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December 2011

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Upcoming Issue in January 2012
The Many Faces of Flooding



Floods are one of the most common hazards in the United States. Flood effects can be local, impacting a neighborhood or community, or very large, affecting entire river basins and multiple states.

However, all floods are not alike. Find out next month what types of flooding occurs in Santa Barbara.

2011 Upcoming Topics

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City of Santa Barbara

Get Ready Santa Barbara!

Stay informed in 2011



Don't Give in to the Cold



Santa Barbara City is known for its Mediterranean like climate hosting very mild winters. In Santa Barbara's history there have been times of extreme cold, such as in 1939 and 1949 when Santa Barbara City experienced snow flakes (without accumulation). With that we need to always be ready for extreme cold weather.

What constitutes extreme cold and its effects can vary across different areas of the country. In regions relatively unaccustomed to winter weather, near freezing temperatures are considered "extreme cold." Whenever temperatures drop decidedly below normal and as wind speed increases, heat can leave your body more rapidly. These weather related conditions may lead to serious health problems. Extreme cold is a dangerous situation that can bring on health emergencies in susceptible people, such as those without shelter or who are stranded, or who live in a home that is poorly insulated or without heat. Below are a few things to think about.

Monitor Body Temperature: Infants less than one year old should never sleep in a cold room because (1) infants lose body heat more easily than adults; and (2) unlike adults, infants can't make enough body heat by shivering. Provide warm clothing for infants and try to maintain a warm indoor temperature. Older adults often make less body heat because of a slower metabolism and less physical activity. If you are over 65 years of age, check the temperature in your home often during severely cold weather. Also, check on elderly friends and neighbors frequently to ensure that their homes are adequately heated.

Eat and Drink Wisely: Eating well-balanced meals will help you stay warmer. Do not drink alcoholic or caffeinated beverages—they cause your body to lose heat more rapidly. Instead, drink warm, sweet beverages or broth to help maintain your body temperature. If you have any dietary restrictions, ask your doctor.

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Avoid Exertion: Cold weather puts an extra strain on the heart. If you have heart disease or high blood pressure, follow your doctor's advice about shoveling snow or performing other hard work in the cold. Otherwise, if you have to do heavy outdoor chores, dress warmly and work slowly. Remember, your body is already working hard just to stay warm, so don't overdo it.

Understand Wind Chill: The Wind Chill index is the temperature your body feels when the air temperature is combined with the wind speed. It is based on the rate of heat loss from exposed skin caused by the effects of wind and cold. As the speed of the wind increases, it can carry heat away from your body much more quickly, causing skin temperature to drop. When there are high winds, serious weather-related health problems are more likely, even when temperatures are only cool.

So, when going out this holiday/winter season remember to take the time to prepare yourself and your family from extreme cold weather. Be safe, think safe, and act safely.

Excerpt for this article is from the [CDC Extreme Cold Guide](#). More information can be obtained from their website at <http://www.cdc.gov>

Give the Gift of Caring

With Thanksgiving behind us and the December holidays ahead, the thoughts of many Santa Barbara residents turn to shopping. So what do you give the loved one who "has everything"?

The City of Santa Barbara Fire Department Office of Emergency Services would like to offer a list of gift suggestions for that special person who isn't quite prepared for disaster or emergencies.

While these may not be the most elaborate of gifts, they will save a life, property or make dealing with a disaster a bit easier.

It is always good to be prepared for any type of natural disaster occurring more and more in the world today.

Here are some gift suggestions:

- NOAA weather radios and extra batteries
- New smoke detectors and batteries
- Carbon Monoxide detector and batteries
- Appropriate fire extinguishers (kitchen, garage, car)
- Key elements of a home disaster kit, such as a flashlight and batteries, a battery-powered radio, a first aid kit, bottled water, and canned goods with manual can opener in a plastic tub or container
- Foldable ladders for second-story escape in a fire
- Car emergency kits (flares, shovels, ice scrapers, flashlights, and fluorescent distress flags)
- Enrollment in a CPR or first aid class
- Pet disaster kit (extra food, leashes, dishes, toys, and carrying case or crate)



Holiday Safety Quiz

1. Holiday lights and decorations on the exterior of your home should be...
 - a. Bright and flashy, you want to outdo the neighbors!
 - b. Rated for outdoor use only and flame retardant.
 - c. Attached to numerous extension cords.
2. Prior to using the fireplace, make sure...
 - a. The stockings are hung neatly in front of it.
 - b. To toss in some spare wrapping paper for kindling.
 - c. Your fireplace is cleaned out and you have a carbon monoxide detector.
3. Everyone is over for a holiday meal, in the kitchen it's best that...
 - a. The food cooks unattended for a while to let the flavors get to know each other
 - b. Everyone crowds in the kitchen to offer help.
 - c. Someone stays with any food that is cooking to reduce the risk of a fire.
4. You're getting ready for bed, before turning in, make sure...
 - a. All holiday lights are on, tis the season!
 - b. To turn off all interior and exterior holiday lights.
 - c. Candles are lit so Santa can see where to put the presents.
5. Holiday plants look so festive and fun, so you should
 - a. Probably opt out or keep out of children and pets reach, as some are poisonous.
 - b. Garnish the food platters with them.
 - c. Make garland necklaces out of them for the pets and kids

1b, 2c, 3c, 4b, 5a

Disaster Facts: December 21, 1812 Earthquake

This major earthquake caused damage in Santa Barbara, Ventura, and northern Los Angeles Counties. One fatality was reported, but many lives probably were saved by a strong foreshock about 15 minutes earlier that sent alarmed residents fleeing from buildings. The earthquakes also may have generated a tsunami because there were several reports of sea waves following the earthquakes. The sea waves reportedly did not cause loss of life or substantial loss of property.

At Santa Barbara Mission, all buildings sustained many cracks, and one chapel was flattened. The ground "opened up" at this area to such an extent "that it caused horror." At the Santa Barbara Presidio, all the buildings were left uninhabitable. The church at La Purisima Concepcion Mission (Lompoc) was ruined; some of the other buildings were "flattened to the ground"; and others required extensive repair. Part of the adobe garden wall collapsed, and the part remaining nearly fell. Damage at the Santa Ynez Mission was considerable but not so severe as at Santa Barbara and Purisima Missions. A corner of the church fell; many new houses were demolished; and many support walls were cracked. Property loss was less severe at the San Buenaventura Mission (Ventura) and the San Fernando Ray Mission. Aftershocks were reported at Santa Barbara through April 1813.



Mission La Purisima
Photo courtesy of [Tsunami Page](#)

Abridged from *Seismicity of the United States, 1568-1989 (Revised)*, by Carl W. Stover and Jerry L. Coffman, U.S. Geological Survey Professional Paper 1527, United States Government Printing Office, Washington: 1993.

City of Santa Barbara Office of Emergency Services



OES is on the web!

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

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FEMA News

January through March is usually when we get our rainfall, which could produce flooding in some of our areas within the City. Flood insurance is designed to provide an alternative to disaster assistance to reduce the escalating costs of repairing damage to buildings and their contents caused by floods.

Flood damage is reduced by nearly \$1 billion a year through communities implementing sound floodplain management requirements and property owners purchasing of flood insurance. So, now is the time to purchase flood insurance or revisit your homeowners or renters insurance and make sure that it covers flood damage. It takes 30 days after purchasing flood insurance before it goes into effect; so now is the time to get your insurance paperwork together. For more information contact your insurance agent or go the FEMA National Flood Plan website at <http://www.fema.gov/about/programs/nfip/index.shtml>