Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) Basic Training

Introduction to Walnut Creek CERT

CERT COMMUNITY EMERGENCY RESPONSE TEAM

2023-10-18

FEMA

WELCOME!

Introductions

Program Guidance and Administration

- Throughout this course and beyond, safety is our first priority.
- When engaging in hands-on skills, never do anything you can't do or that isn't safe.
- To become a CERT, you must complete all units of study, hands on skills demonstration and final drill.
- Complete all required forms including Disaster Service Worker (DSW), Liablity Waiver and Code of Conduct

FEMA CERT Basic Course Preview

- Introduction
- Unit 1 Disaster Preparedness
- Unit 2 CERT organization & emergency communications
- Unit 3 Disaster medical operations (Part 1)
- Unit 4 Disaster medical operations (Part 2)
- Unit 5 Disaster psychology
- Unit 6 Fire & utility controls
- Unit 7 Light search and rescue
- Unit 8 Terrorism & CERT
- Animal Preparedness

CERT – The Big Picture

- A nation-wide, FEMA program overseen by a state's office of emergency services
- 2,700 programs, 600,000 trained CERTs in the United States
- Local teams are formed and managed by a sponsoring agency; Walnut Creek CERT is sponsored by the City of Walnut Creek
- CERT organizations follow the Incident Command System (ICS), a command and control system universal to emergency responders
- The sponsoring agency decides how the CERT organization fits into its disaster preparedness plan, what skills will be trained and what actions (and related agency liability) the CERTs will perform

