborhoods. To sign up for CERT training, call your local Fire Department.

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