

# How to Prepare For and Survive a Disaster in Palos Verdes Estates

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## Get Ready

Prepare your home and  
loved ones to survive

## Get Certified

With the 3 easy steps  
on page 6



## Is Your Home Ready?

It's not the will to survive, but the will to  
prepare to survive that makes the difference.  
This brochure provides clear guidelines for you to prepare.

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A SERVICE OF THE PALOS VERDES ESTATES POLICE DEPARTMENT (PVEPD)  
(310) 378-4211 • 340 Palos Verdes Drive West • Palos Verdes Estates • California 90274

# Are You Ready?

In a disaster YOU are your immediate source of help. Outside help may not be available for hours or days. Your best insurance plan is to be prepared. Is your home ready?

The geology of the Palos Verdes Peninsula may make it less likely to sustain catastrophic damage from a major earthquake than the greater Los Angeles basin. However, our gas, water, electric and communications utilities are supplied from sources that are in or pass through the Los Angeles basin. Following a disaster, fire, police and medical first responders will give first attention to most heavily damaged areas. Your home may sustain major or minor damage, but you may have NO UTILITIES for days. Without utilities and with transportation congested, if not restricted, your home may be functionally reduced to that of a “nice tent.” Will you be ready?

## This brochure contains guidelines to prepare to survive a disaster.

- Lists 5 important steps to take immediately following a disaster to secure your home and protect your loved ones.
  - *It will be hard to think clearly and to order your priorities following a disaster.*
  - *These 5 steps will provide a framework for immediate action.*
- Provides a shopping list for you to prepare your own emergency food and water.
  - *Water is ESSENTIAL for survival. Food is highly desirable.*
- Provides a shopping list for you to prepare your own emergency supplies and equipment.
  - *You may prepare your own or purchase ready-made kits.*
- Gives instructions on how to minimize damage to your home and how to secure it following a disaster.
  - *Your home can become dangerous following disaster if you don't know how to shut off gas, water, electric utilities or fight fire.*



## Remember -

You may not be at home when disaster strikes. Will all family members in the house know where to find a list of the 5 key steps and emergency supplies?

*You are in a restaurant where you and your spouse are enjoying dinner and the lights go out. The ground shakes and the city goes dark. You hear many sirens. The parking garage has collapsed onto your car. The phones are out. Will your children, at home with a babysitter, know what to do and where your flashlights and emergency supplies are kept?*

This brochure focuses on major earthquakes as the most widespread and potentially greatest hazard to our community. Many of the measures described here also apply to fire, flood, mudslide and other hazards; however, more specific information for these hazards can be found at the Palos Verdes Estates city website:

<http://www.palosverdes.com/pve/> Click on “Disaster Preparedness”

# 5 STEPS - Immediately Following a Disaster

*Keep a copy of these 5 steps with your disaster survival supplies*

## 1. Protect yourself and your family

- Check yourself and loved ones for injuries. Shock often hides pain. Look for wounds.
- Move yourself and family to safe areas in case additional hazards or fire occur.
- Give first aid if needed. Retrieve first aid supplies from your emergency storage. If there are substantial injuries, skip to Step 3, then return to here.
- Retrieve and don gloves, sturdy shoes, adequate clothing for outside weather, eyeglasses, and flashlight to prepare for exploring your home and its surrounds.

## 2. Check for fire and the condition of your utilities and home structure

- Check for fire. Use fire extinguisher and garden hose if water is available.
- Do you hear or smell a gas leak? If so, turn off the main gas valve and open the windows. Do NOT turn off the gas unless you suspect a leak. Once you turn off the gas only a licensed plumber or the gas company can safely turn it back on, and this may take days or weeks.
- If you smell hot insulation or an electrical odor, shut off the electricity at the panel.
- Protect your water supply. Your water lines may be broken. If you find leaking water shut off the water at the main valve outside or at the street. Shut the main inlet and outlet valve to your water heater to preserve the water in the tank for future use.
- Check for structural damage to the house. Look for large cracks. If your walls have become badly cracked or bowed or seriously altered, or if there is separation between walls and ceiling, evacuate the house. An aftershock could bring it down.

## 3. Post your HELP or OK sign

- Posting a HELP or OK sign on your front door or window will aid first responders.
- Do NOT use the telephone to immediately call loved ones to check their condition or to report yours unless you or others are injured. Leave the lines open for emergency calls. Call ONLY if you have an immediate emergency.
- Expect and prepare for potentially damaging aftershocks.

