



Emergency Preparedness for Seniors

Torrance City Council

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To locate this publication on-line please go to:

www.TorranceCA.Gov/DisasterPreparedness

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City of Torrance Threat Advisory System

The City of Torrance has adopted the following color-coded threat advisory system. The system is based, in general, upon the Federal system outlined by the Department of Homeland Security. The level of threat is gauged upon the risk to the City of Torrance or an area geographically close to the City that would have a direct affect on the City's ability to provide service to the Community. It is the responsibility of the Emergency Services Director (City Manager) to identify the current threat level for the City of Torrance.

Note: The City's level of threat may be different than the County at any given time. For example, the City may be Green, indicating that we are in routine operations, with a low risk of a possible emergency; however, the County, given its' broader geographic area and facilities, may be Blue. This does not signify a lack of coordination.

CITY - GREEN

Low Condition (Normal/Routine Levels)

There is a low risk of a possible disaster or emergency. The following steps should be applied:

Continuously review and update City and Department Emergency plans..
Ensure training for response to all emergencies is current and on-going.

Reguarly assess facilities for vulnerabilities and take appropriate measures to reduce risks.

CITY - BLUE

Guarded Condition (Heightened Concern)

There is a general risk of possible disaster or emergency. In addition to the preciously-outlined steps the following measures may be applied:

- Check all emergency communications systems.

- Review and update emergency procedures for specific hazards.
- Provide the public and City employees with necessary information.

CITY - YELLOW

(Elevated Condition (General Threat))

There is a significant risk of a possible disaster or emergency. In addition to the previously outlined steps, the following additional measures may be applied:

- Increase surveillance/checking of critical locations.
- Coordinate emergency plans with nearby jurisdictions.
- Assess further steps needed to respond to the current hazard within the context of the current threat information.
- Implement, as appropriate, contingency and emergency response plans.
- Consider alerting the City Emergency Operations Center (EOC) staff.
- Consider activation the City EOC.

CITY - ORANGE

High Condition (Imminent Threat)

There is a possible disaster or emergency. In addition to the previously outlined steps, the following additional measures may be applied:

- Coordinate necessary security efforts with local or County Law enforcement agencies and other public safety organizations.
- Take additional precaution at public events.
- Prepare to work at alternate sites or with minimized and/or dispersed workforce.
- Restrict access to essential personnel at governmental facilities.
- Activate the City EOC.

CITY - RED

Severe Condition (Specific Localized Threat)

There is a severe risk of a disaster or emergency. In addition to the previous steps, the following measures may be applied:

- Assign emergency/response personnel and pre-position specially trained personnel.

- Consider closing non-essential public and government facilities.
- Increase or redirect personnel to address critical emergency needs.

CITY OF TORRANCE ALERTING AND WARNING SYSTEMS

Threat advisory systems levels may be accessed on the City's website at www.torranceca.gov or by phone at (310)618-2320.

Success in saving lives and property is dependant upon timely dissemination of warning and emergency information to persons in threatened areas. The City has various systems in place to provided local information in the event of an emergency as follows:

- **COMMUNITY WARNING SIREN** - alerts public in close proximity to the Exxon-Mobil Refinery of a chemical release and the need to shelter in place.
- **EMERGENCY NOTIFICATION TOOLS** - CityWatch

The CityWatch telephone notification system is one element of the Torrance Community Warning System (TCWS). It replaced the Community Alert Network (C.A.N.) as the telephone notification element of TCWS.

CityWatch is an internet accessible system with a direct tie to the City's Geographic Information System (GIS). This allows the users of the system to accurately determine the notification area for any event that requires notifying the public.

The CityWatch telephone notification system also comes with 10,000 notification minutes as part of the annual contract with the City. These minutes can be used for training and notification purposes. As of the date of this document, additional usage time can be purchased for 9 cents per minute.

CityWatch has up to a 99 percent telephone number accuracy rate. That is because the Fire Department's IT personnel receive updated telephone information from Verizon and AT&T quarterly. This allows the system to be upgraded on a regular basis.

II. Activation

Any activation of the CityWatch telephone notification system shall be authorized by the following personnel:

- EOC Fire or Police Branch Supervisor
- EOC Director/Deputy Director
- Unified Incident Commander
- Fire Incident Commander
- Police Incident Commander
- As needed for any other event affecting the City, with the concurrence of the on duty Fire Battalion Chief or Police Watch Commander.

