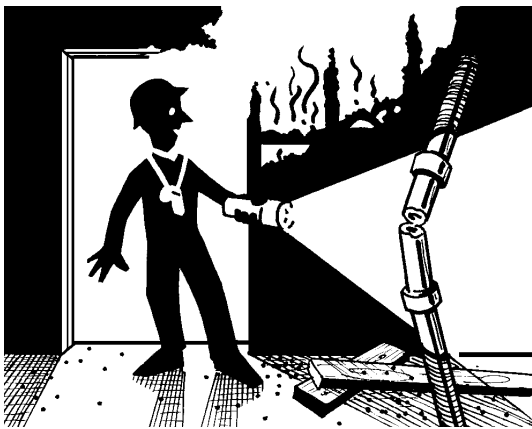


# ESP FOCUS

## Assess the Damage



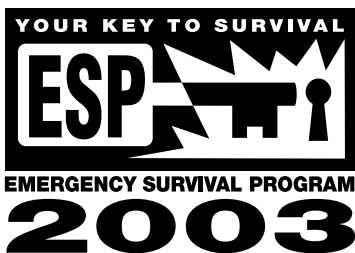
## You May Have to Determine the Safety of Your Home, Office or School

After a damaging flood, fire, earthquake or other emergency, determining the safety of homes, office buildings, schools and other facilities for immediate occupancy will be a major priority for local and state government.

If local cities and counties do not have enough architects and engineers from the private sector to evaluate the safety of buildings, the Governor's Office of Emergency Services (OES) will coordinate the deployment of architects, engineers and building officials from cities and counties outside the impacted area to assist.

Deployment takes time, though, and your home, neighborhood, office building or school may contain unknown hazards. You should form a Damage Assessment Team to identify structures with obvious exterior damage. This is the next step in preparing and can help save lives and reduce injuries. An effective Damage Assessment Team will help reduce the number of hazards and injuries to family members, neighbors, co-workers and students.

The reverse side of this ESP Focus sheet provides information on developing a Damage Assessment Team. Future ESP Focus sheets examine other issues related to preparedness.



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# O C T O B E R

## Select a Damage Assessment Team

After the questionnaires have been reviewed, the Planning Committee and Block Captain should select members of the Damage Assessment Team and a team leader.

The Damage Assessment Leader should have training as an architect, engineer or contractor. Members of the team should have, but do not necessarily need, similar training and backgrounds.

## Pre-Emergency Responsibilities

Before the next fire, flood, earthquake or other emergency, the team leader and members of the Damage Assessment Team should:

- Encourage home and building owners to note the current structural status of their building, including cracks, for later comparison.
- Survey buildings in the neighborhood to become familiar with different types of construction and potential hazards, as well as their current "pre-disaster" conditions.
- Develop an initial damage survey form for use during assessments. It should identify the following hazards:
  - Fires
  - Broken gas lines
  - Broken water lines
  - Fallen power lines
  - Buildings off their foundations
  - Buildings with collapsed walls or ceilings
  - Blocked or jammed doors
  - Toppled or cracked chimneys
  - Broken windows
  - Streets, driveways, lawns with large cracks
  - Trees that have fallen or might fall on a house or another building
  - Debris blocking the street

## Post-Emergency Responsibilities

After the emergency, the Damage Assessment Team should:

- Report to the designated meeting place for assignments (unless otherwise directed).
- Begin assessments, referring to a preliminary damage survey form like the one below.
- Determine obvious external damage only. Never enter a building that might be unsafe.
- Report the damage observed to appropriate authorities, insurance carriers, etc.
- Provide to the Shelter Team the addresses of buildings that are too dangerous to occupy.
- Urge everyone to inventory and document by photo or video, if possible, damages and losses.
- Direct those who reside in or occupy dangerous buildings to the Shelter Team.
- Remind everyone about the possibility of aftershocks if an earthquake has occurred.

## Initial Damage Survey Form

Date _____
Damage Assessment Leader _____
___ Fires ___ Broken gas lines ___ Broken water lines ___ Downed power lines ___ Apts/houses off foundations ___ Apts/houses with collapsed walls or ceilings ___ Blocked or jammed doors ___ Toppled or cracked chimneys ___ Apts/houses with broken windows ___ Large cracks in streets, driveways ___ Fallen trees on houses ___ Other damage



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.