

CHERRYHILL NEIGHBORS “PREPARE AND BE AWARE”

**Why is there a gallon of water on your doorstep?
Because it is THE MOST IMPORTANT THING you will need following a disaster.**

We live in “Earthquake Country”, and if you were here for the 1989 Loma Prieta earthquake, you undoubtedly have a story to tell, still fresh in your memory after 25 years. And what about other events? Our Cherryhill neighborhood experienced a tornado in 1998, and just recently, heavy rains led to street flooding. Chemical spill? Fire? Extended power outage? The possibility is always present that a disaster could happen. And we know that eventually a major earthquake will impact us.

When we talk about Emergency Preparedness, we mean preparing for a disaster, when city and county services will be overwhelmed and unavailable for days if not weeks. Preparations should see you through the actual event and then the aftermath. You will need to be able to take care of yourself and your family during that time.

Here’s a sobering thought: Your time for preparation ends when disaster strikes. That’s it. You are either prepared or you’re not.

If you have already started your preparations, you’re ahead of most people. But you probably need to keep going, either extending the scope of your preparations, or refreshing and updating your supplies and plans. And if you haven’t started, now’s the time! Sunnyvale’s **PEP (Personal Emergency Preparedness) Class** is very highly recommended to get you started.

Preparations made for an earthquake will probably see you through other disasters as well. But how do you prepare and where do you start? We’ve given you one gallon of water – you’ll need more. Let’s begin with a summary of the basics:

Water, Shelter, Food and Making a Plan

WATER: The most important item to store is drinkable water, one gallon per person per day for 14 days. Don’t forget your pets – one gallon per pet per day as well.

SHELTER: Your home is your shelter. Make it as safe as you can: strap your water heater and know where your utility shut-offs are as well as how and when to turn

them off. Secure heavy items. If your home is damaged, have an alternative shelter and warm clothing available.

FOOD: Store food that is familiar and easy to prepare, enough for your family and pets for 14 days. Be sure to have enough medications on hand, too.

MAKING A PLAN: How will you communicate with your family? Where will you meet? How will you evacuate your home? What will you take? Practice your plan and update it when needed. Talk to your neighbors.

Best Practices in Preparation for a Disaster:

- Build your stores of necessary items (water, food, medications, batteries, etc.).
- Keep your supplies in multiple locations throughout the home, garage, outdoor shed, car trunk, etc., so if one area is damaged or inaccessible, you can still get to others.
- Rotate your stores, using them up as you replace with fresh items.
- Make your plans and make sure everyone in the family has and understands them.
- Practice your plans (evacuation, communication, alternative food preparation).
- Talk to your neighbors. They may be looking after your home and pets if you are away when disaster strikes.

Best Practices in the Aftermath of a Disaster:

- Follow your plans. Make sure you and your family are OK. Then check on your neighbors if possible.
- If you suspect a gas leak, turn off your gas (smell of gas, hiss of escaping gas, dials spinning abnormally fast). PG&E must turn your gas back on later—do not do this yourself.
- Turn off your water at the valve where it comes into the home to prevent loss or contamination of your drinkable water.
- **Listen to the radio, 1680AM**, for updates on utility services and area damage in Sunnyvale.
- Stay safe! Always stay in teams of two. Do not do anything above your level of training. Do not become a victim.

Basic Preparedness Checklist:

- **Take Sunnyvale's PEP (Personal Emergency Preparedness) Class.** Two hours jam-packed with information and instructions—for FREE! For info or to register for a class, email sunnyvalepep@gmail.com or call 408-730-7190.
- **Make a plan!** Decide with your family who you will call and where you will meet after a disaster if you have had to evacuate or if you can't get home. Write down the plan (with phone numbers) and give a copy to everyone.
- **Store water!** One gallon per person per day for at least 3 days, preferably 14 days. Don't forget your pets. In addition, have a water filter and purification method.
- **Create a Bedside Bag** with sturdy shoes, socks, work gloves and flashlight for each family member.
- **Buy a fire extinguisher**, or replace an old one. Learn how to use it! Routinely install fresh batteries in smoke detectors.
- **Make sure your hot water heater is securely strapped.** If it falls, you lose all that drinkable water, and the potential for fire is very high because of the gas line.
- **Know where your gas and water shut off valves are.** Do you know how and when to turn them off? Do you know how to safely turn your electricity off and back on?
- **Keep a wrench with your gas meter** so it's always there when you need it.
- **Have your house bolted to the foundation.**
- **Secure anything tall and/or heavy** that could fall or fly across the room, causing injury or damage.
- **Store extra food (14 days/person and pets), medications, hygiene and first-aid supplies.** Don't forget manual can openers and an alternative food preparation method.
- **Create "Go Bags" for each member of your family** for emergency evacuation from home, school or work. Put one in your car, too, in case you become stranded. Include a bottle of water, walking shoes, extra medications, rain poncho, copies of ID and other important info, and some cash in small bills, among other necessities.
- **Make a list of what you would take with you** if you need to evacuate your home, listed by importance based on how much time you have to evacuate. Put the list by your door or in your Go Bag.
- **Prepare a Go Bag for pets** (leash or carrier, vaccination and microchip records, and a picture of you with your pet).
- **Store alternative shelter supplies** (tent/tarp/emergency blankets) outside your home, with a portable toilet.
- **Have an emergency radio on hand** (battery, crank, solar), as well extra flashlights and batteries.
- **Know your child's school emergency plan**, as well as your workplace plan.
- **Consider any special needs for your family**, such as infants, elderly, disabled, other languages spoken, etc.
- **Store vital documents and an inventory of your possessions** (with pictures if possible) in a safe place, such as a safe deposit box or at another family member's home.
- Visit www.ready.gov—an excellent source of additional information!

WHAT TO DO TODAY: Add to your water storage as soon as possible and continue to develop your disaster readiness supplies and plans.

HELP PREVENT CRIME: BE AWARE!

- **Make sure to lock ALL doors and windows** before leaving and use a secondary locking device on doors and windows (i.e. thumb locks for windows and a dead bolt with a heavy duty strike plate w/ 3" screws for doors).
- **Lock the side gate with a padlock** to prevent easy access into the backyard.
- **Install motion sensor lights** around the house to alert you of someone's presence.
- **Make your presence known** by responding to the door when someone knocks. Burglars will knock to see if anyone is home before they try to break in.
- **Take an inventory of all your valuables** and include serial numbers as well as pictures of the items and their location so you can quickly identify if something is missing.
- **Install an alarm system** that best fits your needs, but consider these features: interior motion sensors, door and window sensors, a backup battery in the event power to the house is shut off and a system independent of your home phone line.
- **When leaving your home**, even for a short errand, give the impression someone is home. Leave lights on timers in various areas of the home and have music or the television on.
- **Be aware of who is in your neighborhood.** If you see anyone who is suspicious call 408-730-7180 to report them. Do not confront the person but get a good description (clothing, approximate height and weight, facial features, etc.) and provide as much information to dispatch as you can.
- Find more info at crimeprevention.insunnyvale.com