Walnut Creek CERT History

2006 CERT program implemented through the City of Walnut Creek

2007 CERT neighborhood-based Areas of responsibility established

2008 CERT Area “Cache” program adopted

2009 CERT volunteer training assumed by Walnut Creek volunteers

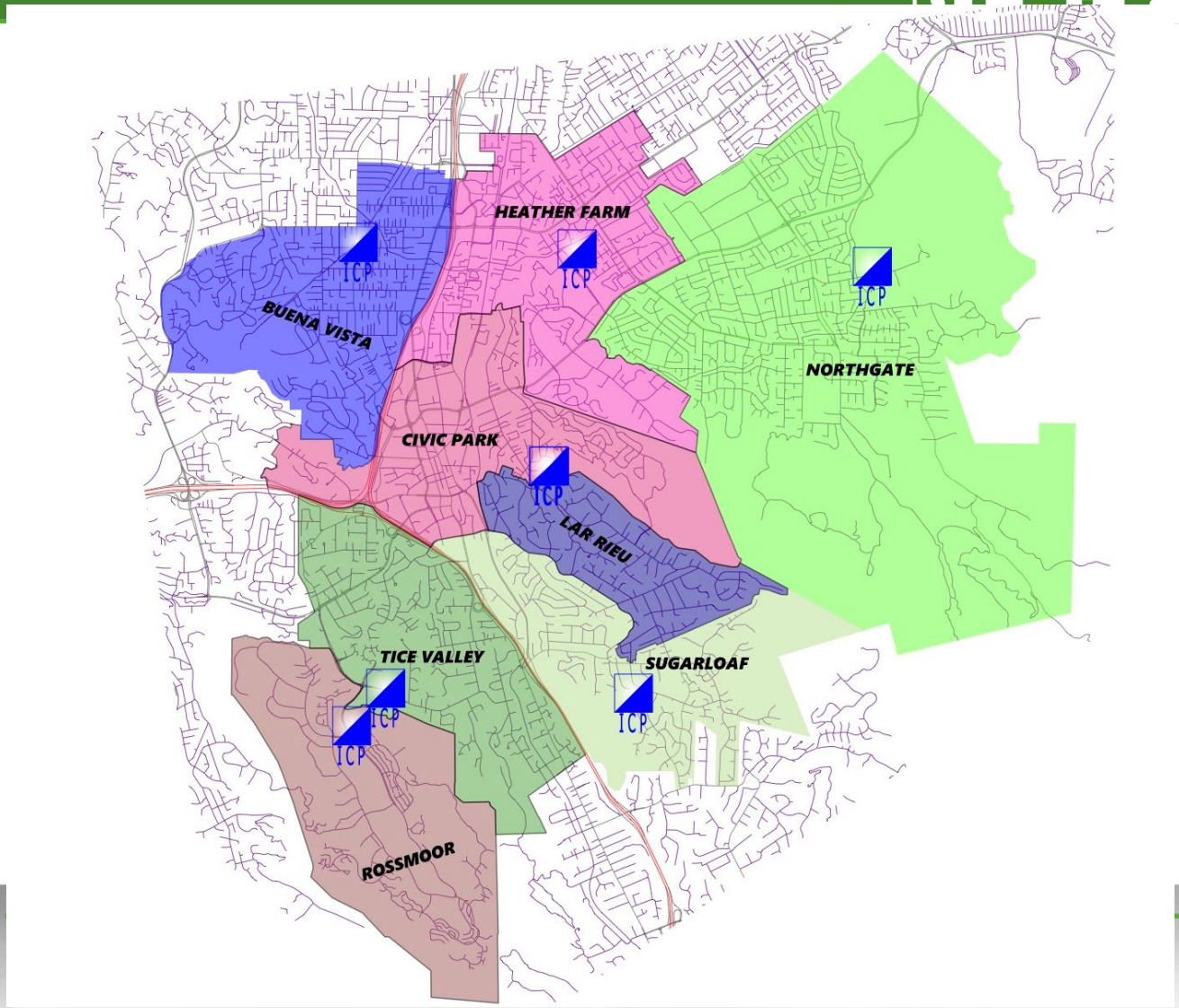
Walnut Creek CERT Mission

Helping people help themselves
and their community prepare
and prevail in an emergency

CERT as Emergency Response Resource

- CERT is a Community Based and Community Supported Volunteer Organization
- CERTs are conditioned to be:
  - ✓ Self Trained
  - ✓ Self Contained
  - ✓ Self Sustained

Each Walnut Creek CERT Area organizes around a local Command Post



CERT Areas

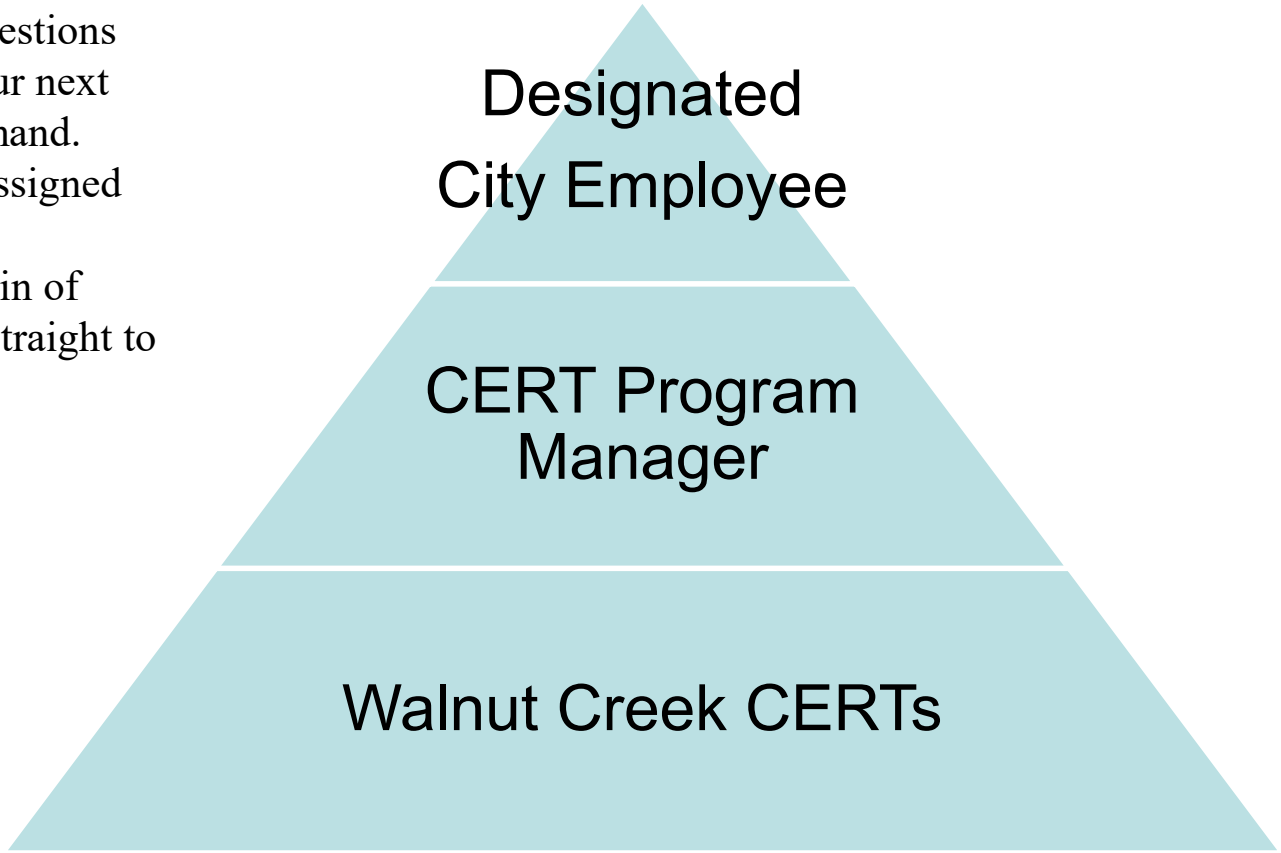
Following disaster activation, CERT teams serve as the eyes and ears of the City, reporting observations via amateur radio while travelling along assigned routes.