## 4. Check on your immediate neighbors

- Give priority to those that are disabled, elderly or with children that may need help. Call out to neighbors from outside their house. Ask about their condition. Do not enter a home that appears to have major structural damage or smells of gas.
- Retrieve your emergency radio and listen for news. Tune to AM 1070, 980, or 640. Satellite emergency radio, more often in a car, is at SIRIUS XM channel 184 or 247.

## 5. If your home is structurally damaged and you need to evacuate, go to your neighborhood gathering site

- Your site will be your nearest public school. PVE-designated Disaster Service Workers will set up a site on school grounds – not inside the school.
- Walk or bicycle to your site if possible, parking and vehicle congestion is likely.
- The site will have emergency frequency communications and assistance.
- Be observant and relay to site officials what you know about the neighborhood.
- Be prepared to volunteer your skills in first-aid, search/rescue, child care, etc.

# Emergency Food and Water Supply

*Maintain a 5-day supply of water and a 3-day supply of food for each member of the household. A person can survive weeks without food, but only a few days without water.*

## Water

The Palos Verdes Peninsula relies on water that is piped through the Los Angeles basin where greater damage is likely in a major earthquake. Furthermore, that water must be pumped up the hill to our higher elevation and without electricity the pumps won't work.

**Maintain a 10-day supply of food and water for each member of the household.**

**A person can survive weeks without food, but only a few days without water.**

A 10-day supply is 10 gallons per person. Remember to include water (and food) for your pets.

If you buy bottled water, its storage life is 6 months to a year. Tap water should only be stored in very clean containers and has a shorter shelf life. Rotate your storage on an established schedule. Do not store water containers in areas where toxic substances, such as gasoline and pesticides, are present. These vapors will penetrate plastic over time.

Your water heater stores 30-50 gallons of drinkable water. Know how to shut it off and use the water. Stored beverages may substitute for water if they are available. Do not use spa or swimming pool water as it is contaminated with chemicals.

If it becomes necessary to purify water, boil clear water vigorously for 10 minutes, or add liquid bleach with 5.25% sodium hypochlorite as its sole ingredient (chlorine bleach without added scent) at 8 drops per gallon. Wait 30 minutes. The water should have a slight chlorine smell; if it doesn't, repeat dosage and wait 15 more minutes.

## Food

Food should be dated, require little or no water or cooking to prepare, not increase thirst (i.e. low sodium and low fat), and be things that your family will enjoy and will meet the dietary needs of infants, diabetics or others with special needs.

Keep your food supply in an accessible, cool, dry place, and in an airtight or tightly sealed container as a precaution against moisture, rodents and insects. Typical foods are:

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Canned fruits, vegetables | <input type="checkbox"/> Trail mix                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Canned meat, stew, pasta  | <input type="checkbox"/> Peanut butter            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Dried fruits              | <input type="checkbox"/> Canned nuts (unsalted)   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Dry cereal                | <input type="checkbox"/> Fruit & vegetable juice  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Crackers (low sodium)     | <input type="checkbox"/> Baby & special diet food |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Granola bars (fat free)   | <input type="checkbox"/> Pet food                 |



Rotate your food cache every 6-12 months. Use a marking pen to date your food.

# Emergency Supplies and Equipment

*You may not have the shelter of your home.  
Plan what you will need to eat, sleep and generally  
survive on your own, with or without your home.*

*Typical supplies are:*

## Eating & Cooking

- Paper/plastic plates, cups, utensils
- Paper towels
- Manual can opener
- Chlorine bleach & eye dropper to purify water
- Cooking source & fuel (optional)
- Matches

## Health & Safety

- First Aid kit & manual
- Soap, detergent, shampoo, comb
- Toothbrushes, toothpaste
- Medications / Prescriptions
- Work gloves
- Sturdy shoes
- Seasonal clothes
- Space blanket or sleeping bag
- Tent or other camping equipment
- Extra eyeglasses
- Hearing aid batteries
- Scissors
- Antiseptic wipes

## Sanitation

- Portable toilet or bucket with lid
- Toilet paper
- Disinfectant / Hand sanitizer
- Feminine hygiene supplies
- Diapers & wet wipes
- Plastic garbage bags
- Twist ties
- Shovel

## Tools

- Flashlight & extra batteries
- Wrench (to shut off valves)
- Fire extinguisher
- Sturdy rope (20 ft)
- Utility knife
- Duct tape
- Broom
- Hatchet or axe
- Portable radio & batteries
- Whistle (help signal)

