

# AGENCY EMERGENCY PLANNING



***Helping Nonprofits Prepare to Prosper!***



## A. Disaster Mission Statement

Make sure you know what role you are planning to play in a disaster

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- *Who are you going to be for your clients and community when disaster strikes?*
- *Does your current mission statement encompass how you see your agency functioning in a disaster?*
- *Think about your commitments and your resource limitations and create a disaster mission statement.*

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## B. Preparing Staff for Emergencies

Make sure your staff is mentally, physically and emotionally prepared to respond

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In an emergency, the first concern of staff will be the safety and welfare of family members.

1. Have all staff and key volunteers trained in basic emergency preparedness on a regular basis.
2. Encourage and support staff and key volunteers to have a family or home emergency plan (see note below). This increases the likelihood that staff and their families can cope with the disaster without outside help.
3. Your agency will want to ensure that all staff members have an opportunity to check on their homes and family members as soon as possible following a disaster.

**Note:** CARD offers an interactive personal preparedness class, and organizations like the American Red Cross offer other helpful trainings such as First Aid and CPR.



### C. Personnel

**Make sure you have enough people to do what needs doing for a response**

**Determine your staffing requirements for post-disaster response.**

1. Realistically, how many staff will continue working after a disaster if it strikes during work? \_\_\_\_\_
2. ...If a disaster strikes on a weekday, but before the workday begins? \_\_\_\_\_
3. ...If a disaster strikes on a weekend? \_\_\_\_\_
4. Which staff should automatically report to work in the event of a disaster? \_\_\_\_\_
5. Develop a list of home telephone numbers for staff for emergency use. (Update at least every 6-months.)
6. To support the work staff in an emergency, we will use volunteers as follows:
  - a. \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. \_\_\_\_\_
  - c. \_\_\_\_\_
  - d. \_\_\_\_\_
  - e. \_\_\_\_\_

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### D. Volunteers

**Make sure you know the best ways to use / work with volunteers in a disaster**

**Know how you will appropriately recruit, task and manage volunteers.**

1. Are your current volunteers appropriate for disaster related work?
2. Do your current practices of recruiting or accepting volunteers include your disaster preparedness and response needs?
3. What important activities (that keep your agency able to provide services) can be assigned to spontaneous volunteers? What activities **should not** be assigned to spontaneous volunteers
4. What safety and/or legal considerations should you include in your plan? Consider: do you have proper insurance for volunteers, do you need background checks on volunteers, is any specialized training or knowledge required for working with your agency or clients, etc.?
5. Do you have someone in charge of volunteers? Who (else) might take that role for new volunteers?



**E. Meeting the Needs of the People You Serve**  
**Make sure you can address the basic needs of staff, clients and volunteers**

1. How many total clients would most likely be at your site in a disaster? (Look at both maximum client load and minimum staff availability for day, for evening and for weekends.) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

2. How will you find out about the condition of people you serve who are off site? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

3. In an emergency, who else needs information about the status of people you serve? Off site staff? Families of clients? List the most critical contacts that need to be made. Be sure to have all necessary phone, cellular phone and pager numbers for each contact.

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

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4. What else will be needed (e.g., bedding, medicine, special equipment, etc.)? Where can you get these items:

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a. Item: \_\_\_\_\_ Location: \_\_\_\_\_

b. Item: \_\_\_\_\_ Location: \_\_\_\_\_

c. Item: \_\_\_\_\_ Location: \_\_\_\_\_

5. What are the special needs of the people you serve? Are these needs of the group or of individuals?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Also consider: What skills can you instill in your clients to let them take part in your preparedness and response efforts as full partners and helpers?**



## F. On-Site Supplies Cache

**Make sure you have preparedness supplies available**

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Create and maintain an onsite cache of emergency preparedness supplies. The exact contents will depend on the size and diversity of your staff, volunteers, clients and potential visitors. Remember to consider special needs additions such as medication.

Store these supplies in multiple locations so if one cache becomes unusable or unreachable, you will still have options. The supply cache complements your agency go-kit.

Some basic contents of an on-site supply cache are:

- Food and Water
- First aid supplies
- Lights/Flashlights
- Radio(s)
- Batteries
- Whistles
- Blankets
- Garbage Bags
- Duct Tape

Perishable supplies, such as food, water and medicine, need to be replaced regularly. One way to do this is by “cycling” the food and water – eat supplies while they are still good, and put new ones in the cache.