Activation of the City Watch system shall be carried out by Communications Center personnel as directed by either the Incident Commander or the incident's Notification Officer, who shall be a member of the Command Staff only after the area to be notified and the message to be used have been clearly determined.

III. All Clear Notification

Anytime any TCWS elements have been activated to notify the general population of the City an "All Clear" message shall be sent to that same population. This is especially critical whenever the notification impacts any school.

- **CRENSHAW BARRIER SYSTEM** - restricts traffic on Crenshaw Boulevard by the Exxon-Mobil Refinery.
- **RADIO ALERT NETWORK** - is a City activated radio system within certain public and private facilities, including some private homes to warn of an emergency.
- **CiTISOUNDS** - City radio AM 1620.
- **TORRANCE AMATEUR RADIO ASSOCIATION (TARA)** - local HAM operators who are Disaster Service Volunteers, that have communication links to the Emergency Operations Center (EOC).
- **KFWB** - Local radio AM 980.
- **KNX** - Local radio AM 1070.
- **CiTICABLE** - City Cable TV Channel 3.
- **DISASTER HOTLINE** - The City has designed and implemented a phone bank which will relieve calls going to the Police and Fire dispatch center and will provide necessary information to the public when they call. The phone number is (310)618-2320.
- **EXXON-MOBIL** - 24 Hour Hotline (310)505-3158.

STATE OF CALIFORNIA

The California Emergency Management Agency operates a toll-free hotline to address concerns and questions that Californians have had following the September 11th attacks and anthrax incidents. The "Safety Information and Referral Line" - 1-800-555-5234 - operates daily between 6 a.m. to 9 p.m., has English and Spanish speaking operators, and also provides a line for the hearing impaired at 1-800-550-5281

WEBSITES OF INTEREST

There is good information available on the Internet on emergency preparedness. The following listing provides a sample of useful information available:

<http://www.tpd.torranceCa.gov> - City of Torrance/Disaster Preparedness.

<http://www.enla.org> - Emergency Network Los Angeles.

<http://www.fema.gov> - Federal Emergency Management Administration.

<http://oes.ca.gov> - California Emergency Management Agency.

<http://www.nws.noaa.gov> - National Weather Service.

<http://www.labt.org> - LA County Public Health.

<http://www.lacounty.gov> - Los Angeles County.

<http://www.bt.cdc.gov> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

<http://www.shakeout.org> - Southern California Earthquake Center.

<http://www.earthquakecountry.org> Southern California Earthquake Center 'Putting Down Roots in Earthquake Country'

<http://www.earthquakecountry.org> - Southern California Earthquake Center 'Putting Down Roots In Earthquake Country'.

<http://www.ci.torrance.ca.us/Parks/6649.htm> - Focal Point - sponsored by the Torrance Commission on Aging in cooperation with the Torrance Community Services.

<http://www.exxonmobil.com/torrance> - Exxon Mobil.

<http://www.salvationarmy.org> - Salvation Army.

<http://vialoflife.com> - Vial of Life Home Page.

More available information: (The following may be downloaded or ordered for mail delivery):

Available through the FEMA <http://www.FEMA.gov> or call 1-800-480-2520:

Are you Ready, #1522
Earthquake Facts, #D559
Financial Aid Kit, #532

Available through the Southern California Earthquake Center
<http://www.earthquakecountry.info>
Putting Down Roots in Earthquake Country

The Vial of Life is available through the Torrance Fire Department, 1701 Crenshaw Blvd., (310)781-7071

The Vial of Life is also available through <http://www.vialoflife.com>

Paramedics, police and hospitals are trained to check cell phones for emergency contact information. By entering ICE (In Case of an Emergency) in your cell phone contact list, emergency responders may quickly obtain any medical history necessary to help you, and will let them notify your loved one or friend of your situation. Add ICE to your contact list, then enter the name and number of your contact.

EARTHQUAKES

At the end of this handbook you will find an EARTHQUAKE CHECKLIST. This check list is meant as a guideline to be used in preparation for all disasters, especially earthquakes. Remove the check list and tape it to a wall or surface (like the refrigerator) that you notice every day. Be sure to have accomplished all the suggested items, before a disaster occurs.

Now that you have prepared yourself, here's what to do...