*You may not be at home when disaster strikes.  
What would you need if you must rely on your car for  
short-term shelter or be forced to make your way home on foot?  
A mini-kit of supplies in a small backpack will make you prepared.*

*Typical supplies are:*

- Snack food (low sodium, low fat)
- Bottled water
- Comfortable shoes and socks
- Jacket and hat
- Heavy gloves
- Cash (\$50-\$100)
- Flashlight & batteries
- Portable AM radio & batteries
- Toilet paper and sanitary supplies
- Mylar space blanket
- Pencil/pen and pad of paper
- Trash bags
- Duct tape
- Scissors

# Preparing your Home to Survive

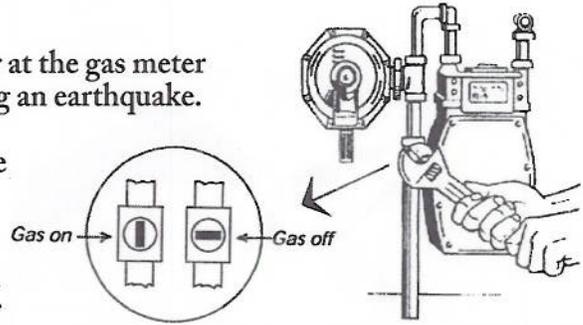
*It's too late to prepare once disaster strikes. Will next month be too late?*

## How and When to Shut Off Utilities

A major earthquake may break gas pipes, electric lines and water lines – all major problems. A gas leak can result in a gas-fed fire or explosion. Broken water pipes can result in water damage and a loss of critically needed water. Sparks from electric lines can cause fires. Locate your gas, water and electric utility shutoffs. Teach all family members how to shut off all utilities and when to do so.

### Gas

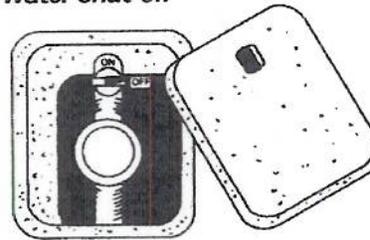
- Leave an adjustable wrench, or a special gas turn off bar at the gas meter so that you won't waste time trying to find one following an earthquake.
- After a major disaster, shut off the gas immediately **ONLY** if you smell or hear gas and/or you notice a large consumption of gas being registered on the gas meter.
- Remember, if the gas is turned off, do not turn it back on. Only a licensed plumber or the gas company can turn the gas back on safely once it's been turned off.



### Water

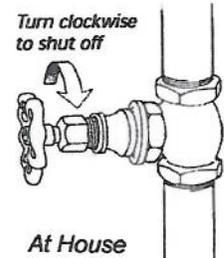
- Know how to turn off the water to prevent water damage and to prevent polluted water from entering your home system. Water may be turned off at either of two locations:
  1. At the main meter box (usually by the street), or
  2. At the water main leading into the house. This is recommended to prevent water from flowing out of your water heater and back into the main line. It is best to shut water off at the water heater inlet valve, often just above the water heater.
- Locate the water main leading into the house and attach a label to it for quick identification.
- Obtain a valve wrench for the water meter line. (This tool can be purchased at most hardware stores.)

Water Shut-off



Water Meter

Turn clockwise to shut off



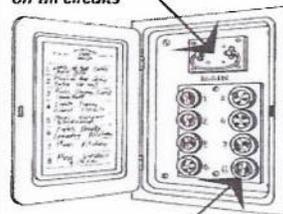
At House

### Electricity

- Know the location of your circuit breaker or fuse box.
- Know how to trip the breakers or remove the fuses if you need to turn off the electricity after an earthquake.
- Shut off smaller circuits first, then finally the main. To turn back on, do main first then smaller circuits.

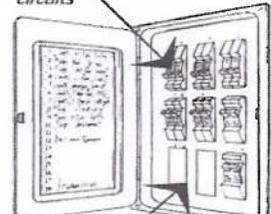


Fuse Box  
Main fuse block:  
Pull out to shut  
off all circuits



Turn fuse counter-clockwise to shut off individual circuits

Breaker Panel  
Switch breakers to "OFF"  
to shut off individual  
circuits



Blanks for additional circuits

## Get Certified – It's Easy!

- Print a certification form from the PVE website or request one from the PVE Police Department.
- Certify that your home has completed these 3 steps:
  1. Your household is informed about Disaster Preparedness. (See certification instructions.)
  2. Your household has safely stored 10 days worth of water and 10 days worth of food for each family member.
  3. Your household has safely stored emergency supplies, tools, equipment and first aid.

