

## 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 incident Flood. 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](mailto: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

- Each section is divided into segments that can be distributed as needed to keep people from getting ahead of the group. This ensures that everyone moves at the same pace. You can also print the entire packet and encourage everyone to follow along with the group rather than reading ahead.

## Prep work Checklist

- 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:

## TABLETOP EXERCISE: FLOOD

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

### **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.



# TABLETOP EXERCISE: FLOOD

## 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.

## Scenario Instructions

1. Read the initial scenario and first set of questions
2. Give folks about 15 minutes to discuss, and then 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!

## TABLETOP EXERCISE: FLOOD

### 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	

## 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 strengths and gaps in community preparedness
- Assess and strengthen the neighborhood's social connections
- 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. Some topics may be address in a separate manner, with a follow up *parking lot* (a place to write other topics of conversation) established to address these and allow the exercise to stay on schedule.

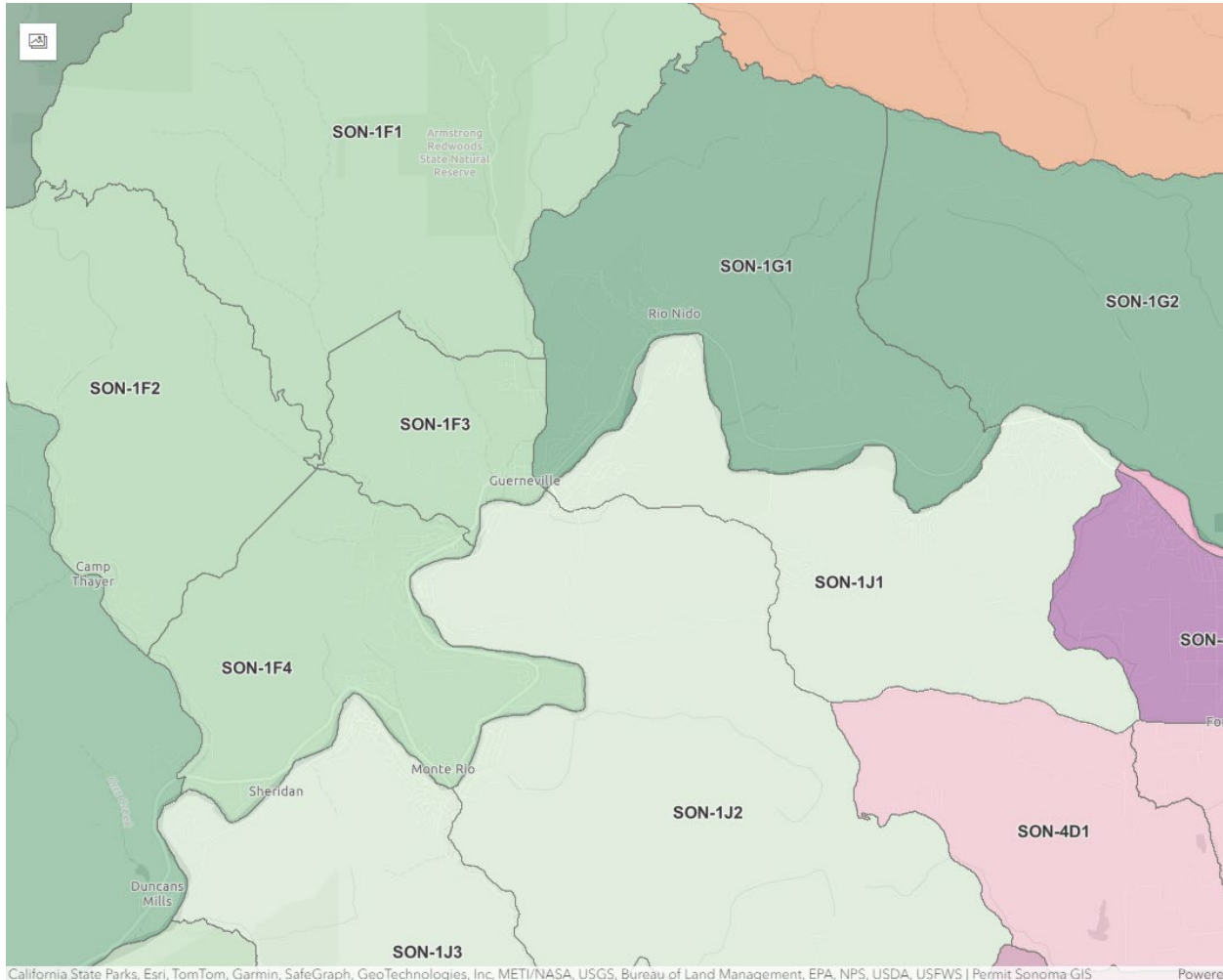
## TABLETOP EXERCISE: FLOOD

### Scenario:

It started raining on Saturday morning and continued raining for a 3-day period. The heavy rain began saturating soils, filling local reservoirs, swelling streams and rivers, and clogging storm drains with debris. Immediately following these events, another storm system moved through the county bringing heavy precipitation, and high winds. Due to the previous storms, the grounds are wet, and the water is filling up the rivers at a rapid pace, ground water is saturated. Sonoma County was issued a flood watch by the National Weather Service to continue through Wednesday.