REGION	POPULATION	HOUSEHOLDS	AREA (sq. miles)
Buena Vista	11,463	4,950	2.73
Civic Park	11,476	6,436	2.65
Heather Farm	16,290	8,719	2.86
Lar Rieu	4,231	1,738	1.30
Northgate	14,661	5,451	9.58
Rossmoor	7,993	6,605	2.89
Sugarloaf	7,934	3,575	2.55
Tice Valley	8,135	3,566	2.57

Population: 82,000 Households 41,000 27.1 square miles

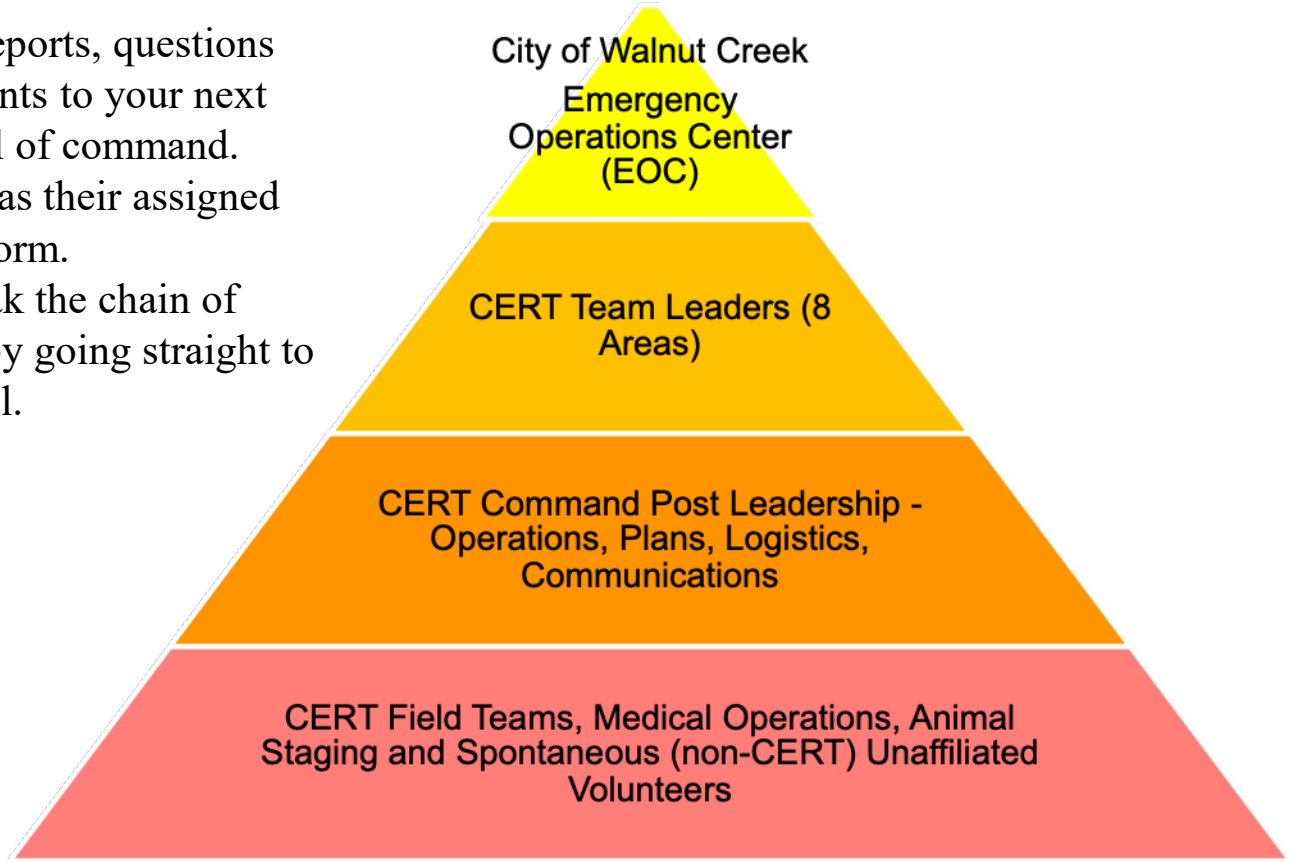
Walnut Creek CERT
Peacetime Chain of Command

