

TABLETOP EXERCISE: EARTHQUAKE

Planning a Tabletop with your Local Neighbors

Leaders of local neighborhoods working on preparedness often look for new ways to engage their neighbors and spur preparedness activity. Having a tabletop exercise is one way to get folks interested and engaged in how to be prepared. The following is a guide and basic earthquake scenario deck to help you get a tabletop exercise ready for your community.

The scenario describes an early incident Earthquake. This template is Countywide. A general initial briefing is included as well as two *injects* (an Inject is additional information about the incident to create new discussion points for the group). Geographic elements are highlighted in yellow to make changing the scenario to fit your specific neighborhood easier. (Guidance available see contact below) Tailoring the scenario to your community will allow you to make the lessons memorable and applicable.

The following checklist should help you stay on track and have your bases covered for a great local exercise. Please feel free to reach out to Nancy Brown at cell 707 396 4033 or Nancy.A.Brown@sonoma-county.org if you need guidance, advice, or a sounding board. We are in this together and hope to support you in your successful exercise.

Step-by-Step Guidance

Prep work

- Query your neighbors to gauge interest, this will also whet their appetite when they get more information.
 - What time of day would most prefer, and what day of the week?
 - *Date/Time*
- Don't try to go too big, 5-20 is a great collaborative conversation.
- Pick a location – make sure the location is accessible for those who might want to attend. Assess tables and chairs – folks may need to bring a chair or card table. Aim for groups of four or five for the discussion and plan accordingly. So, for example, if you have 15 people you will need 3 tables and a total of 15 places to sit.
 - Where:

- Make decisions on providing refreshments or asking folks to “bring your own beverage or snacks”

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- Create and send out invitations – try to pick a date at least 4 weeks away to allow folks to make space on their calendars. Be sure to include any directions or special instructions (e.g. come in the back gate)
 - Review scenario template
 - All yellow highlighted area can be customized for your neighborhood.
 - Make changes to customize including where event takes place and evacuation zones affected by event
 - Make sure your evacuation zone is not part of the zones with *mandatory* evacuation orders or you will have little to say except – let's go.
 - Ask someone to review the new information for accuracy
 - Call neighbors who have not responded to see if they can make it – a personal invite sometimes does the trick.
 - Make copies of scenario for each attendee
 - Find someone willing to take notes
 - Who:
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Important Information:

- What is an Evacuation Zone? Evacuation zones are pre-determined geographic areas that are used to efficiently evacuate residents during large-scale disasters. The agency evacuating residents will announce evacuation orders by zone number. By knowing your evacuation zone, you'll immediately know if you need to evacuate or not when you receive an evacuation notice. These could be areas where you live, work, or attend school.
- Before you start the exercise make sure everyone in your group knows their home evacuation zone by going to this website: <https://socoemergency.org/get-ready/evacuation-map/> or using the QR code.



Day of Event

- Arrive at site for exercise early
- Make sure there are tables and chairs for all attendees.
- When passing out scenarios asks people not to read ahead so they can follow the same information together.

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Scenario Instructions

1. Read the initial scenario and first set of questions out loud asking all to follow along
2. Give folks about 15 minutes to discuss (set a timer), and then have each group do a recap for the whole group of the ideas and discussion
3. Read the first inject
4. Repeat the steps above
5. Read the second inject
6. Repeat steps
7. After all injects have been discussed it is time to review ideas brought forth and work on finding a time to get back together to start a plan to capitalize on the ideas and take action
8. Well Done!

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Potential Agenda -2-hour Exercise

Item	Who	Time	Time in Event
Introduction and Purpose	Host	10 minutes	
Individual Introductions	All	10 minutes	
Initial Scenario	Host	5 minutes	
Discussion 1	All	15 minutes	
Recap	All	10 minutes	
Inject 1	Host	2 minutes	
Inject 1 Discussion	All	15 minutes	
Recap	All	10 minutes	
Inject 2	Host	3 minutes	
Inject 2 Discussion	All	15 minutes	
Recap Discussions and Action steps	Notetaker	20 minutes	
Closing	Host	5 minutes	

→ Times can be altered as needed

Segment 1

Design

The design of this exercise is important to ensure that the location, attendees, scenario, and next steps all align to achieve Objectives and Outcomes.

Exercise Objective and Outcomes

- Identify gaps in local preparedness planning.
- Test capacity to network
- Understand gaps in resources at local level (stuff and people)
- Identify ideas to improve group readiness.

No Fault

It is important that this be a learning environment in which questions, ideas, and statements should be considered as viable and worthwhile at all times. The objective of this tabletop is to understand plans that have been made, spot gaps in the planning, and move preparedness forward in your community.

This exercise scenario occurs over an 8-hour period time on an initial day of an earthquake. Over the course of the exercise there will be added pieces of information and prompts for discussion. Each prompt is designed to help you think carefully about how you would react, what you might need, and what you might do given the fictional circumstances.

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Scenario: Time is 5:15 am

This morning at 4:30 am a 6.8 magnitude Earthquake occurred along the Rodgers Creek Fault. Shaking was felt in neighboring counties. Two aftershocks occurred shortly after - 4:45 (5.8 magnitude) and 4:55 (5.1 magnitude). Lights are on all over the County, no one slept through this. Car alarms had gone off all over the neighborhoods, followed by the sounds of emergency vehicle sirens since then. Radio News is reporting very little news so far, just the shaking, not effects of the quake. It seems clear they do not have much verified information yet. A SoCoAlert has been issued to Shelter-in-Place and is asking the community to stay off roads and bridges until inspections can be done. While there is little concrete information it is clear that this was a big earthquake and there will be effects from the shaking as news comes in.