At 7:30 a.m. on Tuesday morning you receive notification through National Weather Service Wireless Emergency Alert that your community has been issued a flood watch for the next 48 hours, with the expectation of receiving an additional 6 inches of rain. The Russian River water is starting to rise in Guerneville, Forestville, Monte Rio, Rio Nido and along other parts of the river and stream networks in Sonoma County. The high winds are causing falling trees and blowing debris through the streets. The Emergency Operation Center (EOC) has been activated.

# TABLETOP EXERCISE: FLOOD



- (Go to <https://socoemergency.org/get-ready/evacuation-map/> and take a screen shot of your scenario area or delete the picture)
- The purpose of this map is to show where your evacuation zone and to give a visual of where the flooding is happening

## 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 the flood progress to your area?
- Who in your neighborhood might need information or assistance? Segment 2

# TABLETOP EXERCISE: FLOOD

## Inject 1

**25 hours later**

**8:15 Wednesday**

The National Weather Service is issuing a Flood Warning because flood peaks are expected within 24 hours. About 8,000 people are without power throughout the county. Guerneville are, Forestville, and parts of Windsor are dark. The rain has brought 6 inches within the last two days. People have been self-evacuating the area and staying with families in drier parts of the county. There is no current evacuation order in place although a SoCoAlert was issued with Evacuation Warning to all zones adjacent to the Lower Russian River and creeks. The Russian River is expected to reach flood stage on Wednesday at 11:00. The river is projected to crest at 37.1 feet on Wednesday at 10:00pm. The river is forecasted to fall below flood stage on Thursday at 11:00pm.

Official Situation from radio news reports:

- Russian River is rising – Currently at 31.7 ft
- Localized flooding is occurring through the County
- School District closures: Alexander Valley Union School District, Geyserville Unified School District, Guerneville School District, Harmony School District, Monte Rio School District, Montgomery Elementary School District
- Shelters: Sonoma County Fairgrounds is preparing to open should they be needed
- The NWS has forecasted an atmospheric river with heavy rainfall expected in Marin, Sonoma, and Napa Counties starting at 12:00pm on Wednesday, through Wednesday night. The Atmospheric River will move south towards Santa Cruz County on Thursday. It is expecting that 4 to 6 inches of rain to fall in the valleys and 6 to 12 inches of rain in the higher elevations of the County. It is possible that rain rates may exceed flash flood levels in the burn scar areas.
- Evacuation Warning Zones: (add zones near your area but not your neighborhood)



## TABLETOP EXERCISE: FLOOD

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 neighbors who should be Self-evacuating now? Why? Do they need help?
- What will you need to have in place should your neighborhood become isolated due to downed trees or rising waters?
- How is your neighborhood staying informed and sharing information effectively?
- What safety issues need to be considered?

Notes:

## Segment 3

### Inject 2

#### **Three hours Later**

#### **11:30 am Wednesday**

The Russian River continues to rise. Current level is 33 feet. Intense precipitation associated with an atmospheric river has created hazardous conditions throughout Sonoma and adjoining counties, and severe flooding is Emergency Operations Center forecasted for the Guerneville area. There has been many fallen trees and a number of roads have been flooded. Law enforcement and firefighters are doing their best to get the roads cleared. Four cars have been abandoned on flooded roadways and occupants were rescued by Sonoma County Fire District. Evacuation Warnings are still in effect. Additional warnings have also been issued. News reports state that several low-lying mobile homes have been flooded, and lower levels of a number of properties have been inundated. Estimates are now predicting river to rise to 36 feet.

Official Situation from radio news reports:

- Russian River at Guerneville is rising and was at 33ft at 10:30am Wednesday
- Localized flooding is occurring throughout the County
- 10s to 100s of landslips and slides impacting roadways to varying degrees
- 5472 without power
- Shelters: Sebastopol Center for the Arts and Sonoma County veterans Hall are open
- Widespread flooding of low-lying areas reported through Wednesday morning. Power is out for most along the Lower Russian River

## TABLETOP EXERCISE: FLOOD

Inject 2 Questions:

- Given the new inject of information what should you (as a group and personally) do now?
- 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:

# TABLETOP EXERCISE: FLOOD

## 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?