## SAMPLE G. Agency Go-Kit

**Make sure you can operate even if you evacuate**

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If you need to evacuate your facility, an Agency Go-Kit will allow you to continue providing your most vital services wherever you go. This small, portable container should hold copies of every vital document as well as some basic supplies such as pen and paper.

Some basic contents of an Agency Go-Kit are:

- Your disaster plan
- Insurance documentation
- The deed or lease for your facilities
- Legal identification, such as your taxpayer ID number and evidence of exemption status
- Bank information, including all of your account numbers, including personnel contacts
- Documentation for your emergency line of credit
- Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs)
- Contact and Emergency Contact information for your staff and key contacts
- Some cash, including coins for phones

You may wish to maintain more than one kit. Creating two is not much harder than creating one, and an off-site backup may be what ensures that you have needed records.



**H. Facility Preparation**

**Make sure your physical environment supports your safety**

ASSIGNED TO

DATE DONE

- Bolt heavy cabinets, bookshelves or other furniture to wall studs \_\_\_\_\_
- Strap computers, fax, equipment to desk or tables \_\_\_\_\_
- Secure pictures and other wall hangings by using safety hooks \_\_\_\_\_
- Clear exits, pathways and earthquake-safe spaces \_\_\_\_\_
- Fasten breakables to walls or shelves with museum wax \_\_\_\_\_
- Lower heavy items to bottom shelves \_\_\_\_\_
- Remove fire and chemical hazards \_\_\_\_\_
- Install smoke detectors, fire extinguishers, cabinet latches \_\_\_\_\_
- Label fire exits and safety supplies \_\_\_\_\_
- Clearly mark your gas and water shut-off valves. Post clear simple instructions for shutting off each one (in all languages needed). \_\_\_\_\_
- Keep a conveniently located set of tools to facilitate prompt gas shut-off. Tools should include both pipe and crescent wrenches. \_\_\_\_\_

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**Earthquake Putty** (also called **Museum Wax**) holds delicate items in place

**Straps** brace heavy furniture and large items in place

**Safety hooks** stop pictures, clocks and mirrors from falling

**Cabinet latches** keep fingers and toes away from broken glass

**Sketch your facility and note vital emergency resources including:**

- |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fire extinguishers | <input type="checkbox"/> First Aid Supplies | <input type="checkbox"/> Escape routes  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Go kits            | <input type="checkbox"/> Water shutoff      | <input type="checkbox"/> Generator(s)   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Tool kits          | <input type="checkbox"/> Gas shutoff        | <input type="checkbox"/> Documents safe |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Supply Cache       | <input type="checkbox"/> _____              | <input type="checkbox"/> _____          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> _____              | <input type="checkbox"/> _____              | <input type="checkbox"/> _____          |



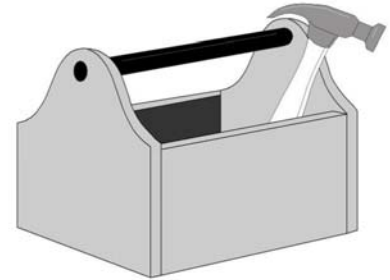
## I. Signage

### Make sure your safety and preparedness tools are well-marked

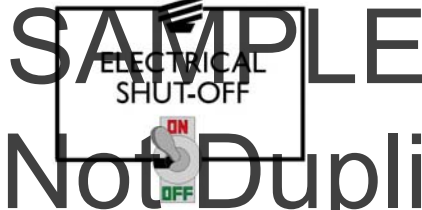
Make preparedness visible! Clear and visible signs indicating safety tools, exits and emergency instructions will help people to keep themselves safe while at your agency.



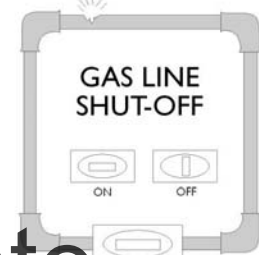
Tool Box Lives Here



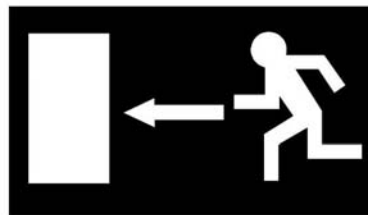
WATER SHUT-OFF



IN CASE OF GAS LEAK



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These and other preparedness signs are available at [www.CARDCanHelp.org/tools](http://www.CARDCanHelp.org/tools)