- Direct all reports, questions and comments to your next higher level of command.
- Everyone has their assigned role to perform.
- Do not break the chain of command by going straight to the top level.



Walnut Creek CERT
Disaster Response Chain of Command

- Direct all reports, questions and comments to your next higher level of command.
- Everyone has their assigned role to perform.
- Do not break the chain of command by going straight to the top level.



Walnut Creek CERT Mobilization Protocol

Refer to City of Walnut Creek Community Emergency Response Team Mobilization Protocol August 1, 2020 for full details.

Highlights:

Alert Level 1	Advisory Alert – Partial Mobilization
Alert Level 2	Full Mobilization and Activation Request
Alert Level 3	Automatic Self-Activation and Deployment

Activation – City of Walnut Creek requests CERTs to be called into service

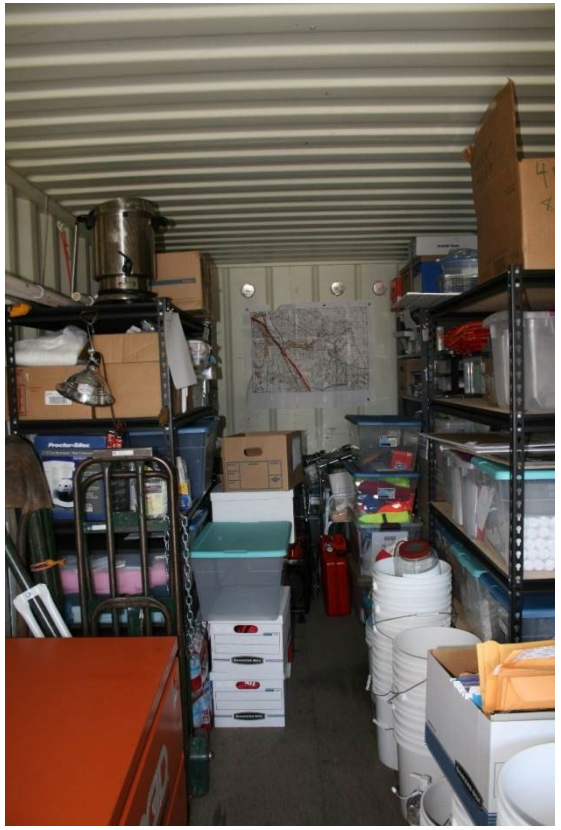
Deployment – the act of being assigned to a specific task or role within a proscribed area of operation

Mobilization - prepare for imminent activation that might include reporting to an assigned area of operation

CERT members are prohibited from self-mobilizing or deploying to routine everyday emergencies.

CERT storage container serves as Area Command Post

Each CERT Staging Area maintains disaster response supplies in a storage container/ ‘cache’



CERT Earthquake Response

- Identify and report damage, hazards, injuries
- Treat life threatening conditions (shock, obstructed breathing, excessive bleeding)
- Perform basic first aid
- Maintain emergency communications
- Conduct light search and rescue

CERTs are uniquely valuable as first responder force multipliers.