DURING and AFTER an EARTHQUAKE

- If you are standing, duck, cover, and hold. If there is no cover, go to an inside wall, crouch down and cover your head. If you are in bed, put a pillow over your head, and stay there. When outside, go to a clear area.
- Prepare to be self-sufficient for seven (7) days.
- Turn on your portable radio for instructions and news reports.
- Tune to KNX 1070 AM, or 1620 AM CitiSounds.

- For your own safety, cooperate fully with the public safety officials and instructions. Remember the land lines and cell phones will probably not work.
- Prepare for aftershocks. Remove any items from high places and pictures from walls, if they did not come down during the initial quake.

FIRE PREPAREDNESS

- Make two escape plans for your home. Practice the plan. Know all the exits from your home, (windows as well as doors).
- Keep your bedroom door closed at night.
- Change the batteries in your smoke detectors twice a year. Doing this when you switch between standard and daylight savings time will help you remember.

IN CASE OF A FIRE EMERGENCY

- When a smoke detector goes off, don't waste time. Get out immediately.
- Most fire related deaths are due to toxic fumes. Drop to the floor where the air is the cleanest.
- Test doors for heat with the back of your hand. If a door is hot, find another exit.
- If your clothing catches fire, drop to the floor and roll
- Call 911 from a neighbors house.
- Do not go back into a burning building.
- If you cannot get out, go to a window and signal for help.

SHELTER IN PLACE

If you hear the non-testing sirens from Exxon-Mobil you must shelter in place.

- ✓ Stay inside your home.
- ✓ Close all the windows, turn off fans, and air conditioners. Close any fireplace flues.
- ✓ Listen to the radio for updated emergency and/or evacuation instructions.
- ✓ Shelter in a room with the least windows and doors.

Take your emergency supplies with you. Include the radio and a phone, if possible.

Tape around windows, doors, exhaust fans and heaters. Heavy plastic, like trash sacks, can be used to seal off windows, and outlets.

Keep blinds and curtains closed. To avoid injury in possible explosions, stay away from the windows.

Stay in place until the radio tells you all is safe or that you must evacuate.

If you are in a vehicle, stay there. Pull over to the side of the road and turn the engine off. Close all the windows and vents. Do not turn the ignition back on.

Do not get out of the car until the “all clear” has been given.

If at any time you are told to evacuate, follow the evacuation orders.

Not complying puts everyone in danger.

CRITICAL RECORDS

In the aftermath of a major earthquake you will need vital personal information for a variety of reasons, including the processing of insurance claims and disaster assistance applications. Keep the following items and documents and/or information about them in more than one location so that if you cannot access your home or bank safety deposit box, you have another place out of area that you may retrieve the information.

- Social Security Cards
- Birth and Death Certificates
- Marriage Certificates
- Drivers' Licenses
- Credit Cards
- Insurance Policies
- Recent Income Tax Returns
- Mortgage or Rental Receipts
- Employment Paycheck Stubs
- Deeds
- Stocks and Bonds
- Saving and Checking Account Books
- Inventory and Recent Photos/Videos of Cars, Home, Household Goods, etc., for Insurance Claims.
- Small Valuables: Cameras, Watches, Jewelry, etc.
- Wills
- Health History, Allergies, Blood Types, Vial of Life
- Recent Photos of Family Members and Friends for Identification in Case They Are Separate

- Passport
- Green Card
- Medical Consent Forms
- Medicare and/or Medical Cards

PREPARING FOR YOUR PETS

In the event of a disaster in Torrance, the Animal Disaster Team (ADT) will set up an animal shelter next to the human shelter when practical.

Those Torrance residents who need to come to a shelter will not be asked to leave their pets behind; instead, their pets will be admitted to our temporary shelter. If these animals are injured, they will be referred to a participating veterinarian until their owner has found a place to live.

Before a disaster, prepare your pet's disaster kit:

- Portable carrier for small cats and dogs (clearly marked with your name, address, and phone number).
- Leashes and/or harnesses to maintain control of frightened animals.
- Food and water for seven (7) days stored in plastic containers. One (1) gallon of water a day for a 40 pound dog, and one(1)quart a day for each cat, and remember, food must be rotated to ensure freshness.
- Medications and current vaccination/medical records in a waterproof container (please mark expiration date on your calendar as a reminder to call your veterinarian to order new medications with a later expiration date).

All pets should have identification tags attached to a collar they always wear (should include pet's name, owners name, address, phone number and an OUT OF STATE contact to be reached in time of disaster).