## **J. Neighborhood Resources**

**Make sure you know the local resources - they may be your only source**

1. If you do not have a back-up generator, in an extended power outage, where can you rent or borrow a generator? Create a written agreement with this supplier. \_\_\_\_\_
2. If the phones at your agency are not working, where are the nearest pay phones? \_\_\_\_\_
3. Where is the nearest public health clinic?  
Clinic Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_
4. Where is the nearest place to go for help if phones are not working?  
Place Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_
5. Where is the nearest fire station and do they know about you?  
Station Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_
6. Where is the nearest police station and do they know about you?  
Station Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

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**Make sure preparedness resources in your neighborhood are clear. Post a large, clear map of your neighborhood. Note these potentially valuable resources, and highlight:**

**key resource framework**

- OES
- City Hall
- other government offices
- Fire Station
- Police Station
- Red Cross
- CARD
- Public library
- \_\_\_\_\_

**liaison /connections**

- CARD
- funders
- partner agencies
- \_\_\_\_\_

**medical**

- hospital
- clinic
- veterinary offices
- pharmacy
- \_\_\_\_\_

**possible gathering points**

- faith/congregation sites
- school
- gym
- shelters
- open space
- \_\_\_\_\_

**food/ water**

- restaurants
- soup kitchens
- grocery stores
- corner stores
- \_\_\_\_\_

**supplies**

- hardware stores
- disaster stores
- drugstores
- sports/camping stores
- "big box" stores
- dollar stores
- \_\_\_\_\_

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**K. Evacuation/Transportation**

**Make sure you can get people safely from your location to a safe alternative site**

**Fire, hazardous material spills or structural damage may require you to evacuate your building.**

1. Are there program participants who will need assistance evacuating your facility?  
Remember to assign staff and volunteers to help these participants and have assistive aids/devises available to help with their evacuation.
2. If your facility must be evacuated, assign a staff person the responsibility of taking a head count to ensure all staff, volunteers and program participants have exited.
3. Practice your evacuation plan.
4. Keep an "Agency Go-Kit". Include copies of your emergency plan, action checklists, phone rosters, copies of vital documents, credit cards, etc.
5. Post a notice indicating where you have gone.

**The following suggestions anticipate that you must evacuate your building and that you are responsible for the care and shelter of the people you serve.**

6. Locate and secure a temporary shelter to be used (consider congregation sites, nearby community centers, schools, other residential facilities). You may want to develop mutual aid agreements with these sites.

Temporary Shelter Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

7. Create a phone list and a system for letting the authorities, family and friends know where you are sheltering your program participants. "Date created" should appear on this and all lists and documents.
8. Designate and identify alternative transportation for moving your program participants to your temporary shelter, or to clients' homes, if necessary.

Alternative Transportation: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

9. Assign responsibility for the care of your clients at the alternate site(s). Identify this person or persons.

f. \_\_\_\_\_

g. \_\_\_\_\_

10. If evacuated, what will your clients need that may not be available in the temporary shelter?

h. \_\_\_\_\_

i. \_\_\_\_\_



**L. Communication (Part I)**

**Make sure you can communicate with staff, clients, funders and your community**

Communications will make or break a disaster response. From a simple note on the door identifying your new location to a Public Information Officer correcting news reports about your agency, communication is the key to letting people make the right decisions. Establishing when to communicate your message(s) is vital – think through the following considerations before putting out your message.

**WHAT should you communicate?**

- Agency Operational Status reports
- Damage assessment
- Services offered or changed
- Funds needed
- Volunteers needed
- Other needs
- 
- 

**TO WHOM are you communicating?**

- Disaster services partners
- Staff & volunteers
- Clients
- Funders
- Media
- General public
- 
- 

**WHO should communicate the message?**

- Ensure they have proper training
- Ensure they have proper authority
- Ensure they share consistent message
- 

**HOW should you communicate?**

- Electronic
- Paper
- Verbal
- Combination
- 

**WHAT can you prepare in advance?**

- Agency talking points/key messages
- Disaster/Emergency response press release
- Emergency related funding solicitation
- Email, phone, pager, cell phone and fax lists
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**L. Communication (Part 2)**

**Make sure you know all the communication tools available to you**

**Mastering how you send and receive information will help you in both crisis and opportunity. A variety of options is the key to maintaining communications. Establish regular times for your communications.**

**Disaster Communication Tools**

There are many communication tools we don't normally consider that may become useful if a disaster cuts off your normal channels.

