



City of Santa Barbara

Get Ready Santa Barbara!

Explore Emergency Management in 2012



Volume 2, Issue 9

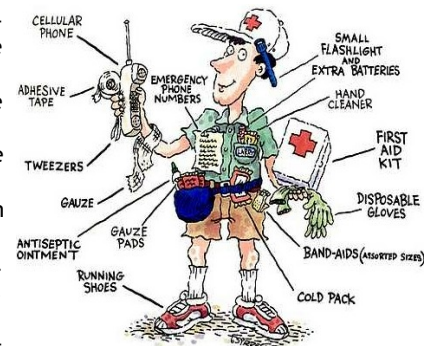
September 2012

It's National Preparedness Month!

Are you prepared for a disaster? If you are, take this month to restock and replenish your disaster kit, if not, take this month to begin to prepare! Being prepared for a disaster means more peace of mind, knowing that you have what you need to survive a disaster and you know where it is located. Not sure where to start your preparations? A good place to start is by assessing the types of emergencies you are likely to encounter in your daily life. Here in Santa Barbara we are at risk for wildfires, earthquakes, tsunami's and flooding to name a few. In the Midwest, you may be more likely to encounter more tornados, and snow-storms than earthquakes and tsunamis.

Once you have an idea of what risks you may encounter, begin building your disaster kit. The list below provides some basics that every disaster kit should have. Remember you know yourself and your family better than anyone so take some time to personalize this kit for your needs.

- * **Food**—at least 72 hours worth of non-perishable food for every member of your family. Try and include foods high in nutritional value like beans and protein bars.
- * **Water**— a minimum of one gallon, per person, per day for three days.
- * **Flashlight(s) and spare batteries**— if possible, consider getting one for every family member or a larger battery operated lantern.
- * **Battery powered radio**—for listening to emergency updates from news sources when the power is out.
- * **First-aid kit**—these can be purchased or you can make your own. Include, at the least, gloves, sterile dressings, bandages, gauze, medical tape, tweezers, scissors and antibacterial ointment.
- * **Clothing**—have a change of clothing for every family member including shoes. Emergency kit clothing should be durable (old jeans work best). Clothing should be long pants and long sleeves and shoes should be closed-toed. Don't forget socks and underwear too!
- * **Tools**—include tools for shutting off utilities (such as gas and water) as well as a pocket knife, matches, and a can opener.
- * **Sanitation Supplies**—wet wipes, trash bags, kitty litter, and plastic ties will be useful for a number of things in a disaster.
- * **Prescriptions**— this includes medicines and eyeglasses/contacts for all members of your family.
- * **Copies of Important Documents**—identification cards, insurance policies, bank information. Store all of it in a water tight container in your kit.



Once you have the basics covered, add to your kit as you see fit and based on the disasters likely to occur in your area. Emergency blankets or sleeping bags, rain ponchos, pet-food and an extra leash for your four-legged family member, infant food and diapers if you have an infant or toddler, puzzles and games for children are all good additions to a basic kit. Consider keeping a second kit in your vehicle if you commute a lot. To get more information on creating a disaster kit visit ready.gov.

Disaster kits are not the only way to prepare for a disaster. Making a plan with your family in the event of a disaster is also a good idea. A family plan should include a general meeting place as well as agreement upon an out-of-state contact to relay information to.

Getting involved in the community and community preparedness efforts is another good way to maintain your own personal preparedness. Take a class from the [American Red Cross](http://AmericanRedCross.org) (in Santa Barbara, they are located at 2707 State Street) or become CERT certified. Volunteer with a local preparedness group such as Voluntary Organizations Active in Disasters (VOAD), or with local fire and law enforcement departments.

Lastly, show you are serious about disaster preparedness by pledging to prepare with the National Preparedness Coalition! As a Coalition Member, you will have access to exclusive resources and be able to collaborate with thousands of fellow members across the country on ways to participate and get your community involved in disaster preparedness!

