



# WHEN DISASTER STRIKES

When disaster strikes you and your family may be affected in several ways. This may range from injuries, physical or emotional, to damage or the loss of property. Remember not to panic and help those who need extra assistance.



## ASSESS

Locate and notify family members of your circumstances.



## FIND SHELTER

Find a safe haven in your home, with family or at a shelter.



## BE SAFE

Proceed cautiously and follow local safety instructions.



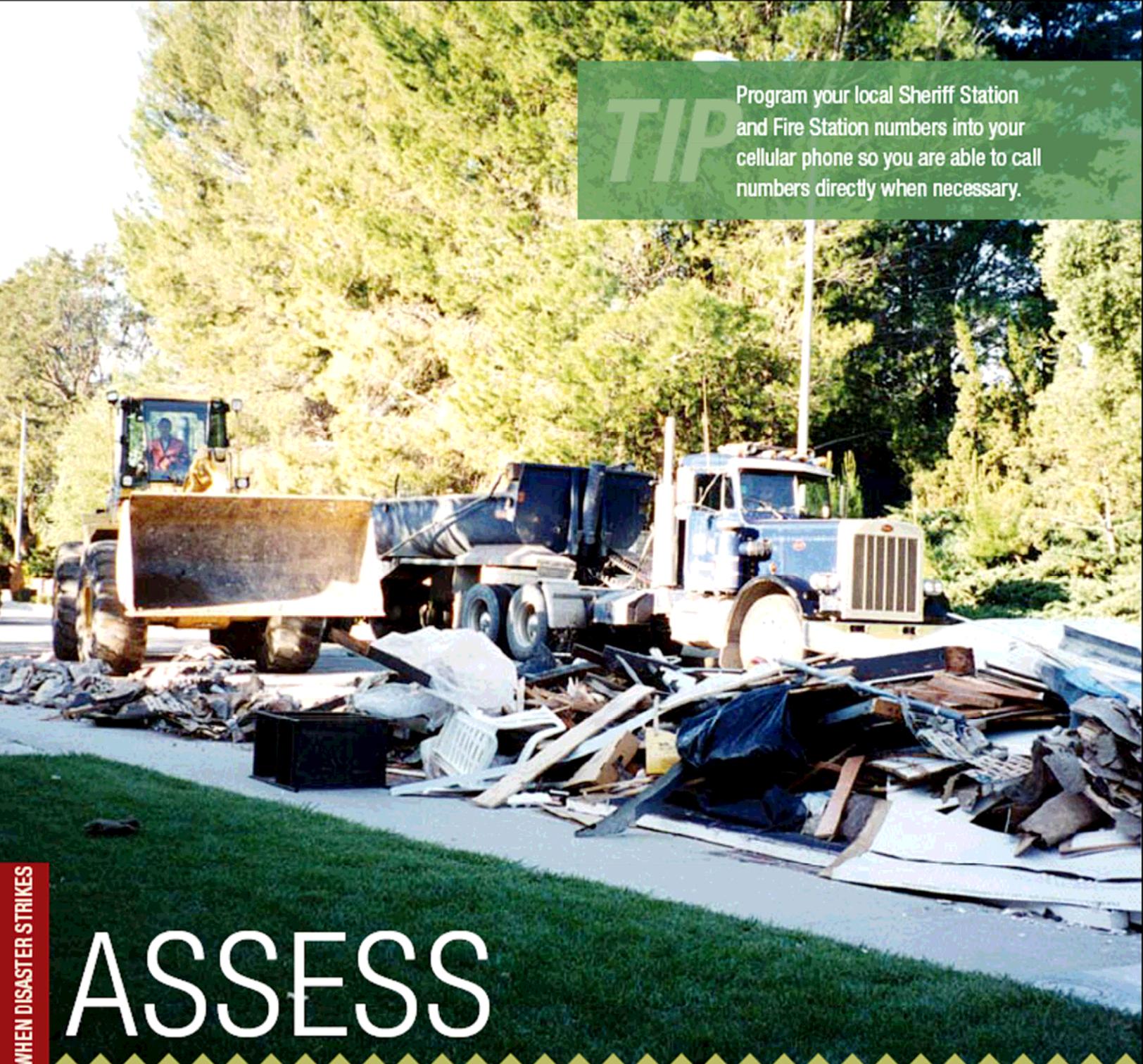
## GET HELP

Get local service availability information or call 2-1-1 for services.



