

Emergency Preparedness (EP) Subcommittee Meeting Notes
Granada Hills North Neighborhood Council (GHNNC)
Tuesday, February 7, 2012

GHNNC office, 11139 Woodley Avenue, Granada Hills, CA 91344

The initial meeting of the EP Subcommittee was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Bill Hopkins, Subcommittee Chair. Nineteen people attended. A sign-in sheet was circulated.

Bill welcomed everyone to this first meeting and invited attendees to take the handouts provided on the side of the room. Among the handouts were the GHNNC newsletter, CERT class information and syllabus, an SOS Survival Products catalog, *Emergency Survival Guide* produced by L.A. County, *Preparedness Guide for Earthquakes and Other Disasters*. Hand warmers (with an expiration date in the past, but still useful) were also made available.

Bill announced and posted information regarding the upcoming CERT Level 1 class at Fire Station 87 on Balboa Bl., just south of Devonshire. The class starts March 6, 7:00 - 9:30 p.m. Information can also be found at the Los Angeles CERT website (www.cert-la.com).

The next meeting of this Subcommittee will be on March 6, 2012 at 7:00 p.m. in the same location (GHNNC office).

Introductions were made by all in attendance. The backgrounds of the attendees were varied in regard to EP experience and included recent graduates of the GHNNC-sponsored CERT Level 1 class at the Rinaldi Adult School and those with many years of experience in emergency services. Four HAMs were in attendance (licensed Amateur Radio operators), as were several GHNNC board members. The recent CERT graduates were interested in continuing their EP education and meeting their neighbors.

Linda Pruett, Chair of the EP Committee for the Lake Balboa Neighborhood Council, invited everyone to her Committee meetings, which are on the second Saturday of every month at 9:00 a.m. at the FlyAway at Woodley and Saticoy in Van Nuys. Parking is free in the spaces closest to Woodley (may be designated as employee parking, but it's OK to park there). The meeting is approximately 1½ hours long in the community room at the North end on the second floor (use the inside elevator). The next meeting is this coming Saturday, February 11.

Bill and Linda Pruett emphasized that although the public is instructed to have food, drinking water, and supplies to last three days in an emergency, that is a *minimum*, and really you want enough for a week or two. Rotate your stock. Don't forget your pets.

In response to a question regarding whether animals are allowed in shelters, Bill responded that they are not (with the exception of guide dogs) because of various concerns including communicable diseases and allergies. Because many people have pets, the American Red Cross (ARC) tries to set up an animal shelter adjacent to its shelters for humans.

Bill said that a Red Cross shelter is by definition staffed by a nurse. CERT may set up an evacuation center until the ARC arrives and sets up.

Bill encouraged attendees to take a brochure with information about the Los Angeles County's Specific Needs Awareness Planning (SNAP) for themselves or for a neighbor. It's a volunteer disaster registry to help emergency personnel find people with disabilities who may require additional assistance in a disaster. Their website is at <http://snap.lacounty.gov>.

Bill said that the CERT rule is that in a disaster, you take care of yourself first, then your family, then your local neighborhood. Only then should you consider taking care of others away from your immediate area. Most people who complete the CERT 1 training are not active volunteers, but they have the training to take care of themselves and their families in a disaster.

Ron Howell said it is ideal for Neighborhood Watch groups to include people who are CERT trained and be organized to handle disasters in the neighborhood.

Dennis Smith said that the Grocer's Association has an emergency plan for grocery stores to offer a bag of pre-selected food for shoppers for \$5 in cash (registers won't work without power).

Bill encouraged attendees to suggest speakers and topics for future meetings. Suggestions: Pet rescue organizations, first-aid for pets, ARC representative to explain their role in disaster shelter management, DWP/MWD to talk about safety of the water treatment plant in Granada Hills North, leaflets with suggested supplies, what to do if you have a medical problem, how do we organize to find each other, LAUSD representative to explain their procedures in an emergency, how to become a HAM, information about additional CERT training, water safety, Gas Company precautions.

Linda Pruett suggested that when discussing EP with the schools, be sure to ask how often their supplies are checked and updated.

Bill is working on having a speaker from ARC at the next meeting.

Bill asked attendees if they prefer afternoon or evening meetings. The preferences were split, and so we'll keep the meeting time at 7:00 p.m. for the first couple of meetings and then revisit the issue.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:05 p.m. Bill invited attendees to stay for a "post-meeting roundtable" to get acquainted with one another.