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bulletin Board/White Board | <input type="checkbox"/> Megaphones / Bullhorns     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Carbon Paper / NCR paper   | <input type="checkbox"/> Pagers                     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> CB Radios                  | <input type="checkbox"/> Palm Pilots / Blackberries |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cell Phones                | <input type="checkbox"/> POTS Telephones            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Digital Telephones         | <input type="checkbox"/> Public Signage             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Drums                      | <input type="checkbox"/> Runners                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Flag Pole                  | <input type="checkbox"/> Walkie-Talkies             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ham Radios                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Whistles                   |
| <input type="checkbox"/>                            | <input type="checkbox"/>                            |
| <input type="checkbox"/>                            | <input type="checkbox"/>                            |

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**Community Outreach Options**

What are all the different ways you can speak to your community? Different methods have different advantages, and may help you reach people you had not reached before.

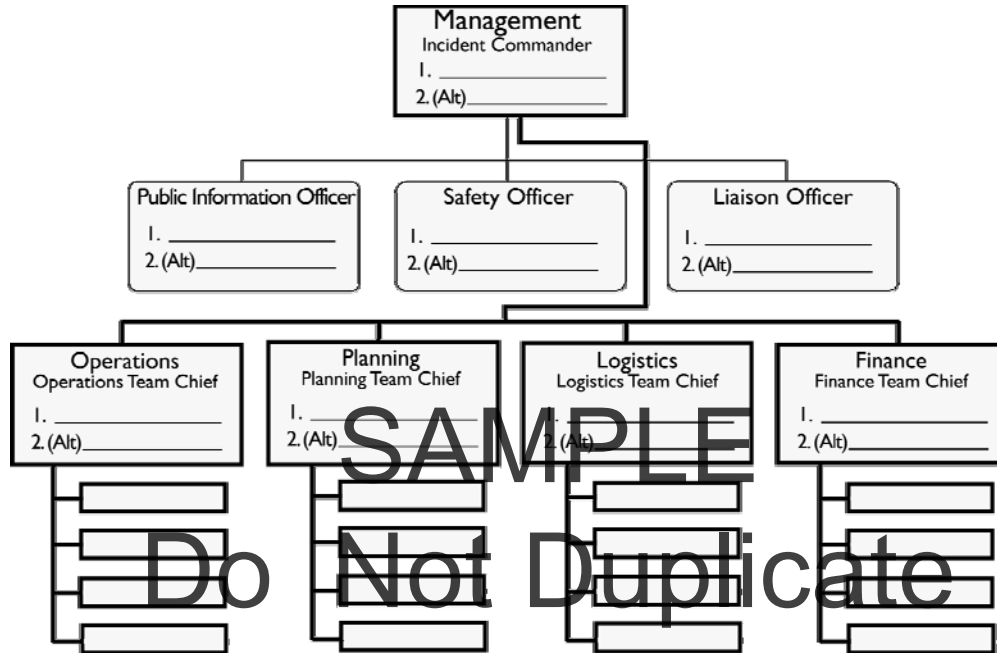
- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> American Sign Language (ASL)                  | <input type="checkbox"/> In-person events, workshops or classes |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Computers : DSL or dial-up                    | <input type="checkbox"/> Language Translators                   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Door-to-door canvassing or home visits        | <input type="checkbox"/> Mailing lists: brochures, fliers       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> E-mail and listserves                         | <input type="checkbox"/> Radio                                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fact Sheets or FAQs                           | <input type="checkbox"/> Television                             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fax Machines/WinFax                           | <input type="checkbox"/> Video / cassette tape / CD-ROM / DVD   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Information Phone lines (such as 800 numbers) | <input type="checkbox"/> Websites                               |
| <input type="checkbox"/>   | <input type="checkbox"/>  |
| <input type="checkbox"/>   | <input type="checkbox"/>  |



**M. ICS (Part I)**

**Make sure you know California’s universal response system**

The state of California uses the Standardized Emergency Management System to respond to disasters. Understanding the Incident Command System that is the core of SEMS will allow you to organize for managing any situation, coordinate with your community partners, and “speak the language” of the professional responders – which makes you that much easier to help.



**Incident Command:** Leads the response; appoints and empowers team leaders; sets 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 the media and distributes messages to the public and local community.

**Liaison Officer:** Links to and supports external partners and organizations.

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

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

**Logistics Team:** Finds, distributes, and stores 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.



**M. ICS (Part 2)**

**Make sure you know California's universal response system**

Considering who might do well at certain functions is an excellent tool for understanding SEMS and getting people used to the idea. Be careful, though: you never know who will be part of your disaster response team, so be prepared to assign roles when they are needed.

