

# In Response

san francisco

card

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community  
agencies  
responding to  
disaster

## Why is the Disaster Planning Community Failing?



Brian Whitlow recently spent time with G.L. Hodge, a teacher at Providence First Baptist Church in the BayView-Hunters Point, to discuss his thoughts and opinions, of the community he serves, of their current perceptions and viewpoints about the issue of being prepared for a disaster.

"There are two differing viewpoints," Hodge thinks his community has when it comes to the discussion of the topic of disaster preparedness. One viewpoint is of the community leaders who focus on the idea and perception that people within their community are not as prepared as they need to be and they need to understand that they will need to take care of themselves after a disaster. According to Hodge, community leaders believe that after a large-scale earthquake their community will be "ignored" by the government from all levels and they will experience a Katrina type of aftermath in the community. These perceptions have led community and church leaders to take more of a facilitation role in helping the community become prepared by trying to educate residents that they need to prepare and care for themselves because no one else will do it for them. According to Hodge, "there has been a throwback to the 1950's where the church has become a focal point and vocal leader within the community, but a person took care of themselves." The question becomes why has there been a change? Are church leaders beginning to understand their congregation's limitations and that they will not be able care for all of their congregants during and after a disaster?

The other viewpoint on the topic of disaster preparedness comes from homeowners to general street people. According to Hodge, many homeowners want to be prepared for an emergency or disaster but encounter many obstacles due to societal and economic restraints. "They can't just go buy a kit for \$45." Many families only have enough monthly income to pay for everyday food, mortgage etc. plus there is a lack of preparedness training offered in the neighborhood. One of the common vehicles taken for granted is having Internet access in the home to ascertain preparedness information. Often, residents within G.L. Hodge's community "do not even have a personal computer!" Unlike other, more affluent communities, preparedness perceptions in Hodge's community are always viewed through the guise of obstacles.

Why is the disaster-planning community still facilitating a concept of fear and food? The fact is that the message that the disaster planning community is advocating is not addressing the concerns and limitations of Hodge's community. For example, the 72-hour message may not be applicable to members within Hodge's community. It is time for a change!

Staff with SF CARD has addressed the fact that we have failed in reaching Hodge's community. In recent months there has been an effort at SF CARD to develop strategies to reach out and gear, with the limitations in mind, preparedness training and information. One of the primary projects SF CARD is currently undertaking is the Inter-Congregational Program, where staff will educate and train church leaders from 14 congregations on disaster preparedness and response. Some of the churches involved with this project are from BayView-Hunters Point, Mission, and Excelsior districts. Additionally SF CARD has begun to have staff and volunteers go on foot to meet with leaders from congregations and community-based nonprofits throughout San Francisco and offer information and assistance with their preparedness needs.

For the second part in this three part series on the thoughts and beliefs of one man who serves the vulnerable population, please read our next newsletter where G.L. Hodge will discuss current preparedness efforts taking place in the community.

### **Step by Step Agency Emergency Plan**

We know how difficult it is for nonprofits to get through each day. Staffing, operations, budgets, getting services to your clients-it's almost as if every day is an emergency. And we know you understand having a disaster plan for your agency is essential. It's just finding the resources to develop your plan and put it in place.

To that end SF CARD is going to help through [our newsletter](#). Each month we will include one or two elements of the Agency Emergency Plan in the newsletter. Doing these few items each month will not place an undue burden on you, and when finished you will have an entire plan developed. Then we can work together to further inform your plan, help you with drills, and connect you to the community response and recovery networks.

#### **Step 1:**

Define Your Disaster Mission Role - before you can make a plan you need to decide what your agency's role will be in a disaster. It may be very different from your every day roles. Here are some questions to help guide you:

- Who are you going to be for your clients and community when disaster strikes?
- Does your current mission statement encompass how you see your agency functioning in a disaster?
- Think about your commitments and your resource limitations and create a disaster mission statement.

Best practice will be to discuss these questions at your next staff meeting. A disaster plan should be a group activity involving your organization as much as possible. After discussion and consensus write your mission disaster statement-a clear, concise and meaningful statement of what your agency's role will be to your clients and community.

