DISASTER MITIGATION IN CALIFORNIA: BUILDING RESILIENT COMMUNITIES

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Reducing the Impact of Disasters: Mitigation

- Disaster Are Not Emergencies. They Are Extreme Events That Stress Our Structures, Our Communities, Our Government Capabilities, and Us.
- Objective of Mitigation is to Reduce Risk (Impact)
- Objective of Being Resilient is to Able to Adapt to the Damage That Occurs and Resume Service After a Disaster Occurs
Resilient: A Definition

- Resilience means that an organization or individual can absorb the impact of a disaster and bounce back to continue to function and serve their clients.
- Not just Prepared for Immediate Life Safety Activities But to Re-establish Self, Family, Business, & Delivery of Services in Schools and Social Support Agencies

Mitigation and Resilience

The Gap

Mitigation Prevents Collapse

Recovery is Enabled by Resilience
Mitigation Reduces Loss of Capacity
Resilience Enables Communities to “Bounce Back” to a “New Normal”

A Resilient Community Is Comprised of Resilient Sectors
- All Sectors Participate in Mitigation and Planning
- All Sectors Have a Role in Being Prepared
- The Collapse of Any One Sector Jeopardizes the Community
- Resilience Emphasizes
  - Mitigation
  - Collaboration and Coordination
  - Sharing Resources
Sectors of a Community

NGO
 Individual
 Family
 Neighborhood
 Business
 School

Sectors Integrated as Community

NGO
 Individual
 Family
 Government
 Business
 Neighborhood
 School
Creating a Resilient Individual

- Know the Hazards You Face
  - At Home
  - In Your Neighborhood
  - At Work or Commuting
- Learn How to Mitigate the Hazard
- Know How to Protect Yourself
- Know How to Respond to Save Your Life, Your Family, Your Colleagues, Your Neighbors
- Work to Mitigate Hazards

Creating a Resilient Family

- Have a Family Plan for Disasters at Home
- Have A Plan to Communicate and Re-unite if Separated
- Have Emergency Supplies, Food and Water
- Have Flash Lights, Radios, Extra Batteries, Tools
- Have First Aid Kit and Training
- Mitigate Hazards in the Home
Creating a Resilient Community – The First Response

- Know the Hazards in Your Neighborhood
- Work with Neighbors to Make the Neighborhood Safer
- Organize to Respond with Neighbors
- Create a Disaster Plan in Your Neighborhood
- Each Family Should Know How to Save Lives
- Each Family Should Know Their Neighbors and Who Will Need Help During A Disaster
- *Bosai-Fukushi Komuniti (BOKOMI)*

The Challenge to Government

- Local Governments are Key Responders
- Many Local Governments Do Not Have Enough Staff to Respond
- Many Officials Have Not Experienced a Disaster
- Sudden (No Warning) Disasters!
- Government Needs to Expand Capacity Rapidly
Creating a Resilient Government

- Government is Part of Local, Regional and National Mutual Aid System
- All Employees have a Disaster Mission and Assignment, Not Just Fire, Police and Health Staff
- Agencies and Staff are prepared to Provide Mutual Aid to Other Agencies in Need
- Agencies Have a Plan to Sustain Disaster Operations for Weeks or Months
- Government partners with NGOs, Business, Faith- and Community-Based Organizations
- Plan to Use Volunteers -- Recruit Before the Disaster
- Disasters are a Risk Management Issue for Every Agency

One Role of Government

- Create a Disaster Volunteer Network
- Recruit and Train Volunteers
- Sort, Screen and Assign Skilled Volunteers
- Provide “Overhead” Management of Volunteers
Create A Resilient School

- Have a School Disaster Plan for Security and Site Safety After a Disaster
  - Disaster Assignments for Staff, Teachers, Students and Parents
  - Have a Plan to Communicate with Parents
  - Have a Plan to Relocate and Care for, or Release Students
- Have Teachers Trained About Safety In the Classroom and How to Mitigate Hazards
- Science, History, Geography and Geology Classes Should Introduce Natural and Technological hazards
- Teachers Should Prepare Their Families for Impact of Their Roles as “Child Caretakers”
Teachers, Student Teachers, Students & Parents Should Partner in School Safety and Know the School’s Disaster Plan (Learn, Teach, Act, Communicate, Promote Preparedness)

If the School Will be Used as a Community Refuge or Shelter, Identify an Alternative Site for Providing Classes

Students Should Bring “Emergency Supply Bags” During First Week of School Each Year
- Water, Juice & Energy Bars
- Emergency Contact Information
- Family Pictures
- Light Sticks

Create Resilient Businesses

Encourage Employees to be Prepared at Home
Provide Life Safety Training in the Work Place & Conduct Response and Evacuation Drills
Provide for Employees or Clients Who Cannot get Home
Have a Disaster Plan
- Disaster Response Plan
- Business Recovery (BRP) & Continuity of Operations Plans (COOP)
Encourage Employees to be Volunteers
Identify a Disaster Response or Recovery Role
A Resilient Community Starts With One – The Individual
- Plan to Be a Resource to Your Family, Your Neighborhood, Your School, Your Business and Your Community
- Identify and Mitigate Hazards
- Practice “Drop, Cover and Hold!”
- Be Prepared to Respond to Save Lives
- Be A Volunteer and Train as if it is an Important Job
- Each of us Needs to Become Advocates for Resilient Communities

Observations and Lessons
- Emergency Response is Local. Rescue and Saving Lives is Local. Local Government Needs to be In-charge. Logistics is a Role for State and National Government.
- Prepared and Trained Residents, and Local Police and Fire Staff are More Effective Than “International Search & Rescue Teams”
- The Job is Too Big for Local Governments Alone. They Need to Partner With NGOs to Open and Operate Shelters, Provide Food and Care, and Sustain Relief Operations.
- Trained and Managed Volunteers are Essential!