



Be Aware . . . Plan, Prepare

Many of us have been at least a bit frightened after the earthquakes, floods and wild fires that have hit California in recent years. We wouldn't be human if we hadn't been. Fear is a natural reaction – one that domestic and international terrorists use as a weapon against us to achieve their political and social goals.

Much of the fear caused by terrorism – or the threat of it – is based in the uncertainty of when it will occur, whether we, our loved ones or friends will be injured, or whether the business we own, or that employs us, will be targeted. We feel we have no control over our fate.

As individuals and business owners, we can take control of our fate by taking some of the same actions we take to prepare for earthquakes, floods and fires – store a three-day supply of food and water, make sure we have flashlights, portable radios and spare batteries; and identify an out-of-town contact and place to reunite if we are separated from loved ones. We also can seize control by becoming more aware of surroundings and reporting suspicious activity to local officials.

Taking these and the other steps described in this brochure may not enable us to prevent every terrorist attack, but we can take away some of their ammunition. After all, strength, courage and determination are part of being an American.

Prepare Now

- Develop a disaster plan for your family.
- Have a telephone number of a relative or friend outside the area for all family members to call should you be separated. Make sure each family member has the contact's work and home telephone numbers and e-mail address, in case phone calls can't get through. Establish a family meeting place in another area of the city in case you have to evacuate.
- Learn basic First Aid.
- Make sure you locate and check your emergency preparedness kit to ensure there are fresh batteries, water, food and First Aid kit. If you need to create a kit, make sure it has at least a 72-hour supply of water and food, a First Aid kit, fire extinguisher, flashlight, battery-operated radio, and extra batteries. It is also a
- good idea to include some cash and copies of important family documents (birth certificates, passports, and licenses).
- Know where fire exits and fire extinguishers are, at home, at work or when traveling, and practice emergency evacuation procedures with your family.

- Know the emergency procedures at your child's school. Be sure to give your caregiver appropriate authorization to pick up your children if you are unable to do so.

Be Alert

- Always be aware of your surroundings, particularly in airports, large cities, large crowds or popular tourist areas. Report any suspicious activities to local authorities.
- When you travel, keep your belongings with you at all times, and DON'T accept packages from strangers.

If An Emergency Occurs

- Stay calm and don't panic.
- Follow your emergency plan. Check for and treat injuries. First Aid tips are in the white pages of your telephone book.)
- Check for damage, fires, gas leaks, and other hazards
- using a flashlight. **Don't** light matches or candles. Don't turn on electrical switches —sparks could cause
- an explosion.
- Check on your neighbors. E-mail or call your family contact.
- Stay informed by listening to a battery-powered radio,
- and follow instructions issued by authorities.
- **Don't** call 911 unless you have a life and death emergency.

Evacuating

- If you evacuate from work, use the stairs and stay to the right to leave a clear path for firefighters and other emergency personnel. If you evacuate from home, put on sturdy shoes to protect your feet from debris. Take your pets with you to your prearranged meeting place. (Pets are not allowed in public shelters.)
- If you are instructed to "shelter-in-place," stay indoors, close windows and doors, and turn off air conditioning systems. Do not leave your sheltered location until instructed to do so.

Explosions and Fires

- If you hear an explosion nearby, take cover under a desk or sturdy table, away from falling items. Then exit the building as quickly as possible.
- If there's a fire, stay low, cover your nose and mouth with a wet cloth, and seek a safe escape route, away from heat or flames.

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- If you are trapped in debris, cover your mouth with a handkerchief or clothing to avoid breathing dust. Use a flashlight or whistle to signal to rescuers, or tap on a pipe or wall. If you shout, you may inhale dangerous amounts of dust.)

Chemical or Biological Threats

Although a terrorist attack with a conventional weapon is considered more likely than a large-scale bioterrorist attack, local, state, and federal authorities are working together in California to assess terrorist threats and coordinate a rapid response if necessary. Experts recommend that you *not* buy a gas mask. The mask can only be effective if worn prior to an attack and often there may not be advanced notice. Additionally, don't stockpile antibiotics. They can cause side effects and should be taken only with medical supervision.

If you think you've been exposed, contact your local physician, medical clinic, or local health department. For more information on specific biological agents, call the **Safety Information and Referral Line at 1-800-550-5234** (TTY 1-800-550-5281) or go on-line at www.oes.ca.gov (*click on Terrorism*”).

Water Supplies

It would be difficult to effectively contaminate our drinking water supplies due to the fact that any chemical or biological agent would be diluted and filtration methods would commonly kill the agent. However, emergency plans for California's water systems have been reviewed while surveillance and security throughout the water system infrastructure has been increased.

Mail

The U.S. Postal Service, package delivery companies, and your own office mailroom are all taking extra security precautions to identify and isolate any suspicious letters or packages. There is little chance that you will receive such an item at home. If you *do* come across a piece of mail or other item that looks suspicious, or if you believe your mail, car, desk or home was contaminated, call the non-emergency phone number for your local law enforcement or fire department. They have the expertise to determine the correct actions to be taken.

Some general precautions:

- Wash your hands with soap and warm water before and after handling the mail.
- Do not eat, drink or smoke around the mail.
- If you have open cuts or lesions on your hands, disposable latex gloves may be appropriate.
- Surgical masks, eye protection or gowns are *not* necessary or recommended.

If a letter contains powders or a written threat, take the following steps:

- Do *not* shake or empty the envelope.
- Isolate the specific area of the workplace so that no one

disturbs the item.

- Evacuation of the entire workplace is *not* necessary at this point.
- Call your local law enforcement agency. They will provide further instructions. Wash your hands with soap and water for one minute.

Government Readiness

The Governor's Office of Emergency Services (OES) coordinates preparedness for and response to natural disasters such as earthquakes, fires, and floods by activating the California Emergency Management System used by all California public safety agencies. OES also coordinates state-level terrorism preparedness, response, and recovery.

The California Terrorism Response Plan was activated early on September 11, 2001 and will remain in force as long as necessary to ensure swift response to any incident in the state.

OES is the most experienced, innovative, and effective emergency management agency in the world. In the past 15 years, OES has successfully managed response and recovery to more than 22 presidentially declared disasters, including the 1994 Northridge Earthquake, that was the most costly disaster in U.S. history until September 11, 2001.

California's nearly 80,000 sworn peace officers, more than 60,000 firefighters, and thousands of emergency management personnel, combined with the State's multi-disciplinary approach to emergency response, give California a robust and formidable capability to deal with any disaster or emergency.

For More Information

California Governor's Office of Emergency Services www.oes.ca.gov (*click on "Terrorism"*)— This site contains a comprehensive collection of Web links from the State, Federal, and private sectors.

Centers for Disease Control Bioterrorism Website

www.bt.cdc.gov

Johns Hopkins University – Center for Biodefense Studies

www.hopkins-biodefense.org/

American Red Cross

www.redcross.org

Contact your local law enforcement agency for more information.

Safety Information and Referral Line

OES operates the Safety Information and Referral Line to provide non-emergency information on terrorism and related issues. Call 1-800-550-5234 (TTY 1-800-550-5281) for recorded messages (24-hour service). Trained technicians are available to answer questions directly during peak hours.