

# ESP FOCUS

## Reduce Hazards



### Fewer Hazards = Fewer Injuries + Less Damage

The majority of injuries caused by fires, floods, earthquakes and other emergencies can be prevented. Your emergency response teams can do their share by forming a Hazard Reduction Team.

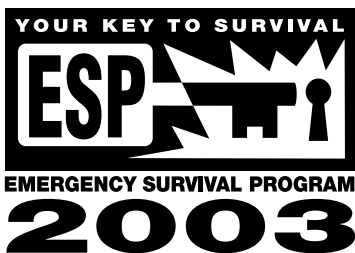
This ESP Focus sheet provides basic information about identifying and reducing hazards. Future focus sheets will provide basic information on other aspects of creating a preparedness and response program.

### Select a Hazard Reduction Team

The Planning Committee can start the hazard reduction effort by selecting members of the Hazard Reduction Team and a leader. Members of the team can include architects or engineers, building inspectors, contractors, electricians, plumbers, etc.

### Hazard Identification

The primary responsibility of the Hazard Reduction Team is to identify, reduce and eliminate potential hazards in their areas of expertise. The team can start by conducting a thorough hazard hunt to identify and prioritize structural, nonstructural and environmental hazards.



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## Common Hazards

**Structural damage** resulting from a flood, fire, earthquake or other emergency can cost tens of thousands of dollars to repair. **Nonstructural hazards** can cause serious injuries and result in

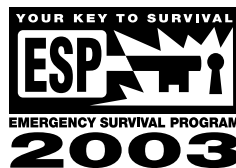
millions of dollars in property losses. Identifying and eliminating such hazards can prevent much of the potential damage. The table below lists common flood, fire and earthquake hazards.

Flood	Fire	Earthquake
Debris, overgrowth from on-site drainage areas Debris and overgrowth in public drainage areas Canyon, hillside and mountain areas Cracked or bulging slopes, snow, ice Tilted trees New holes or bare spots on hillsides Downed power lines Swollen streams, rivers, or other waterways	Dry grass, brush and leaves Debris on roofs, in gutters and spouts Dead limbs over roofs and within 10 feet of chimneys Lower limbs within six feet of the ground on all trees 18 feet or taller Weak, dead and leaning trees Plants, shrubs and trees near power lines Gas and propane tanks within 30 feet of structures Roofs constructed with wood shake or other combustible materials	Unreinforced masonry buildings Buildings that are not bolted to their foundations Soft/weak first story construction Weak or unbraced chimneys and cripple walls (cripple walls are the short wall and studs between the foundation and the floor) Room additions Inadequately braced balconies Beds or desks under or near windows Computers, stereos, televisions and other appliances that are not properly bolted or secured Glass, heavy objects on shelves Hanging plants or light fixtures that aren't secured Mirrors and pictures over beds and desks, etc. Propane tanks Tall pieces of furniture that aren't secured Cabinet doors that aren't latched Water heaters that aren't bolted or braced

**Environmental hazards** also pose an injury and damage threat. Common environmental hazards include: overhead and downed utility lines, signs, trees, underground gas, sewage and water lines.

### Prioritize and Reduce Hazards

After the hazard hunt is complete, the Hazard Reduction Team should identify the hazards that pose the greatest threat to the occupants and develop a strategy to eliminate or reduce them. The Hazard Reduction Team should determine hazards that can be easily eliminated and encourage those who have the necessary skills to reduce them. The Planning Committee should work with representatives from local government and utilities to reduce the risk of injuries and damage from such environmental hazards as power, sewage, water and telephone lines. Contact your local emergency agency for more information on structural and nonstructural hazard reduction.



This action sheet is produced as part of the Emergency Survival Program (ESP). ESP is an awareness campaign designed to increase emergency preparedness at home, in the community, at work and at school. ESP was developed by the County of Los Angeles. The California Governor's Office of Emergency

Services (OES) and representatives from Southern California cities and counties assist in the development of campaign materials and coordination of the campaign.