## BEGIN RECOVERY

Contact insurance providers, FEMA and secure documentation.



**TIP**

Program your local Sheriff Station and Fire Station numbers into your cellular phone so you are able to call numbers directly when necessary.

WHEN DISASTER STRIKES

# ASSESS

Immediately after a disaster, listen to local media for advisories and instructions from local officials. Instructions will vary according to the disaster.

After an earthquake, check for injuries then assess your building for obvious hazards and dangerous situations. Once you and your family are safe, activate your telephone calling tree to locate and notify family members about your circumstances. Limit your phone calls to emergencies and necessary notifications to reduce the strain on the telephone system.

First responder agencies will be working to assess damages throughout the County and determine which areas are most severely impacted. They will begin to clear disaster routes so emergency vehicles can get through to help where they are most needed. Utilities and transportation routes will be restored more slowly as they perform assessments and prepare to serve the needs of residents and emergency responders.

# FIND SHELTER

Find a safe haven in your home, with family or at a shelter.

## When an Evacuation Order has been issued for your area

- Gather your family, pets, and disaster supply kit into your car and prepare to leave your home or business immediately.
- Follow the instructions and directions from Sheriff and Fire Department's personnel.
- Drive carefully and at a normal speed with your headlights on.
- Keep your car windows rolled up and turn air vents to re-circulate.

## Evacuating Your Pets

- Choose evacuation locations ahead of time; you should have at least two options.
- Prepare a list of boarding facilities and veterinarians who can shelter your pets in an emergency (include 24-hour numbers).
- Contact hotels and motels outside your immediate area to check policies on accepting pets and restrictions on number, size, and species.
- Ask friends, relatives and others outside the affected area if they can shelter your animals. The Red Cross does not house pets inside shelters.
- If you have more than one pet they may be more comfortable if kept together, but be prepared to house them separately.



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## TIP

Everyone who needs additional or special assistance should interpret an Evacuation Warning as an Evacuation Order and make arrangements to leave their residence or place of business immediately.

# BE SAFE

Inspecting your home after a disaster

## Natural gas

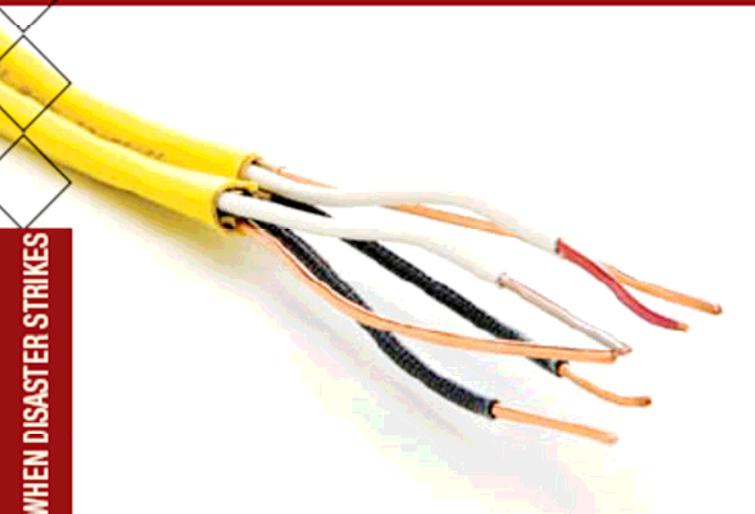
If you smell gas or hear a hissing or blowing sound, open a window and leave immediately. Turn off the main gas valve from the outside, if you can. Call the gas company from a neighbor's residence. If you shut off the gas supply at the main valve, you will need a professional to turn it back on. Do not smoke or use oil, gas lanterns, candles, or torches for lighting inside a damaged home until you are sure there is no leaking gas or other flammable materials present.

## Sparks, broken or frayed wires

Check the electrical system, do not check it if you are wet, standing in water, or unsure of your safety. If possible, turn off the electricity at the main fuse box or circuit breaker. If the situation is unsafe, leave the building and call for help. Do not turn on the lights until you are sure they're safe to use. You may want to have an electrician inspect your wiring.

## Roof, foundation, and chimney cracks

If it looks like the building may collapse, leave immediately.