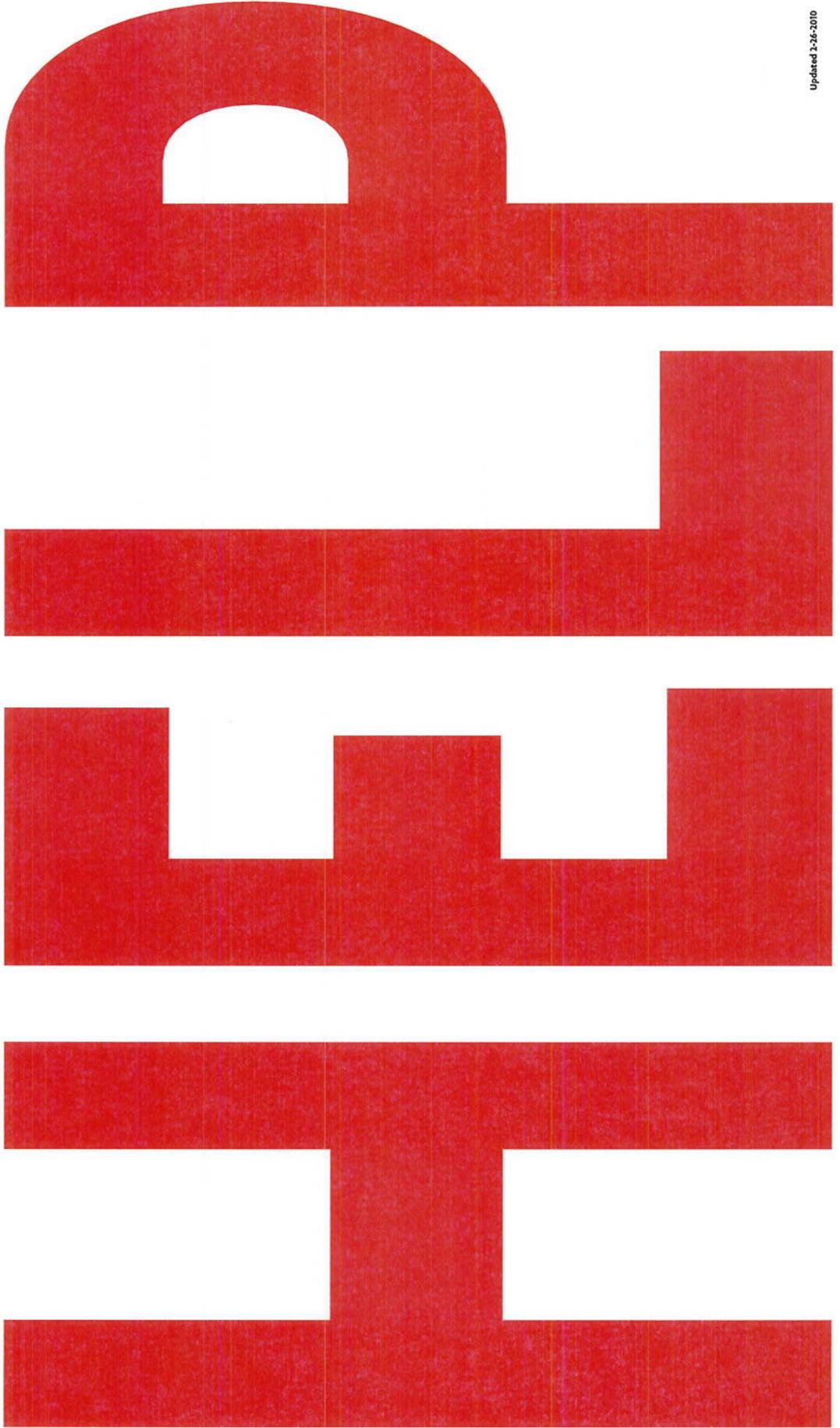


### **Before the Disaster**

Put 2 Band-aids in this brochure and put it with your disaster supplies.

### **After the Disaster**

Use the Band-aids to hang this sign on your front door or window so the front or back is visible from the street.



# OK

More complete information for disaster preparedness can be found at the Palos Verdes Estates city website at <http://www.palosverdes.com/pve/> Click on "Disaster Preparedness".

If you would like to be a volunteer in your neighborhood to assist with disaster recovery activities, please call the Palos Verdes Estates Police Department and give your information to the Community Relations Officer at (310) 378-4211.

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