

CERT Earthquake Standard Operating Procedures

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The Santa Clara County Fire Department is responsible for fire suppression and rescue emergencies within the City of Campbell. On a day to day basis, there is an Incident Commander for each event response. During disasters, Fire Department personnel may be unavailable to respond to all emergency events.

CERT members may be called upon to serve in areas outside of their immediate neighborhoods – with and without Fire Department supervision.

If the Fire Department is present at an incident scene, they may request CERT assistance. CERT team members would function in the Operations Section of the Incident Command System either under Search & Rescue or EMS.

If no Fire Department personnel are available to manage the scene, CERT members will function under their own Incident Command structure.

1. Earthquake hits
2. First Actions to take
 - A. Assess the damage to your building. If there is structural damage to the building, power, gas, or water, shut off the affected utility. If there are uncontrolled gas leaks or uncontrolled fires or other hazardous situations, CALL 9-1-1 and evacuate the premises.
 - B. Treat minor injuries to family members. If life threatening injuries are present, CALL 9-1-1.

Note: If significant local damage has occurred within your neighborhood, you may not be able to reach 9-1-1, or emergency services may not be available. Remember to try 9-1-1 via land lines, call local emergency services via cell phones, use neighborhood amateur radio operators, or send a messenger to your nearest Fire Station. A Campbell Amateur Radio Emergency Service (CARES) member will be there to receive your reports, and to transmit them to the Campbell Emergency Operations Center where help may be dispatched. If you are unable to contact help by any means, use your CERT skills to adapt, improvise and overcome!

- C. Mark the outside of the building with pre-designated signal:
If the occupants and building structure are OK, place a “white flag” in the front yard or “ALERT BAG” on your front doorknob (some organized CERT neighborhoods have distributed these bags), with the “I AM O.K.”

sign showing.

If help is needed, place your “ALERT BAG” on the front doorknob with the “HELP NEEDED” side facing out or do nothing. You may stay outside to seek help, or stay indoors. Neighborhood CERT members, not seeing a “white flag” displayed, will assume that: (1) occupants are at home and need help, or (2) there is no one at home.

- D. If CERT members see no “white flag” indication, they will
- (1) attempt to contact the occupants by calling out and looking through windows. Depending on the situation, search and rescue operations may commence.
 - (2) If occupants are not at home. An exterior check for damage will be conducted. If a gas leak or broken water pipe is detected, CERT members may turn off the utilities. If so, they will leave a note under the door indicating actions taken.

Note: The absence of a “white flag” or “Alert Bag” is not permission to break into a structure where no distress is evident. There must be a reasonable belief that a life threatening situation exists.

NOTE: Talk to your neighbors about searching their house in case of a major disaster and have them sign a release statement giving you permission to search their home if they didn't hang a white flag out or don't respond to your knocking or ringing their bell.

3. Listen to the radio to determine the severity of the earthquake, and of neighborhoods where significant damage may have occurred. (A 5.5 magnitude earthquake with its epicenter 200 miles away, may cause less damage in your neighborhood than a 5.0 magnitude earthquake with its epicenter 10 miles away.) Radio stations that will provide local information are 1590 AM (KLIV) and 105.7 FM (KARA).

- A. Significant damage in your neighborhood may have occurred if the following happens:
- (1) Significant swinging/swaying of doors, and hanging objects falling.
 - (2) Objects such as desk lamps, pictures, other items on desk tops toppling over, or falling off of shelves.
 - (3) Shelves and bookcases falling over
 - (4) Heavy appliances (refrigerator, stove, washer dryers, water heaters) moving
 - (5) Items falling out of shelves in the kitchen, bathroom or other rooms
 - (6) Structural damage inside or outside of the building (walls tilted over or collapsed completely, separation of porch, balcony or other addition from building, building shifted off of foundation)
 - (7) Cracks in walls or windows cracked
 - (8) Ceiling tiles or lighting fixtures fell
 - (9) Cracks in chimneys, or chimneys falling down

- (10) Masonry fell from block or brick walls
4. Call 9-1-1 via a land line to report all life threatening situations including injuries, collapsed buildings where people may be trapped inside, fires, chemical spills and other major situations. Isolate hazards as much as possible.
 5. If your neighborhood **has a CERT organization in place**, commence CERT activities according to your neighborhood plans.
 - A. Communications net opens and contacts the Campbell Amateur Radio Emergency Services group (CARES).
 - B. Vehicle or bicycle goes through your neighborhood with a bullhorn announcing:
 "Attention _____ neighborhood. We have experienced a _____ magnitude earthquake. CERT members are walking through the neighborhood checking for damage. Display your "I'm OK" sign or put a white flag in your yard to tell us you're OK. If you would like to help, go to the neighborhood Command Post at _____."
 - a. Broadcast in multiple languages if possible
 - b. Other signals can be used to convey information, but they need to be prearranged and provided to the entire neighborhood. For example, driving through your neighborhood continually blasting a horn (or constant short bursts) means
 - C. Damage assessment teams walk or ride bikes through neighborhood and report to the neighborhood Command Post.
 - D. Search & Rescue/First Aid/Special Needs/Child Care/Care & Shelter team leaders check in.
 - E. Incident Command assesses information and determines need to activate other functions.
 6. If your neighborhood **does not have a CERT organization in place**, and you are a CERT graduate:
 - A. Follow actions 1 - 4.
 - B. After securing the safety of you, your family, and your immediate neighbors, recruit volunteers to:
 - (1) Find needed supplies
 - (2) Prepare a first aid area
 - (3) Listen to the radio for information
 - (4) Assist with damage assessment in your neighborhood
 - (5) Begin documenting findings
 - (6) Do not instruct volunteers to do anything they would need specialized training to do.
 - C. Perform a walk around damage assessment of your neighborhood. Assist in locating and identifying damaged structures or life threatening situations that may require the assistance of emergency personnel. Call 9-1-1 to report life threatening emergencies.
 - D. After calling 9-1-1, report damage assessment information to a local CARES member who will forward this information to Campbell's Emergency Operations Center (EOC). (The contact

information of a local CARES member in your neighborhood may be obtained by calling Campbell's OES Manager at 408-.) A CARES member will also be at all Santa Clara County Fire Stations in Campbell

- E. Damage Assessment Survey Forms used be used
 - F. Report to:
 - (1) A staging area (Locations of staging areas within Campbell are currently being planned)
 - (2) Perform assistance as needed to your local community
 - G. It is important for CERT members to provide assistance to their neighborhoods. Do not go to City Hall for assistance, seeking to provide help, or to receive instructions during the emergency.
7. Your safety is #1. Without your safety insured, you may not be able to provide assistance to others.