

# El Paso County Ready & Resilient Neighborhoods

Build a Kit.  
Make a Plan.  
Help Each Other.

Guide for:  
Preparing with Neighbors





**Preparing with Neighbors**  
Participant's Guide

**Phase I: The Presentation**  
**Phase II: Getting Organized**  
**Phase III: Getting Confident**

Dear El Paso County Residents,

Ready and Resilient Neighborhoods, or R & R Neighborhoods, are all about encouraging local residents to prepare for emergencies and disasters. This includes preparing as individuals, families, a neighborhood block, in your building, and in the workplace. This guide provides a road map to organizing with neighbors.

After a disaster, people will need to work with those around them to solve problems and meet needs. As you know, it is likely that the systems we normally rely on in emergencies, such as the Fire Department and Emergency Medical Services (EMS), will likely be overwhelmed in the event of a disaster. We want to make sure that El Paso County and its neighborhoods have the necessary information, tools, and know-how to be self-sufficient for at least two weeks following a disaster event.

Our staff and volunteers have likely given you a presentation on personal and neighborhood preparedness, along with a few tips on how to organize your group; this is Phase One of preparing with your neighbors. You may have also accessed this information on our website and gone through Phase One on your own. If you'd still like to schedule a presentation, please let us know.

This booklet will serve as your guide for the last two phases of organizing with your neighbors. You can find all the presentation materials from Phase One, as well as other preparedness resources on our website ([www.epcoem.com](http://www.epcoem.com)).

Phase Two walks you through some simple steps to organizing with your neighborhood. This section also provides some forms that may help in collecting information about the current preparedness of your neighbors and identifying gaps that may exist.

Finally, Phase Three gives participants the opportunity to further practice and acquire new skills should they wish to grow their base of knowledge. Keep in mind that all of the steps and tools outlined here are simply guidance.

Preparing and organizing with neighbors is not a one-size-fits-all process, just as neighborhoods are all unique in their own way. You may live in a single family home with neighbors spread out over a block, or you may live in an apartment building or condo, with neighbors spread out over several floors. How you organize may differ depending on your needs and preferences.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact us. Our contact information is provided on the next page and we are more than happy to help you and your neighborhood on the road to preparedness.

Good luck!

Sincerely,

El Paso County Office of Emergency Management

# PHASE ONE: RESOURCES

- Preparing with Neighbors: Power Point Presentation
  - Be Prepared Infographic
  - Preparing with Neighbors Guide

60 - 90 minutes

## Neighborhood Time Commitment

For questions about the materials or clarification on any of the subject matter covered, please contact El Paso County Office of Emergency Management at 719-575-8858 or [CERT@elpasoco.com](mailto:CERT@elpasoco.com)



# PHASE ONE: MEETING AND PREPAREDNESS DISCUSSION



## Goals for Phase I:

- Learn and discuss key aspects of personal and household preparedness
- Assess the level of preparedness of the group
- Learn what steps should be taken immediately after a disaster
- Learn about other neighborhood initiatives
- Become familiar with the next steps to organizing as a R & R Neighborhood group

This program focuses on preparing with neighbors. A neighborhood can be considered a group of people living on the same street, in the same building, or in several buildings.

The first step to preparing with neighbors is holding an initial meeting to learn about personal and family preparedness, and discuss how neighbors might work together before, during, and after a disaster. The intent of this introductory meeting is to get individuals and neighborhoods thinking about preparedness, and considering how participants may be able to support their neighborhoods when the time comes. If a neighborhood decides to organize as a group, Phase II provides a road map and tools that can assist with that process. Once a neighborhood is organized, Phase III provides tools to become even more confident with response plans through training, drills, and exercises.



# PHASE TWO: GETTING ORGANIZED



## Goals for Phase II:

- Decide on a neighborhood coordinator(s)
- Determine the locations of your neighborhood meeting place
- Determine roles and responsibilities
- Sign up on the NeighborLink Map

Thanks for taking the time to get yourself and your neighborhood prepared for a disaster or emergency. Have questions on what to do next? We bet you do. Phase Two of R & R will help give your neighborhood ideas and tools to get even more prepared.