- Registered Disaster Service Workers - known, sponsored
- Follows Incident Command System – won't "go rogue"
- Trained in versatile, non-professional response skills
  - Medical operations
  - Light search and rescue
  - Recognizes and avoids hazards
  - Traffic and people management

Increasingly, CERTs are assigned response support tasks, freeing professional responders to focus on large scale situations.

Recent California CERT deployments:

• Missing person searches
• Points of distribution:
  ○ Vaccination Clinics
  ○ Supply distribution
  ○ Information dissemination/solicitation
• Evacuation support and evacuation drills
• Unsolicited donations management
• Business and public fire safety information

citizen corps

CERTs are increasingly assigned response support tasks, freeing professional responders to focus on bigger issues.

Recent California CERT deployments:
• Damage assessment (flood, fire, etc.) • Volunteer intake/credentialing • Evacuation center reception and shelter support • Traffic management • EOC runners & scribes • Auxiliary communications

citizen corps

CERTs may also perform non-disaster services when requested.

- Distribute preparedness materials; do demos
- Staff first aid booths at special events
- Assist with installation of smoke alarms
- Participate in parade route management

Local Hazards

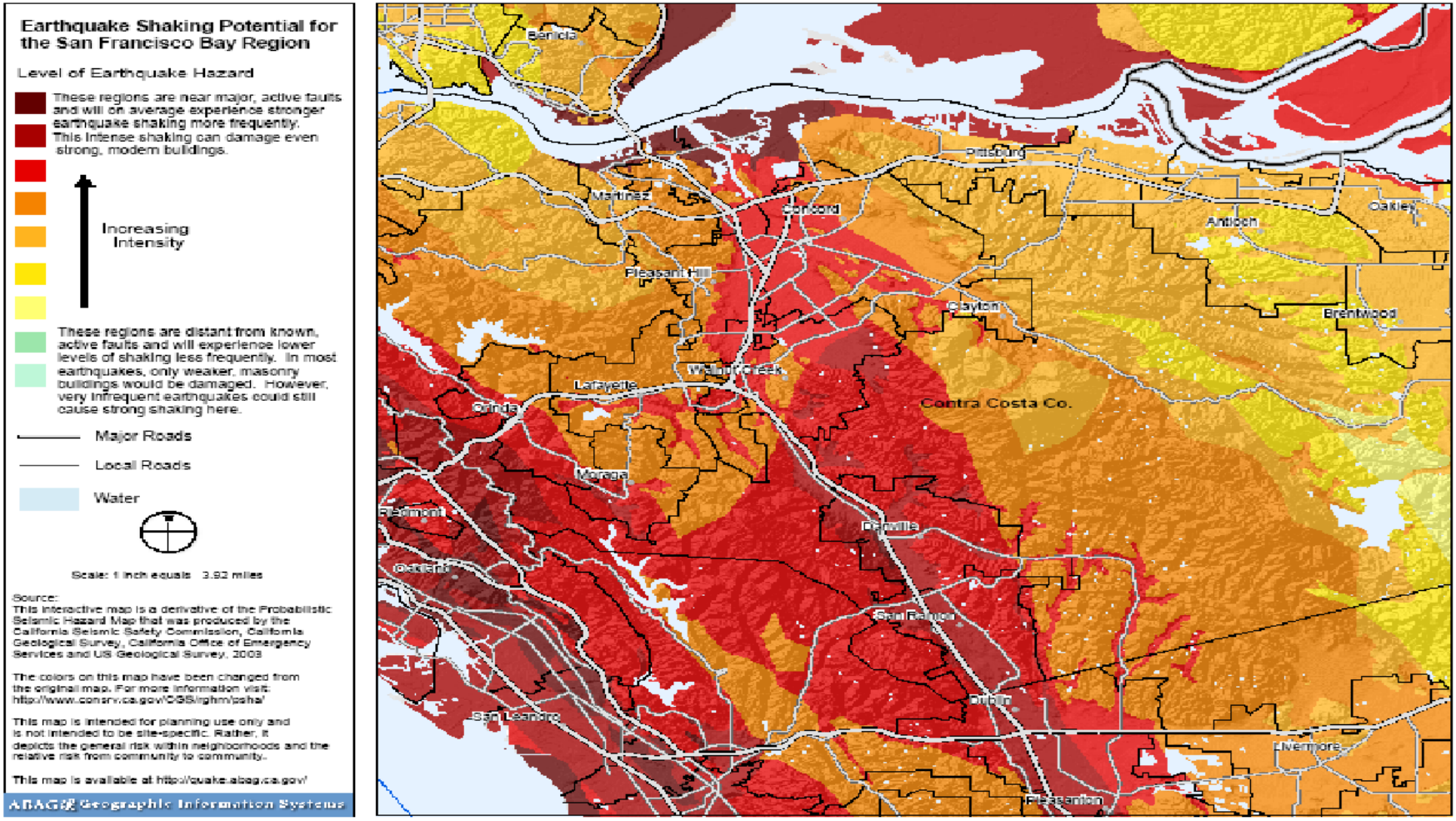
Local Hazard – Earthquake

- An earthquake is the sudden, rapid shaking of the earth, caused by the breaking and shifting of subterranean rock as it releases strain that has accumulated over a long time
  - Usually less than 50 miles below the surface
- There is no seasonal or yearly cycle of earthquake occurrence; earthquakes can happen at any time

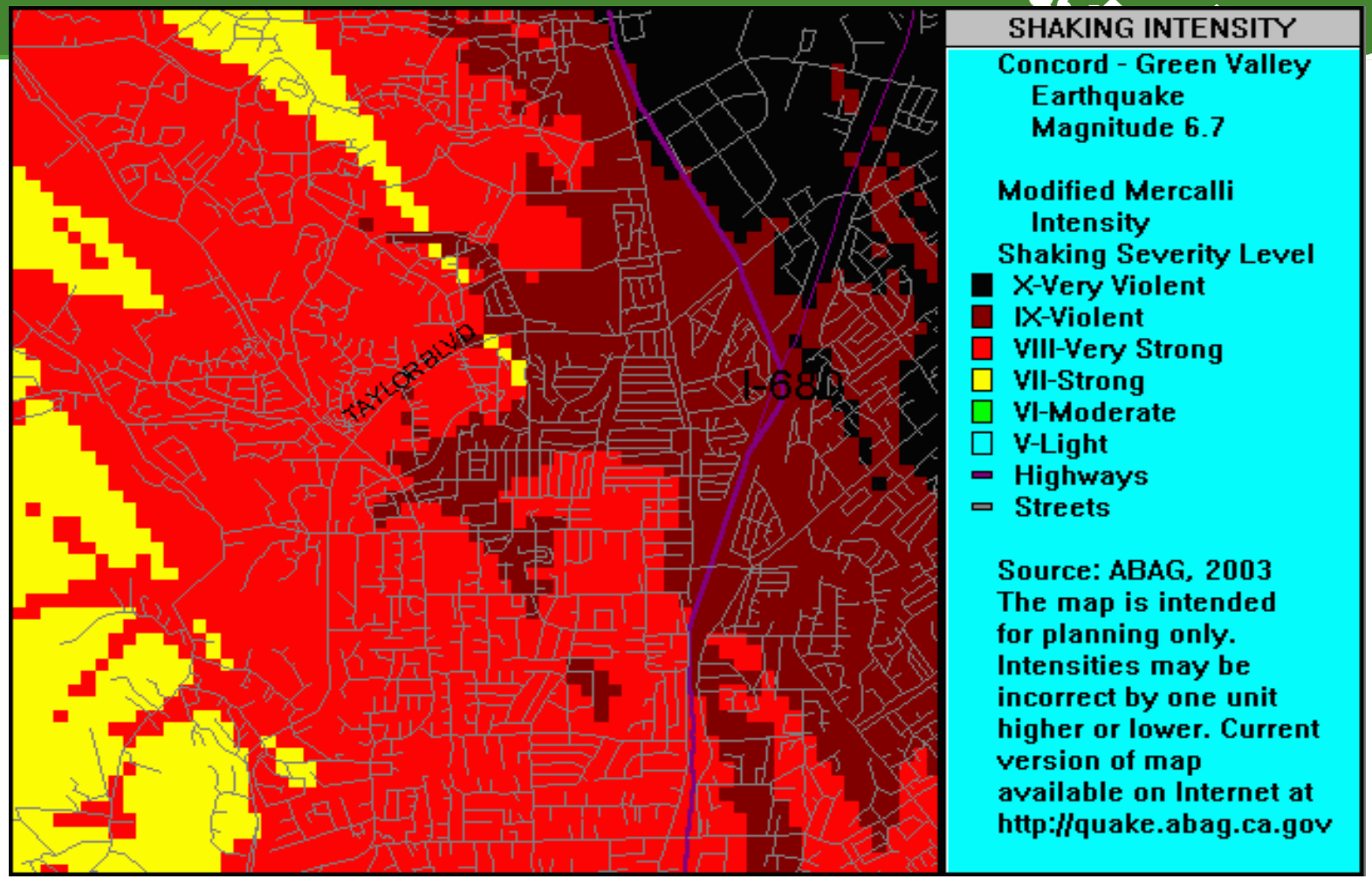
Why we should be prepared?

