

## Neighborhood Councils a Key Component in Emergency Preparedness

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To: Neighborhood Council Friends and Colleagues

From: BongHwan (BH) Kim, General Manager, Department of Neighborhood Empowerment

The recent earthquake disaster in Haiti, and the fact that we live in a geologically active area, remind us all of the importance of Emergency Preparedness. We are encouraging all Neighborhood Councils to take proactive steps to plan for a similar disaster in Los Angeles. US Geological scientists predict a similar earthquake here, but almost ten times more powerful, within the next 20-30 years. This is expected to be followed by water shortages, sewer-line breaks, long-term power outages, shortage of survival supplies, gas leaks, fires, and civil unrest.

We are aware that many Neighborhood Councils have already started this emergency planning effort on a local level. Building in part on their knowledge and experience, a concerted effort with Department of Neighborhood Empowerment (DONE), Emergency Management Department (EMD), and the Los Angeles Fire Department (LAFD) has commenced to unite all best practices and implement a unified Neighborhood Council disaster planning effort.

One of the results of this concerted effort will be a standardized, easy-to-use toolkit to help Neighborhood Councils quickly and effectively implement an Emergency Preparedness Plan for their stakeholders and neighborhoods. We hope that a key component will be the integration of LAFD's Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) program with NC disaster preparedness activities. In addition, we will be working on establishing system policies and programs that will assist Neighborhood Councils in better addressing these issues.

In an effort to better assist Neighborhood Councils, the following are some of the steps you are encouraged to take in order to begin your Emergency Preparedness planning/activities:

- **Form an Emergency Preparedness Committee** - Neighborhood Councils are encouraged to form such committees in order to address issues and bring forth information to their respective communities.
- **Begin an Awareness Campaign** - encourage residents and businesses to go to <http://www.ready.gov> and learn how to get a kit, make a plan, and be informed. Post notice on website, newsletters, and email blasts.

- **Emergency Point of Contact (POC)** - Establish POC from the NC to work with DONE to disseminate information, set up CERT training, etc. Please provide an Emergency POC from your Neighborhood Council by March 1, 2010. You may contact LisetteCovarrubias, Department of Neighborhood Empowerment Project Coordinator at 213-473-5391 or email at [lisette.covarrubias@lacity.org](mailto:lisette.covarrubias@lacity.org).
- **CERT Training** - Encourage all residents 18+ years to take the 17-hr free course, offered by the LAFD.

For help in setting up CERT training classes in your area, please contact either of the following NC board members:

a) Mark Legassie (323-823-3046, [safety@asnc.us](mailto:safety@asnc.us)) - Arroyo Seco Neighborhood Council

b) Linda Pruett (818-345-9809, [txtmgt@att.net](mailto:txtmgt@att.net)) - Lake Balboa Neighborhood Council

Please watch the following interesting ABC7 Eyewitness News story on a recent drill organized by the Arroyo Seco Neighborhood Council:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XdRzAqhvbt8>

### **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION REGARDING STORM IMPACT**

We wanted to share with you the most updated information regarding the storm system in Los Angeles. There have been mud slides and evacuations occurring in the San Fernando Mountains due to the rain storms. The Sunland Tujunga NC is actively involved in helping the rescue workers and evacuees. For the most updated evacuation information please call 323-441-1187.