WHEN DISASTER STRIKES



**TIP** After an earthquake, be prepared for aftershocks.

## Your Basement

If your basement has flooded, pump it out gradually (about one third of the water per day) to avoid damage. The walls may collapse and the floor may buckle if the basement is pumped out while the surrounding ground is still waterlogged.

## Water and Sewage Systems

If pipes are damaged, turn off the main water valve. Check with local authorities before using any water; the water could be contaminated. Pump out wells and have the water tested by authorities before drinking. Do not flush toilets until you know that sewage lines are intact.

## Appliances

If appliances are wet, turn off the electricity at the main fuse box or circuit breaker. Then, unplug appliances and let them dry out. Have appliances checked by a professional before using them again. Also, have the electrical system checked by an electrician before turning the power back on.

## Food and Other Supplies

Throw out all food and other supplies that you suspect may have become contaminated or come in to contact with floodwater.

## Open Cabinets

Be alert for objects that may fall.

## Clean up Household Chemical Spills

Disinfect items that may have been contaminated by raw sewage, bacteria, or chemicals. Also clean salvageable items.

## Call Your Insurance Agent

Take pictures of damages. Keep good records of repair and cleaning costs

# COPING WITH DISASTER-RELATED STRESS

## COMMON REACTIONS TO DISASTERS

Irritability and anger	Fatigue
Loss of appetite	Inability to sleep
Nightmares	Sadness
Headaches	Nausea
Hyperactivity	Lack of concentration
Hyper-alertness	Increase in alcohol or drug consumption



- Talk with someone about your feelings
  - anger, sorrow, and other emotions
  - even though it may be difficult.
- Seek help from professional counselors who deal with post-disaster stress.
- Do not hold yourself responsible for the disastrous event or be frustrated because you feel you cannot help directly in the rescue work.
- Take steps to promote your own physical and emotional healing by healthy eating, rest, exercise, relaxation, and meditation.
- Maintain a normal family and daily routine, limiting demanding responsibilities on yourself and your family.
- Spend time with family and friends.
- Use existing support groups of family, friends, and religious institutions.
- Ensure you are ready for future events by restocking your disaster supplies kits and updating your family disaster plan. Doing these positive actions can be comforting.

	Issues	Public Agencies Responsibilities	Residents & Businesses
<p>Immediate <b>Life</b> &amp; Safety</p>	<p>Food and Shelter</p> <p>People and pet reunifications</p>	<p>Ensure transportation routes are operational</p> <p>Implement public safety measures</p>	<p>Dial 9-1-1 for emergencies</p> <p>Use CERT skills</p>
<p>Short Term <b>Care</b> &amp; Shelter</p>	<p>Restoration of Utilities</p> <p>Crisis counseling</p> <p>Temporary housing</p> <p>Rebuilding infrastructure</p> <p>Loose or wild animals</p>	<p>Issue information on available resources and service locations</p> <p>Issue health alerts &amp; warnings</p> <p>Mitigate secondary damages and effects</p> <p>Coordinate provision of basic services</p>	<p>Some residents in shelters</p> <p>Many businesses re-opening on limited basis</p> <p>Communications limited but functional</p> <p>Transportation difficult in many locations</p> <p>Assistance from human services organizations Red Cross, Salvation Army, etc. may be available.</p>
<p>Long Term <b>Restore</b> &amp; Rebuild</p>	<p>Job losses and unemployment</p> <p>Displaced households</p> <p>Loss of housing stock</p> <p>Transportation issues</p> <p>Long-term economic impacts</p> <p>Community identity</p> <p>Coping with physical and emotional loss</p>	<p>Issue permits for rebuilding</p> <p>Issue information on available emotional, financial, and physical assistance</p> <p>Streamline permit and licensing processes to accommodate high volume requests</p> <p>Convene public forums and task forces targeting specific areas of need</p>	<p>Re-establishing with suppliers and customer base</p> <p>Restoration of pre-disaster employment numbers</p> <p>Rebuilding homes and businesses</p> <p>Potential assistance from government agencies including Small Business Administration and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)</p>

# GET HELP

In the event of a disaster, Santa Cruz County will establish Local Assistance Centers. These centers will have state and County resources, as well as loan and insurance representatives on hand to assist residents, as needed. Tune to your local radio or TV stations for locations and more information.