Official Situation Information:

- Major Earthquake on Rodgers Creek Fault
- Expect Aftershocks
- Current Shelter-in-Place Order: Entire County
- Shelter Operations – Unknown
- Damage - Unknown
- Hospitals - Unknown
- Injuries - Unknown

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→ The purpose of this map is to show where the faults are near your area

Initial discussion

Gather in groups of four or five and discuss the following questions. Be prepared to share your findings with the wider group. Spend 15 minutes on this discussion

- Given the situation, what do you feel are the three most important actions you want to take now? Be specific, for example reach out to neighbors how? Door knock, text?
- What might be your biggest challenges should major after shocks occur?

Who in your neighborhood might need information or assistance?

Notes:

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Segment 2

Day 1- 9:15 am 4 Hours Later

You and your neighbors have gathered and checked on each other. There does not appear to be serious damage to your homes or injuries beyond bumps and bruises, you are lucky! One of your elderly neighbors is quite worried about the safety of their home. Some of the small children do not want to go into the house again. News from the rest of the County is slowly coming in. A few smaller aftershocks have occurred since the early morning.

There are smoke plumes on the horizon so some fires must have ignited in other areas. Although the cable system in your area does not seem to be working radio news is broadcasting. News reports include that a few buildings appear to be unstable, no loss of life has been reported in Sonoma County yet, and many roads have been damaged.

Cell service in your area is spotty. One neighbor does have internet working and has reports from Facebook friends of damage all around the County. One neighbor reported all roads in and out of Sonoma County closed and another heard the Richmond Bridge was damaged. Another Facebook report showed pictures of a house on fire but did not know if the cause was gas or electrical or something else. Lots of discussion about if water is safe to drink is also on Facebook.

Official Situation from radio news reports:

- Hospitals report many injuries and ask folks to come in only if they need medical attention immediately. Long waits were reported.
- Shelter opening has not been announced.
- Hwy 101 has been closed to through traffic. Road and bridge inspection is ongoing
- Shelter-in-Place order still in effect for all Sonoma County
- Some structure fires have occurred, cause unknown but coincides with earthquake so a gas leak or electrical fire is suspected
- PG&E asks that all who smell gas shut off their valves if you do not smell gas no need to do so.
- Countywide cell service is unreliable, and a few power outages have been reported.
- HAM radio operators are supporting Emergency Operations and providing information to Radio networks from Police and Fire as well as Emergency Operations Center (EOC)
- Radio reports on information from USGS (United States Geologic Survey) say that aftershocks will continue for many days, and some may be quite strong

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Inject 1 Questions:

Gather in groups of four or five and discuss the following questions. Be prepared to share your findings with the wider group. Spend 15 minutes on this discussion

Are there potential sources of ignition of post-earthquake fires in your neighborhood? If so, what action should you take?

How is your neighborhood staying informed and sharing information effectively?

How will you assess the needs of folks in your community? What actions might you need to take?

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Segment 3

3 hours later 12:15 pm Day 1

More information is coming over the radio. Some cell service has been restored in some places. People all over the county are glued to news reports trying to gauge the disruption caused by the earthquake. Many small quakes have rumbled by, but one 4.8 cause a bit of a stir about 10:30. County EOC has asked people to continue to stay off roads and at home. Schools will be closed tomorrow as well as most businesses. County statement asks that if you must venture out stay off highways, bridges, and culverts. Drive carefully and be aware that aftershocks can also cause roadway damage as you are driving. Neighbors are asked to work together and support each other to avoid unnecessary driving. Water lines are declared safe in Sebastopol, Coastal Area, Cloverdale, Geyserville, and Healdsburg. Water portability (safe for drinking) inspections still occurring in all other areas. Natural Gas to City of Sonoma and Sonoma Valley is shut off with restoration time not yet known. Electricity is out in Rohnert Part/Cotati, parts of Santa Rosa, and Cloverdale, also without restoration times available.

Many of your neighbors are considering camping in their yards overnight. Overnight lows should be 58 degrees. There does not appear to be a pending end time to the Shelter-in-Place order so many are concerned about their supplies and are doing inventories.

Official Situation from radio news reports:

- One hospital (Sutter) is closed to new cases, they are at capacity including their parking lot triage tent and cannot take new cases. Long waits reported at all other facilities.
- Shelter opening has not been announced.
- Hwy 101 is still closed to through traffic. Road and bridge inspection is ongoing
- Shelter-in-Place order still in effect for all Sonoma County
- Structure fires are primarily extinguished
- PG&E is working to ascertain safety of some systems and reenergization schedules are pending investigations
- Countywide cell service is still unreliable, but some service has been restored
- HAM radio operators are continuing to support Emergency Operations and providing information to Radio networks from Police and Fire as well as Emergency Operations Center (EOC)
- USGS continues to communicate aftershocks are likely

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Inject 2 Questions:

- What should you (as a group) consider for actions in the next 24 hours to keep your community safe?
- What might you need to do should a “boil water” notice be issued?
- Are you concerned about your animal’s safety?

Notes:

Hot Wash (Quick review of exercise)

Full Group

What went well?

What gaps in planning need to be address?

What did you learn?

Other comments

Learn

Next steps

Full group

- Who will take responsibility for them?
- When should they be done?
- When should the group reconvene?