The United States Geological Survey (USGS) has estimated a 72% probability of a magnitude 6.7 or larger earthquake in the San Francisco Bay Area in the next 30 years.

Earthquake Shaking Potential



Concord – Green Valley Fault



1989 Loma Prieta – 6.9 M/15 Seconds

2014 Napa – 6.0 M

Earthquake Impacts

- Fatalities
  - The severity of the shaking during an earthquake can cause manmade and natural structures and the contents within these to fail or fall and injure or kill people
- Disruptions
  - Interrupts transportation, power, and daily life due to collapsed buildings, damages to utilities and roads
  - Generates economic losses from damages to structures and roadways

Accompanying Hazards

- Earthquakes can trigger other hazards
  - Avalanche
  - Fire
  - Flood
  - Landslide
  - Tsunami

Other Walnut Creek Disaster

Table 2-1: Past Natural Hazard Events in Walnut Creek*			
Date	**Type of Event**	**FEMA #**	**Damage Assessment**
03/16/2017	Severe Winter Storms	DR-4305	Minimal Recorded Damage
02/14/2017	Severe Winter Storms	DR-4301	$680,000
1/1/2006	Flooding	DR-1628	Minimal Recorded Damage
12/16/2002	Flooding	N/A	Minimal Recorded Damage
2/1998	Flooding/Landslide	DR-1203	$300,075
1/12/1993	Flooding	N/A	Minimal Recorded Damage
1986	Landslide	N/A	$150,500
1984	Flooding/Severe Weather	N/A	$350,000
1983	Landslide	N/A	$250,000
1982	Severe Weather	N/A	$348,000
** - Table and information from Contra Costa County Hazard Mitigation plan; Volume 2 –*			

Table 2-2: Hazard Risk Rating*			
Rank	**Hazard Type**	**Risk Rating Score (Probability x impact)**	**Category**
1	Earthquake	48	High
2	Landslides	39	High
3	Severe Weather	30	Medium
4	Floods	18	Medium
5	Dam and levee failure	11	Low
6	Drought	9	Low
7	Wildfire	6	Low
8	Sea level Rise	0	None
8	Tsunami	0	None
** - Table and information from Contra Costa County Hazard Mitigation plan; Volume 2 – Planning Partner Annexes*			

Other Local Hazards – Extreme Heat

CERTs are not trained nor mobilized for extreme heat but may be asked to volunteer with wellness checks or related services

- Heat-related deaths and illnesses are preventable
- Some groups—including older adults, young people, outdoor workers, and people with chronic medical conditions—are more vulnerable to extreme heat and more likely to develop heat-related illnesses
- Disruptions
  - Extreme heat waves can interrupt power and other utility services

Local Hazards – Wildfire

CERTs are not trained nor mobilized for wildfire but may be asked to volunteer with wellness checks or related services

- 90% of wildfires are started by people, either intentionally or accidentally
  - Debris burning, equipment use, and campfires are leading causes of accidental wildfires
- The number and size of wildfires increases annually
- Disruptions
  - Interrupts transportation, power, and other infrastructure

Local Hazards – Pandemic

CERTs are not trained nor mobilized for pandemic but may be asked to volunteer with remote wellness checks or related services

- In a pandemic, widespread illness may result in the disruption of essential services such as the food supply chain, medical services, banking, transportation, postal services and fuel
  - The economy may be impacted,
  - Travel may be restricted,
  - Social support to neighbors in need may be required