Information on exposure to toxic substances?	Poison Control Center (California)	1-800-222-1222 <a href="http://www.aapcc.org/DNN">www.aapcc.org/DNN</a>
Emergency Financial First Aid Kit?	Operation Hope	<a href="http://www.operationhope.org">www.operationhope.org</a>
Disaster loan and grant information?	U.S. Small Business Administration	800-659-2955 <a href="http://www.sba.gov">www.sba.gov</a>
Preparing and planning for disasters?	U.S. Department of Homeland Security	<a href="http://www.ready.gov">www.ready.gov</a>
Information and services for individuals, families and businesses needing disaster recovery assistance?	U.S. Department of Homeland Security	<a href="http://www.disasterhelp.gov">www.disasterhelp.gov</a>
Latest earthquake information?	U.S. Geological Survey	<a href="http://www.quake.usgs.gov/recent">www.quake.usgs.gov/recent</a>
Latest weather information?	National Oceanic Atmospheric Administration	<a href="http://www.noaa.gov">www.noaa.gov</a>
Information on environmental disasters?	U.S. Environmental Protection Agency	<a href="http://www.epa.gov/ebtpages/emergencies.html">www.epa.gov/ebtpages/emergencies.html</a>



# DISASTER ASSISTANCE INFORMATION

## What is FEMA Disaster Assistance?

Disaster assistance is money or direct assistance to individuals, families and businesses in an area whose property has been damaged or destroyed and whose losses are not covered by insurance. It is meant to help with critical expenses that cannot be covered in other ways. This assistance is not intended to restore your damaged property to its condition before the disaster. While some housing assistance funds are available through the FEMA Individuals and Households Program, most disaster assistance from the Federal government is in the form of loans administered by the United States Small Business Administration. FEMA Disaster Assistance is only available if the President signs a declaration of disaster

## How do I apply for Disaster Assistance?

There are various services and special programs that may be available when the President signs a Disaster Declaration. The phone number to apply for assistance will be advertised widely following the disaster; notices will be listed on County websites, posted at County Libraries and reported by the news media. Special one-stop centers may also be set up to help residents find the assistance they need.

## How can I get in touch with my family?

The American Red Cross maintains a database to help you find displaced family members. Phone number and website information will be widely publicized during and after a disaster. Contact the local American Red Cross chapter where you are staying for information. Because Red Cross chapters nearest the disaster site will be coping with emergency response operations, do not contact the chapter in the disaster area. Also, FEMA has established the National Emergency Family Registry and Locator System (NEFRS), which has been developed to help reunite families who are separated during a disaster. The NEFRS system will enable displaced individuals the ability to enter personal information into a website database so that they can be located by others. You should also have an out-of-area contact that your family knows to call in case of disaster.



Depending on the magnitude of the disaster, FEMA will decide whether or not individual assistance will be made available.



# FEMA

# DISASTER ASSISTANCE INFORMATION

## What if my home is destroyed?

For immediate housing needs, the American Red Cross and other volunteer agencies set up shelters for people who cannot return to their homes.

Listen to your radio or watch local media for the location of the nearest volunteer agency facility.

For health and space reasons, pets are not permitted in public emergency shelters. Contact the emergency management office or your local animal shelter or humane society to see if there is a shelter set-up to take pets in an emergency.

For those who have longer-term housing needs, FEMA offers several types of assistance, including services and grants to help people repair their homes and find replacement housing.

The American Red Cross can help you find immediate shelter. For long-term assistance after a Presidentially Declared Disaster, call the FEMA registration number and apply for FEMA and Small Business Administration (SBA) assistance programs.

FEMA assistance does not make you whole again, but it can give you a helping hand to recover.

## Where can I get food and water following a disaster?

After a disaster, the American Red Cross and other volunteer agencies will provide food, water and clothing to the best of their ability. Listen to your radio or watch local media for distribution locations.

## What if I lost my job or can't work because of a disaster?

People who lose their jobs because of a disaster may apply for Disaster Unemployment Assistance (DUA). DUA provides weekly benefits to individuals who are unemployed and not eligible for regular unemployment insurance compensation. Apply by registering with FEMA or contacting your local unemployment office.

## What if I think I need legal help?

Local non-profit organizations often provide legal assistance to individuals who have been impacted by disasters. Also, local members of the American Bar Association offer free legal counseling to low-income individuals. You can get more information at a Local Assistance Center or Disaster Recovery Center that may be set up after the President declares a major disaster.



**Tip:** Local Assistance Centers will have resources available to help answer your questions after a disaster.