

ESP FOCUS



RESCUE ME



WHY

You may have to help in rescue efforts!

A major earthquake (above magnitude 7) within a densely populated area may overwhelm emergency-response agencies, leaving residents to put out small fires, provide first aid and conduct basic search and rescue operations.

If members of your family, friends or coworkers were trapped behind doors, under debris or other heavy objects, could you help them?

Prepare **now** to help them by organizing a community response team and learning how to conduct light search and rescue.

Resident searches are designed to provide a cursory search of a building or to locate victims with minor or no injuries and help them exit.

Specially equipped search technicians and specially trained search dogs may conduct secondary searches since they often locate injured or unconscious victims that untrained rescuers cannot see or hear.

The reverse side of this Focus Sheet includes tips on conducting light search and rescue that were extracted from "Organizing Your Neighborhood for Earthquake Preparedness," which was developed by the Governor's Office of Emergency Services.

You may jeopardize your life and may endanger those coming to your aid if your attempts to rescue others are obviously beyond your physical capacity or skill or if the building is no longer structurally sound. Sometimes it takes wisdom and courage to wait for others.

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BEFORE THE EARTHQUAKE

- Know your neighbors. Prepare and frequently update a list of neighborhood residents. Familiarize yourself with the schedules of neighbors to determine if someone is likely to be in a damaged structure.
- Prepare a list of neighbors with special needs; designate team members to check on their conditions after the earthquake.
- Get training in basic search and rescue.
- Determine methods such as "OK" signs or white flags neighbors can use to indicate that they do not need assistance and "HELP" or red signs to indicate that assistance is needed.
- Ensure your neighborhood has an adequate supply of flashlights, work gloves, hard hats, sturdy shoes, ladders, crowbars, axes, sledge hammers and other supplies.
- Obtain prior permission to search the homes of neighbors should they be presumed trapped.

AFTER THE EARTHQUAKE

- Assemble team members; determine if any neighbors are missing. Refer to the list of neighborhood residents and talk to other people about their neighbors.
- Check the homes of anyone who is missing, homes displaying a "HELP" sign and homes not displaying "OK" signs.
- Ensure that designated team members check on those with special needs, provide assistance they might require or advise a member of the special needs team of their locations and needs.
- Keep a list of those who are not accounted for.
- Maintain a log of all homes searched. Include each address, the date, whether the home was OK or needed help and the assistance provided.
- Clearly mark each building that has been searched as a "resident search" and include the lead searcher's name or organization, the date and time.

SEARCH AND RESCUE GUIDELINES

1. Never conduct a search alone. Work with a partner. Plan your search; do not wander.
2. Feel the top and bottom of the front door with the back of your hand before you enter. **Do not enter if**

it's hot. Cautiously open the door if it is cool. Repeat this at every closed door.

3. Check the door jamb, the wall and the ceiling for cracks and splinters. Also check for other hazards. Broken glass and bowed structures, including windows, could indicate that the building is near collapse. **Do not enter if it appears unsafe.** Prepare for aftershocks.

4. While you're in the entry way, sniff for the odor of natural gas. If you smell gas, open the front and back doors and as many windows as possible without going inside. **Enter the house only when the odor of gas is gone.**

5. While still in the entry way, loudly call out, "Is anyone here?" Listen for a response. If someone answers, ask where they are and the type of help needed. If you don't hear anything, ask that anyone trapped make some kind of noise. Listen for cries, moans, thumping, banging or other indications that someone needs help.

6. If it's dark, slowly sweep each room with your flashlight before entering. Check the floor and ceiling for holes, fallen beams, glass and other hazards.

7. Systematically search each room. Check under beds and stairs, behind furniture, stairs, inside closets, bathtubs and showers. Stay with your partner and communicate often.

8. Maintain contact with the wall if it's dark. Follow the wall to return to the original door if you become confused about your location.

9. If you find an injured person, determine, to the best of your ability, the nature of his or her injuries. **Do not** move a person whose limb is under a heavy object; immediately seek qualified first aid and advance life-support assistance if he or she cannot move on his or her own.

This action sheet is produced as part of the Earthquake Survival Program (ESP). ESP is an awareness campaign designed to increase individual and home earthquake preparedness. ESP was developed by the County of Los Angeles. The Governor's Office of Emergency Services and representatives from Imperial, Inyo, Kern, Los Angeles, Mono, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, San Diego, San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara and Ventura counties assist in the development of campaign materials and in coordination of the campaign.

Steps to Survive in *1995*