Supplemental Training May be Offered Annually to Maintain and Build Skills

- Examples include:
  - Amateur ham radio licensing and emergency communications classes and drills
  - CERT Basic training refresher training and drills
  - Traffic and crowd management
  - Shelter reception and operations
  - FEMA IS 100, 200, 700 and 800 (Incident Command self study program)

Walnut Creek CERT

Conduct and Practices

CERT Code of Conduct

- Elements include:
  - Expected behavior
  - Behaviors that are subject to termination
- Sign Code of Conduct and keep a copy with your CERT materials

CERT Code of Conduct – Rules 1, 3 & 10

- "CERT members will follow the Incident Command Structure (ICS) chain of command at all times."

- "CERT members will only undertake activities that are within the scope of their training, within their physical capabilities, and will not take risks likely to cause injury to themselves or others"

- "CERT members will comply with the California Disaster Service Worker Volunteer Program which can provide workers' compensation insurance coverage and limited immunity from liability. The California Disaster Service Worker Volunteer Program Guidance states in part that Disaster Service Worker immunity from liability does not apply in cases of willful intent, unreasonable acts beyond the scope of training, or if a criminal act is committed"

Excerpts of Liability Protection for Disaster Workers

CERT members are generally protected by “Good Samaritan” laws

- Federal Volunteer Protection Act of 1997 – Federal

“…no volunteer of a nonprofit organization or governmental entity shall be liable for harm caused by an act or omission of the volunteer on behalf of the organization or entity if—

(1) the volunteer was acting within the scope of the volunteer’s responsibilities…”

- California Health and Safety Code 1799.102

“(a) No person who in good faith, and not for compensation, renders emergency medical or nonmedical care at the scene of an emergency shall be liable for any civil damages resulting from any act or omission…”

CERT Limited Workers Compensation Eligibility

- After basic training certification, Walnut Creek CERTs are eligible for limited State workers compensation coverage

- CERTs must maintain active Disaster Service Worker (DSW) status with the City of Walnut Creek by participating in a qualifying event every two years to maintain workers compensation coverage.
  - For more information on the California Disaster Service Worker Volunteer Program

    http://www.caloes.ca.gov/cal-oes-divisions/planning-preparedness/disaster-service-worker-volunteer-program
  - Walnut Creek CERT Disaster Service Worker Policy

    https://www.walnut-creek.org/home/showpublisheddocument?id=24223

CERT Disaster Service Worker's Loyalty Oath

I, _[STATE YOUR NAME]_, do solemnly swear (or affirm) that I will support and defend the Constitution of the United States and the Constitution of the State of California against all enemies, foreign and domestic; that I will bear true faith and allegiance to the Constitution of the United States and the Constitution of the State of California; that I take this obligation freely, without any mental reservations or purpose of evasion; that I will well and faithfully discharge the duties upon which I am about to enter. I certify under penalty of perjury, under the laws of the State of California, that the foregoing is true and correct.

Personal Liablity

Act within the scope of your training in a prudent and reasonable manner.

"Good Samaritan law"

Federal Volunteer Protection Act of 1997

California AB83 of 2010 –

Torts: personal liability immunity.

Personal Liability

California AB83 of 2010 - Torts: personal liability immunity

"This bill provides that no person who in good faith and not for compensation renders emergency medical or nonmedical care or assistance at the scene of an emergency shall be liable for civil damages resulting from any act or omission other than an act or omission constituting gross negligence or willful or wanton misconduct."

CERT Disaster Service Worker's Loyalty Oath

- Supplemental materials are available on the Walnut Creek CERT website
- FEMA CERT Participant's Manual is an important addition to this training and is available online
- Any vendors or websites referred to in this presentation series or by any instructors are for informational purposes only. Walnut Creek CERT does not endorse any specific commercial organizations.

Skills are learned with continuous practice

- Skills that will be presented have details that are easily forgotten. This perishability of abilities means that when a disaster occurs, if you have not practiced these skills, you may not remember the life saving details.
- Maintain your skills
  - Attend scheduled refresher meetings and exercises regularly
  - Take additional training
  - Audit basic classes and/or volunteer to help with CERT Basic.