



IN AN EMERGENCY,

we often rely on first responders — firefighters, police officers, emergency medical technicians — for help. But during a widespread disaster like a wildfire or earthquake, it is likely that a community's emergency response resources will be strained beyond their capacity. It could be hours, even days, before professional help arrives. In these situations, it is critical that we come together as a community —

NEIGHBORS HELPING NEIGHBORS.

LEARN WHAT YOU CAN DO BEFORE, DURING, AND AFTER A DISASTER TO HELP YOUR NEIGHBORS.

GET TO KNOW YOUR NEIGHBORS

The first step in responding to a disaster as a community is getting to know the other members of your community beforehand. **Be aware of neighbors who are elderly, people with disabilities, or who otherwise might be more likely to need help.** This way, you know where to start when checking on the status of your neighbors following a disaster.

It's also good to know if there are people nearby who have special skills, like medical training, or tools and equipment that could help save someone's life.

WORK TOGETHER

Engage members of your community to share information about disaster preparedness. According to the CDC, "53 percent of people receive preparedness information through conversations with neighbors, friends or family." Use community networks to share updates about emergencies.

Work together to make your community more resilient. During an emergency, the strength of an entire neighborhood could be dependent on the weakest link. **In many neighborhoods, it is likely that neighbors will need to work together to ensure that every structure is protected by a 100-foot buffer zone of defensible space.**

COMMUNITY EMERGENCY RESPONSE TEAM (CERT)

CERT is an education program that trains and organizes volunteers for disaster preparedness. CERT volunteers learn things like fire safety, light search and rescue, disaster medicine and other functions they can perform when called upon in a disaster which help allow professional emergency responders to focus on more complex tasks. CERT-like programs are also known as Neighborhood Emergency Response Team (NERT) in San Francisco or Communities of Oakland Respond to Emergencies (CORE) in Oakland, California.



COMMUNITY PREPAREDNESS

The **Department of Homeland Security's Community Preparedness Toolkit** provides a step-by-step guide to make your community more resilient.

Look into the emergency plans for other places in your community, like schools or places of worship. During some emergencies, there may be large numbers of people congregated in these areas who could need help. In other situations, these places could be central staging locations for disaster relief resources.



MAKE SURE THAT YOU'RE PREPARED

Remember, the best thing you can do to help your community prepare for an emergency is to take personal responsibility for ensuring that you and your family are prepared.

It may not seem like being individually prepared will do much to help your community as a whole, but everything you can do to make it less likely that you or a family member are a victim in a disaster makes it more likely that emergency responders will be able to help someone else.

TO LEARN MORE ABOUT WHAT YOU CAN DO TO HELP YOUR NEIGHBORS, VISIT [READY.GOV/NEIGHBORS](https://www.ready.gov/neighbors).

If you or your neighbors have medical needs and rely on electricity, you may qualify for PG&E's Medical Baseline program for discounts and extra notifications of Public Safety Power Shutoffs. To learn more, visit [pge.com/medicalbaseline](https://www.pge.com/medicalbaseline).