In this Issue:

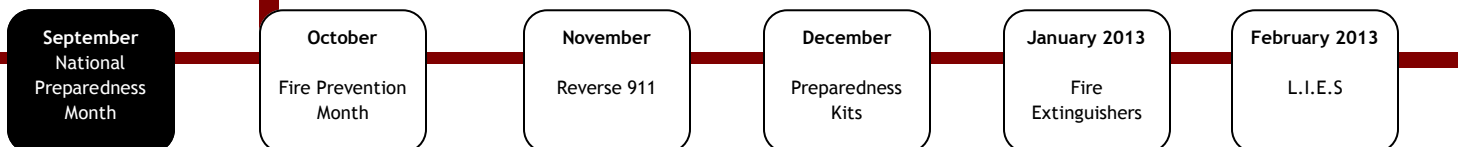
- September is National Preparedness Month
- Disaster Facts: Simoom
- Did You Know: Terrorism
- Quiz Time
- City News: Santa Barbara is a Tsunami Ready City!

Upcoming Issue: October is National Fire Prevention Month!

National Fire Prevention month is in October as it commemorates the Great Chicago fire of 1871 in which many people lost their lives. Unfortunately Santa Barbara is also no stranger to fire having seen its share of fires in the last decade. Next month we will cover fire prevention tips for several different types of fires. Including everything from creating defensible space around your home to having the right fire extinguisher and fire alarms for the inside of your home. Stay Tuned!



2012/2013 Upcoming Topics



Did You Know: Terrorism Preparedness

Just as you can prepare for natural disasters there are some steps you can take to prepare for terrorist threats as well. Terrorism can come in many forms including chemical, biological, explosive threats and even cyber attacks. The most important preparedness advice to combat terrorism however is awareness. Being aware of your surroundings at all times is crucial to ensuring the safety of yourself and your family.

The 'See Something, Say Something' campaign has come about since September 11th, 2001 and encourages people to report suspicious activity to law enforcement. If you see something suspicious taking place then report that behavior or activity to local law enforcement or in the case of emergency call 9-1-1. Factors such as race, ethnicity, national origin, or religious affiliation alone are not suspicious. For that reason, the public should report only suspicious behavior and situations (e.g., an unattended backpack in a public place or someone trying to break into a restricted area) rather than beliefs, thoughts, ideas, expressions, associations, or speech unrelated to terrorism or other criminal activity.

Other preparedness steps you can undertake include:

- * Installing High Efficiency Particulate Air (HEPA) air filters in home to filter out air contaminants.
- * Including particulate filtering face-masks in your emergency kit (also useful for many natural disasters).
- * Have a plan to shelter in place (home and office) if necessary.
- * Including plastic sheeting and tape in your emergency kits to put over windows, doors and air vents to minimize the infiltration of contaminated air. Be sure to measure them ahead of time.
- * Only accessing the internet over secure networks and changing all of your computer passwords frequently.

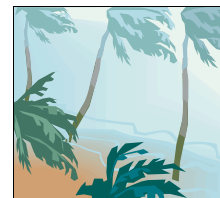
The above are extra steps that can be taken to minimize your risk of harm from a terrorist event. They should not be done in place of an emergency kit, but in addition to an emergency kit. Regardless of the disaster having a plan, an out-of-state emergency contact and at a minimum a basic disaster kit will all be priceless in a disaster.

Lastly, The National Terrorism Advisory System, or NTAS, has replaced the color-coded Homeland Security Advisory System (HSAS) that was introduced in 2002. The new system will more effectively communicate information about terrorist threats by providing timely, detailed information to the public, government agencies, first responders, airports and other transportation hubs, and the private sector. It recognizes that Americans all share responsibility for the nation's security, and should always be aware of the heightened risk of terrorist attack in the United States and what they should do.



Disaster Facts: Simoom

You are probably familiar with our local Santa Ana winds, the warm, (hot even!) blustery winds that blow down canyon, from the mountains to the shore, that we experience from roughly September through March. These winds are capable of drying out vegetation increasing the risk of wildfires, which then grow quickly and unpredictably under Santa Ana conditions.



