



# City of Gilroy

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## For Immediate Release

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### April is Earthquake Preparedness Month

Now more than ever families, neighbors and community members need to come together to help one another—to prepare for any eventuality. Although the City of Gilroy is well equipped and prepared to respond to emergencies, it is also important for residents to be prepared for the possibility for natural disaster such as earthquakes. One important way to begin preparations is to build a network of friends and families that are trained and able to help in a disaster. The American Red Cross lists five action steps that everyone can take to help ensure their safety in the event of a major earthquake:

1. Make a plan
2. Build a kit
3. Get trained
4. Volunteer
5. Give Blood

During the month of April, which is Earthquake Preparedness Month, the City of Gilroy would like to remind community members to develop or review a family disaster plan to ensure that all family members know what to do, where to go and who to call in case of a disaster. Having the right tools, medicine and food in a disaster can mean the difference between life and death. We recommend that everyone have an emergency disaster kit at home, in the car and at work or school. The following tips will help community members prepare for a disaster:

#### **Make a Plan**

Planning ahead is the first step to a calmer and more assured disaster response.

*more follows*

- ▶ Talk with your family about potential disasters.
- ▶ Plan to share responsibilities and work together as a team.
- ▶ Plan and designate a place to meet after a disaster has struck.
- ▶ Designate an out-of-state friend to be your family contact.
- ▶ Learn how and when to turn utilities off (water, gas and electricity).
- ▶ Tell everyone in the home where emergency contact information is located.
- ▶ Install smoke detectors on each level of your home, especially near bedrooms.  
Remember to test smoke detectors monthly and change batteries at least once a year.
- ▶ Determine the best escape routes out of your home.
- ▶ Check if you have adequate insurance coverage.
- ▶ Take a Red Cross first aid and CPR Class.
- ▶ Practice the plan.

### **Build a Kit**

The first 72 hours are critical to enduring the effects of a disaster. During this time period local emergency services will likely be overwhelmed dealing with the early response to the disaster as well as conducting overall assessments of local need. Accordingly, federal, state and local emergency preparedness materials ask that individuals and families take the necessary steps to get through the first 72 hours without assistance from disaster response agencies. The first step in doing so is to build an emergency response kit.

Start by keeping your disaster supply items in a sturdy, easy-to-carry container such as a backpack, duffle bag or covered container and store in a convenient location known to the entire family. Remember to check dates of both food items and batteries and change water supply every six months for freshness. Keep enough supplies in your disaster supply kit to meet the needs of your family for a minimum of three days (72 hours). Remember to prepare for family members with special requirements, such as infants, elderly or disabled persons.

- ▶ Water (a minimum of one gallon per person per day).

*more follows*

- ▶ Food (non-perishable, high-protein items).
- ▶ First aid kit (including prescription and non-prescription medicine).
- ▶ Flashlight (including extra batteries).
- ▶ Tools and supplies (including scissors, aspirin, knife, can opener and sanitary supplies).
- ▶ Battery-operated radio.
- ▶ Clothing and bedding (one set of clothing and shoes per family member and sleeping articles).
- ▶ Money.
- ▶ Pet supplies (including food, water, leash and medication).
- ▶ Map of the surrounding area.
- ▶ Contact information.

Having the right tools is important however, without proper training, the injured may not receive the care and attention they need to survive. The Red Cross offers a variety of first aid and CPR classes to help community members learn the skills they need to respond in an emergency. For more information on available classes, preassembled disaster kits or for free disaster preparedness information, please call the Red Cross Silicon Valley at 1-877- 727-6771, or go to their website at: <http://www.siliconvalley-redcross.org/>

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