To complete step 1 announce your Disaster Mission Statement to your staff at the following staff meeting. Post it and distribute a copy to each staff member. Then encourage each staff member to be personally prepared. It is essential that your staff and their families have a home emergency plan.

Take the opportunity to call SF CARD to come to your agency and teach your staff how to prepare themselves and their families for disaster. Next month we will be working with how to manage staff and volunteers in a disaster response.

## **Disaster Survival Recipes (Yummy!)**

In a disaster, one of the most important items a person can have is food. Well who says [disaster food](#) has to be boring or taste bad! SF CARD's own - Ruth Hu has commissioned her father (Wei Hu), who is a professional chef, to create some wonderful disaster recipes for us. Over the next five issues of the newsletter, we will provide one of the recipes Mr. Hu has created exclusively for SF CARD. This issue we are introducing the wonderful disaster dish - *Sweet, Salty, and Sour*.

### ***Sweet, Salty and Sour Ingredients:***

- 1 can tuna
- 1 tablespoon of Mayonnaise (packets of mayo may be left at room temperature if refrigeration is not accessible)
- 1/4 cup of canned pickle leaks (note: pickle leaks are a type of garlic and considered an Asian delicacy) or 1/4 cup of onion. Please note, the use of pickle leaks or onion is to help cancel out the flavor of tuna for individuals who do not like the taste of seafood.

Additionally, pickle leaks are preserved in salt and sugar.

### ***Materials needed:***

- Spoons or Fork
- Manual can openers
- Bowl or plate

***Directions:*** Open the can of tuna and pickle leaks with a manual can opener and drain the water/oil/salt/sugar from both cans (please note: if you have a cat or dog, draining the water/oil/sugar/salt into their dry food will make their meal tastier and give them added energy). Empty the tuna into a bowl or onto a plate. Mix in a tablespoon of mayonnaise and 1/4 cup of pickle leaks (note: pickle leaks are like garlic cloves, so please pull apart and fill 1/4 cup, otherwise use an onion). Continue to mix until the mayonnaise and pickle leaks are blended well with the tuna. Once the tuna is mixed with the mayonnaise and onion/pickle leaks, your dish is ready to eat.

## **Bust a Myth Section**

**MYTH** -Disaster kits are expensive and complicated to build.

**FACT** - Many disaster related organizations sell disaster supplies and kits like the [Red Cross](#). Additionally, you can save money by building your own kit. One suggestion we have is to purchase a small number of items each month to spread the cost of assembling your kit throughout the year. Additionally, there are organizations that offer lists providing a description of what should be included in your kit. Some of those partner organizations are [www.72hours.org](http://www.72hours.org) and CARD at <http://firstvictims.org/downloads/Go%20Kits.pdf>.

# August 2007

## Upcoming Events, Training, & Services

### SF NERT

**August 18: Drill:** NERT Triage, Carries, & Damage Assessment, [Ft. Mason Field](#), Bay and Octavia, 8:30 a.m. to 12 p.m.

**August 29: Meeting:** NERT Leaders Meeting, 6:30 p.m., [FD-DOT](#). Discussion: How to Work with Emergent Volunteers.

### Department of Emergency Management

**August 21:** SF Ready Roundtable, Tuesday, August 21 **Time:** 12:00 pm- 1:30 pm **Location:** Federal Reserve Bank, 101 Market St **Description:** The August topic for SF Ready's free roundtable presentation is what's new at the Department of Emergency Management. Recent and upcoming projects, initiatives, public outreach, staffing and funding sources will be discussed. More information about SF Ready and the upcoming sessions is available at the [SF Ready website](#) or by calling 415-681-2920.

### Red Cross Bay Area

For more information on the classes and which dates and locations there classes are offered please visit <http://www.redcrossbayarea.org/training/register.htm>.

### Disaster Medical Assistance Team - California 6 (DMATCA)

**August 23 - 26:** Rough & Ready '07, mobilization exercise and field training event. Rough & Ready '07 is scheduled for 23-26 Aug.

Sign-ups have been up on the website for a while, and will be up for a few more days. After that, email Sam Bradley ([training@dmatca6.org](mailto:training@dmatca6.org)) until 06 Aug to sign up. People who sign up can cancel up until 06 Aug, after which there will be a \$50 cancellation fee.