These winds don't start out as warm, they actually come from very cold desert air. High pressure builds over the Great Basin (e.g., Nevada) and the cold air there begins to sink. However, this air is forced downslope which compresses and warms it at a rate of about 29°F per mile of descent. As its temperature rises, the relative humidity drops; the air starts out dry and winds up at sea level much drier still. The air picks up speed as it is channeled through passes and canyons and gives us the gusty winds we are familiar with here in Santa Barbara.

But this article is about simooms, another type of wind event more common in the deserts of the Middle East. During these wind events the humidity drops and temperatures rise as heavy, often cyclonic winds, blow dust and sand. Simoom, translated from Arabic, means 'poison wind' due to the fact that these wind events are capable of suffocating small animals and even people.

On June 17, 1859 the only ever recorded simoom to occur in North America occurred right here in the Santa Barbara/Goleta area. On that day the morning temperature was recorded as a standard 75-80°F. Around 1pm a gusty wind began to blow over the Santa Ynez mountains and into the city bringing with it dust and dirt. By 2pm the recorded temperature (as recorded by a US coastal survey vessel doing work just offshore) was 133°F! This was the highest recorded temperature in North America for 75 years until the U.S. Weather Bureau recorded a temperature of 134°F (one degree more) in Death Valley, CA.

The US government report of the day stated "Calves, rabbits and cattle died on their feet. Fruit fell from trees to the ground scorched on the windward side; all vegetable gardens were ruined. A fisherman in a rowboat made it to the Goleta Sandspit with his face and arms blistered as if he had been exposed to a blast furnace". Source: Tompkins, Walker A. (1966). *Goleta - The Good Land*. Goleta Am-Vets Post No. 55, 1966; Library of Congress Catalog Card Number 66-523873. P. 57-58

Quiz Time!

True or False!

1. In an emergency, you can use regular bleach to treat water by using 16 drops of regular household liquid bleach per gallon of water.
2. In a power outage, an 'old fashioned' phone with a cord will still work.
3. Cyber attacks are not a form of terrorism
4. An emergency kit should only contain things recommended by the Red Cross or other emergency response agency.

Multiple Choice!

5. If you come across an accident scene in what order should you do the following?
 - a. Call 911
 - b. Assess the scene to make sure it is safe
 - c. Provide aide to any victims

6. Which of these is the best choice for your family's emergency disaster contact?
 - a. Your friend across town
 - b. Your cousin out-of-state
 - c. The oldest member of your family
 - d. The loudest member of your family
7. Why should you have food and water for 72 hours in you emergency kit?
 - a. Most disasters are over within 72 hours or less
 - b. Three days worth of food and water is all that is manageable to carry
 - c. It generally takes 72 hours for emergency personnel to reach you after a disaster.

ANSWERS: 1. T; 2. T; 3. F; 4. F; 5. B; 6. C; 7. C

City of Santa Barbara Office of Emergency Services

OES is on the web!

<http://www.santabarbaraca.gov/OES>



OES is launching it's first ever social media campaign! Look for details in an upcoming issue of Get Ready Santa Barbara!



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Do you have a question about disasters or disaster preparedness you want answered? Send an email to the above address and you might just see it in the next newsletter!

City News— SB Becomes Tsunami Ready!

Back in June the city was officially certified as a *TsunamiReady Community* by the National Weather Service (NWS). On September 25th, 2012 the City of Santa Barbara will recognize this designation at a council meeting. You may have seen signs along the Santa Barbara Waterfront indicating you were entering or leaving a tsunami hazard zone. These signs will help to direct visitors and the public to safe areas in the event that Santa Barbara experiences a tsunami.

As part of the designation by NWS the City also developed a Tsunami Response Plan that you can download from the OES website, www.santabarbaraca.gov/oes, under The City Has a Plan. For more information you can contact the City's Office of Emergency Services at 805-564-5711.