- Litter box, scoop, litter.
- Poop scooper or plastic bags to pick up and store waste.
- Photos of you with your pet to show ownership.
- Pet First Aid Kit.
- Brush, treat, toys to calm your pet.

After a Disaster

- ✓ Check your pet for injuries, remember, even a gentle pet may respond defensively when frightened or in pain.
- ✓ If you must muzzle your dog, use gauze rolls from your first aid kit.
- ✓ Place a towel over your cat to handle it.
- ✓ Apply direct pressure to any areas that are bleeding.
- ✓ Have your pet examined as soon as possible by a veterinarian.

If Your Pet Is Lost

- ✓ Fill out a lost pet report and take current photographs to nearby shelters.
- ✓ Do not just call the shelter to locate your pet, go to each shelter in person to look at every pet - yours may be among them.
- ✓ Do not stop looking for your pets. They are counting on you to find them.

City of Torrance **Disaster Service Volunteer Teams**

Animal Disaster Team (ADT)

ADT was formed to provide shelter, care, and feeding for animals impacted by disasters. Under the direction of the Torrance Animal Control the ADT's goal is to provide quality shelter and care in a timely, organized manner following a disaster. The mission will vary according to the magnitude of the disaster. The ADT can assist with pets, allowing police department, fire department and other disaster responders to concentrate their efforts on public safety.

Community Emergency Response Team (CERT)

The CERT volunteer program (members are trained by the Torrance Fire Department) helps train people to be better prepared to respond to emergency situations in our community. When emergencies occur CERT members can give critical support to first responders, provide immediate assistance to victims, and organize spontaneous volunteers at a disaster site. CERT members can also help with non emergency projects that help improve the safety of the community.

Torrance Amateur Radio Association (TARA)

The TARA volunteer program provides emergency communications during a major communications outage. Utilizing a multi-band amateur radio station coupled with licensed amateur radio operators stationed throughout the community, TARA ensures vital information is shared among the first responders. During disasters they report directly to the Torrance Emergency Operations Center.

For more information on these City organizations, go to <http://www.torranceca.gov/dsv.htm>

NOTES

EARTHQUAKE PREPAREDNESS CHECK LIST

- Eliminate hazard. Make it as easy as possible to quickly get under a sturdy table or desk for protection.
- Anchor special equipment such as telephones and life-support systems.
- Fasten tanks of gas, such as oxygen to the wall.
- Keep a list of medications, allergies, special equipment, names and numbers of doctors, pharmacists, and family members. Make sure you have this list with you at all times.
- Keep an extra pair of eyeglasses and medication with emergency supplies.
- Keep walking aids near you at all times. Have extra walking aids in different rooms of the house.
- Keep sturdy shoes, gloves and a flashlight by your bed.
- Put a security light in each room. These lights plug into any outlet and light up automatically if there is a loss of electricity. They continue operating for four to six hours, and they can be turned off by hand in an emergency.
- Keep flashlights in every room.
- Make sure you have a whistle to signal for help.
- Keep extra batteries for hearing aids with your emergency supplies. Remember to replace them annually.
- Have emergency water and canned food on hand. You should have available one gallon of water per person per day.
- Keep extra emergency supplies at your bed side.
- Find two people you trust who will check on you after an earthquake. Let them know your special needs, show them how to operate any equipment you use, and where your emergency supplies are kept. Give them a spare key. Your Neighborhood Watch Block Captain and trained members of Map Your Neighborhood can be available to help.

- Have cash, in small bills and change, on hand.
- Identify an 'Out of State' contact by following these procedures:
- Call a relative or a friend who lives out of the state of California and designate him or her to be your family's Emergency Out of State Contact.
- Tell the contact that after a major earthquake, or other emergency, your family may be separated. This friend or relative will be your best means of communication. Your family members should call as soon as possible, to receive or leave messages.
- Input ICE in your cell phone and make a card to carry with you at all times. On each card print in ink: the contacts name, area code and phone number, your own name, address, phone number, medical condition, allergies, and medications.
- Make a similar card for each family member and instruct members how and when to use their Emergency Out of State Contact Card. Be sure that schools and babysitters have the name and number of your Out of State Contact.
- Know your insurance agent's contact information.
- Check to see if there is a pay phone near your home or business.
- Have an evacuation plan, practice it. Make a list of possessions you want to take with you, so you don't forget something important to you.