Primary Functions	
<p><b>Incident Commander</b></p> <p>Name: _____</p> <p>Phone: _____</p> <p>Alt. Phone: _____</p>	<p>Name: _____</p> <p>Phone: _____</p> <p>Alt. Phone: _____</p>
<p><b>Operations Officer</b></p> <p>Name: _____</p> <p>Phone: _____</p> <p>Alt. Phone: _____</p>	<p>Name: _____</p> <p>Phone: _____</p> <p>Alt. Phone: _____</p>
<p><b>Planning Officer</b></p> <p>Name: _____</p> <p>Phone: _____</p> <p>Alt. Phone: _____</p>	<p>Name: _____</p> <p>Phone: _____</p> <p>Alt. Phone: _____</p>
<p><b>Logistics Officer</b></p> <p>Name: _____</p> <p>Phone: _____</p> <p>Alt. Phone: _____</p>	<p>Name: _____</p> <p>Phone: _____</p> <p>Alt. Phone: _____</p>
<p><b>Finance / Admin Officer</b></p> <p>Name: _____</p> <p>Phone: _____</p> <p>Alt. Phone: _____</p>	<p>Name: _____</p> <p>Phone: _____</p> <p>Alt. Phone: _____</p>
Support Functions	
<p><b>Safety and Security Officer</b></p> <p>Name: _____</p> <p>Phone: _____</p> <p>Alt. Phone: _____</p>	<p>Name: _____</p> <p>Phone: _____</p> <p>Alt. Phone: _____</p>
<p><b>Public Information Officer</b></p> <p>Name: _____</p> <p>Phone: _____</p> <p>Alt. Phone: _____</p>	<p>Name: _____</p> <p>Phone: _____</p> <p>Alt. Phone: _____</p>

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## N. Financial Resources

**Make sure you know your financial assets, limitations and commitments**

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It is a good idea for your organization to be aware of its cost of normal operations; estimate cost increases that might arise from emergencies and be familiar with eligibility and other prerequisites for aid and reimbursements from Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and other agencies.

Some topics to explore include the following:

1. Copies of Financial Support Documentation to have ready
  - Insurance policies
  - The deed or lease for your facilities
  - Bank information, including all of your account numbers, including personnel contacts
  - Legal identification, such as your taxpayer ID number and evidence of exemption status
  - Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs)
2. Liquid Assets
  - How much cash do you keep in “petty cash?”
  - Do you have \$15 - \$20 in coins for pay phones?
3. Credit Cards / Lines of Credit
  - What credit cards does your agency own?
  - Where are they?
  - What are the limits of each?
  - Who can sign on each?
  - Do they have emergency credit extensions?
  - Do you have a line of credit immediately available?
  - Who can access the money?

***Reminder: Keep this information updated;  
be sure it reflects any staff or policy changes!***



## O. Ensuring Service Continuation

Make sure you are clear on your service priorities

What is needed to continue providing essential services after a disaster?

1. List the primary services you will continue to provide following an emergency?
  - a. \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. \_\_\_\_\_
  - c. \_\_\_\_\_
  
2. What are the critical material resources necessary to maintain these operations?
  - a. \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. \_\_\_\_\_
  - c. \_\_\_\_\_
  
3. What neighboring agencies or businesses can you form a connection with in order to share resources in an emergency, to maintain operations and to ensure the care of people you serve?
 

a. Name: _____	Phone: _____
b. Name: _____	Phone: _____
c. Name: _____	Phone: _____
d. Name: _____	Phone: _____
e. Name: _____	Phone: _____

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**Your organization should clarify what its mission and priorities will be in the aftermath of a major disaster. It is important for agencies working with at-risk clients on a daily basis to know their client's needs and how to support their recovery following a disaster.**

4. Some questions to ask include:
  - What are the predictable needs of the people you serve in emergencies?
  - Will the needs of the people you serve require you to expand services in a disaster's aftermath?
  - Will you need to consider providing new or different services?

***Remember: Knowing your priorities as an agency makes everything else fall into place. In crisis or opportunity, if you are clear on your priorities you can make the best decisions for your agency.***

Some parts of this plan were originally produced by the **Bay Area Emergency Preparedness Coalition for Seniors and People with Disabilities**. It was adapted from *Creating a Workable Disaster Plan for Your Agency* which was produced by **VOICE of Contra Costa County** and from the *Earthquake Preparedness Guidelines for Large Retirement Complexes and Large Residential Care Facilities* which was produced by the **Bay Area Regional Earthquake Preparedness Project**. The teaching method, interactive exercises, as well as significant changes and additions have been created by **CARD -Collaborating Agencies Responding to Disasters**. Last updated February 2009

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