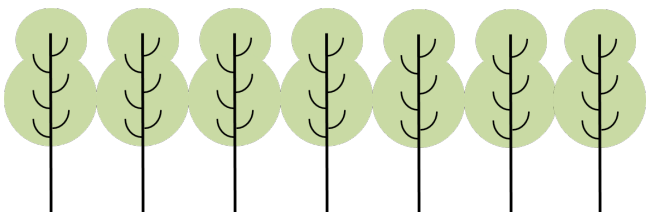
See Phase I for learning how to get prepared.

# PHASE TWO: GETTING ORGANIZED



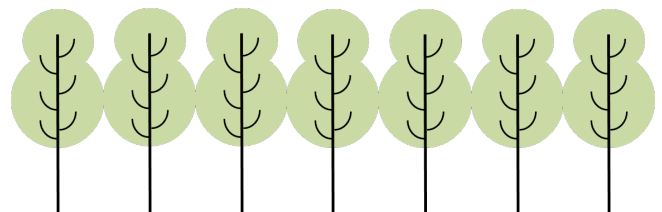
## 1 Identify a Neighborhood Coordinator

Identifying a Neighborhood Coordinator is the first step to organizing. This could be the person that set up the first meeting or another person that is willing to take on the task of keeping the group engaged before an emergency. The Neighborhood Coordinator will also serve as a leader during an actual disaster. It may be a good idea to have more than one person serve in this role. This will help spread the workload of organizing meetings and drills, as well as increase the chances that one coordinator is available when needed.



## 2 Determine Roles and Responsibilities

Determining roles and responsibilities before a disaster happens helps ensure that everyone is comfortable with tasks that will need to be accomplished. Flexibility in defining the roles is key for a successful neighborhood response. When defining what role each person might play, it is important to match people to roles based on their skills and experience. Keep these roles flexible, and focus on completing the 3 priority tasks following a disaster or emergency.





# PHASE TWO: GETTING ORGANIZED

## 3

### Determine Key Locations

Once you determine how you will organize as a group during a disaster, it is important to identify some key locations in your neighborhood.



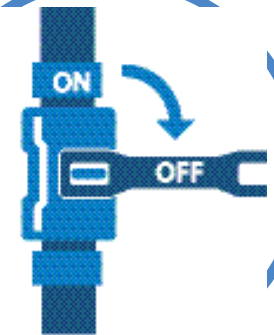
Define the area that your R & R neighborhood group will cover (i.e. which streets and households are included).

Identify a neighborhood meeting place. This is the place that everyone will meet during an emergency, after attending to their own household needs. If you are in a condo or apartment building, your meeting place may be outside, in a lobby, or on a designated floor.



Identify a location for the First Aid Station.

Identify homes with natural gas meters and the location of those meters, whether for individual homes or the whole building.



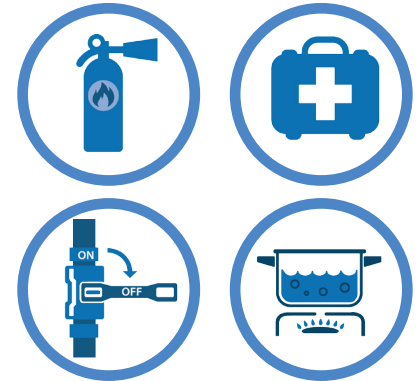


# PHASE THREE: GETTING CONFIDENT



## Take a Course and Learn a Skill

El Paso County Office of Emergency Management offers disaster skills training including utility control, fire suppression, disaster first aid, and light search and rescue. This training is provided through our volunteer Community Emergency Response Team (CERT). To see current training offerings, please go to our website.



[www.epccert.org](http://www.epccert.org)

## R & R Forms

The next section provides a variety of forms to use in helping establish and organize your R & R Neighborhood group.

The **Skills and Equipment Information Form** will help you and your neighbors learn what skills or emergency function each person or family are willing to perform during an emergency, and what kinds of equipment they would be willing to provide and share during an emergency.

The **Neighborhood Planning Form** helps the group outline the parameters of the group, and puts key locations into writing. This form also provides a checklist for post-disaster priorities for the group.

The **Household Information Form** allows households to share information about themselves to be used only in case of an emergency. This will allow your neighbors to contact you or members of your household in the instance that you are not home when an emergency occurs. This form is voluntary, and should only be used for emergency purposes.

# SKILLS AND EQUIPMENT INFORMATION FORM

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Name(s) of Person(s) at this Residence: \_\_\_\_\_

Skill:	Name of person(s) with this skill:	Equipment and Supplies:	Brief description of equipment available:
First Aid, CPR		First Aid and Medical	
Childcare Specialist		Spare Bedding, Tents	
Search and Rescue		Chain Saw	
Crisis Counseling, Psychologist		Generator	
Damage Assessment		Portable Lights	
Disaster Feeding		Camp Grill, Stove	
HAM Radio Operations		Walkie Talkie	
Plumber, Carpenter, Electrician		Long Ladder	
Fire Fighting		Crow Bar, Axe	
Other		Strong Rope	

Check Services I/we could provide:

- Emergency Housing \_\_\_\_\_
- Emergency Feeding \_\_\_\_\_
- Participate in Phone Tree \_\_\_\_\_
- Transport Those in Need \_\_\_\_\_
- Cut Trees/Debris Removal \_\_\_\_\_
- Shovel snow or mud, sand bag \_\_\_\_\_
- Language Translation \_\_\_\_\_

Which language?

\_\_\_\_\_

**Additional Equipment I/we could provide:**

*This information is owned by the neighborhood and is to be kept strictly confidential and used only during times of disaster.*

# NEIGHBORHOOD PLANNING FORM

The Co-Coordinator for our neighborhood are:	
Our neighborhood includes households on the following streets:	
Our neighborhood Meeting Site is located (address and description):	
Our First Aid Site is located (address and description):	
Our Neighborhood Care Center is located (address and description):	

## After the Disaster

### Priority #1: Take care of yourself, your family, and your home

#### Check yourself and your family members for injuries. Take care of your house by:

- Putting out small fires using portable fire extinguishers \_\_\_\_\_
- Turning off your natural gas at the valve outside the house (only if you smell natural gas, hear or see a problem, or if you suspect a leak) \_\_\_\_\_
- Turn off your water at the main house valve, and if necessary, your electricity at the main electrical panel \_\_\_\_\_

#### Dress for safety and go to your meeting site:

- Put your Help/OK sign at the window or on the door where it can be seen from the street \_\_\_\_\_
- Bring a flashlight and your first aid kit \_\_\_\_\_
- Put your fire extinguisher at the end of the driveway for others to use if necessary \_\_\_\_\_

### Priority #2: Take care of others

- Report to the neighborhood meeting site
- The Neighborhood Coordinator will identify the tasks that need to be done based on the emergency or disaster and the problems being reported in your neighborhood
- Highest priority problems include utility control, search and rescue, and first aid. If there are enough resources, include sheltering as a high priority.
- Assign neighbors who are not currently on a Response Team to those teams needing additional support.
- Give them a copy of the appropriate task description, and direct them to where the team is located. Coordinate food and rest breaks as needed.

#### Highest Priority: Life Safety Tasks

- Utility Control
- Search and Rescue
- First Aid Station and Treatment

#### People, Property, and Information Tasks:

- Sheltering and Special Needs
- Damage Assessment
- Communications

# HOUSEHOLD INFORMATION FORM

## General Information

Address	City	Zip Code	Home Phone
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## Household Members

Family Members (list adults first, then children)	Mobile Phone	Personal Email	Work Phone	Work Email

Pet Name	Type/Breed	Comments

## School Information

Child's Name	Age	School Name	School Phone

## Medical Information

Our medical and allergy information is located here: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## Emergency Contacts

Emergency Contact	Relationship	Home Phone	Mobile Phone	Work Phone
(Local)				
(Out-of-Area)				

## Search & Rescue / Utilities

<b>In the event a member of my family is missing and presumed trapped in our home, I give permission for someone to enter my home to search for them.</b>	
<b>In the event that no one is home, I give permission for the water, gas, and/or electricity to be shut off if it is necessary for the safety of my home and the neighborhood.</b>	
<b>Water shut-off location:</b>	
<b>Gas shut-off location:</b>	
<b>Electricity shut-off location:</b>	

**Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

\* This information will be kept strictly confidential, and will be used only during times of disaster.





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Special thanks to the Seattle Office of Emergency Management for written permission to adapt and publish materials based on the Seattle SNAP program for emergency preparedness.