



## Simple Search and Rescue Tasks

### Primary Responsibilities

- ▼ Conduct a search of the homes with damage and check to see if neighbors need help. Rescue anyone who may be trapped or injured. Your job will be to **locate**, **stabilize**, and **transport** the injured to the neighborhood First Aid Station.
- ▼ Respond to the houses that have HELP signs posted and assist those neighbors.
- ▼ Check on each home in the neighborhood to determine if your neighbors are OK.

### Before the Disaster

- Make sure every home in the neighborhood has a neighborhood communication card ("Help" printed on one side and "OK" on the other side), and they know how to use it.
- Determine how your neighborhood wants to implement a search procedure after a disaster for homes that have sustained damage and/or appear to have people inside who are non-responsive. For example, if doors are locked and a neighbor is trapped, injured or unable to come to the door, what would you do to enter/not enter the home and give/not give assistance?
- Frequently review the Search and Rescue procedures listed on the back of this sheet.

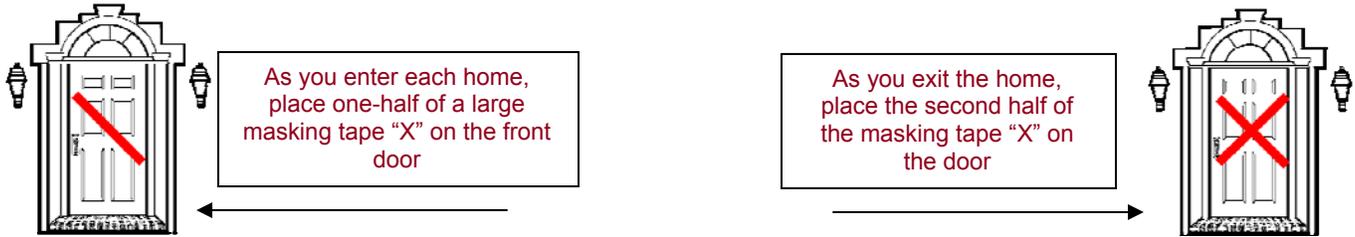
### After the Disaster

#### 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 a portable fire extinguisher.
  - 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 in the window or on the door where it can be seen from the street.
  - Wear comfortable clothing, hardhat, safety glasses, gloves, sturdy shoes.
  - 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

- Meet up with your team members at the neighborhood Meeting Site. Always work in teams of at least two. Make sure you are all dressed for safety. Help homes in this order:
  1. Homes that display the **HELP** card.
  2. Homes with damage that have **no card** displayed.
  3. Homes with no visible damage with no card displayed.
  4. Homes that display the **OK** card.
- Follow the safe search guidelines listed on the back of this page. Before entering the building, put the first half of an "X" on the door using tape (chalk or marker may also be used).
- When you complete activity in that home, tape the second half of the "X" to signify the house has been checked. Ultimately, each home will have an "X" taped on its door.
- As you are checking the neighborhood, if you find any children, elderly or disabled persons who are home alone and frightened, invite them to go with you to the neighborhood Care Center.
- As you are searching, if you find anyone who is injured, send one of your team to the First Aid Station to get someone to come and treat them. As soon as possible, resume your systematic search.
- Keep a log of all homes you search. Record the address, whether they were OK or needed help, and what type of help was given. Include the date and time the search was conducted.



## Simple Search and Rescue: Basic Guidelines

1. Dress in long pants, a long-sleeved shirt and sturdy boots. Leather gloves, a hard hat and a flashlight are essential. Goggles, a dust mask, and a small first aid kit for your own basic needs are also good ideas.
2. Establish who your partner will be. Never conduct a search and rescue alone. Plan your search. Do not wander aimlessly.
3. If the house is significantly damaged and you feel it is unsafe to enter (remember to also check the back door), respect your feelings. Do not go in.
4. Before you enter each home, place half of a large taped "X" on the front door. This signals to the neighborhood your exact location (see front for illustration).
5. Before you enter each home, feel the top and bottom of the door with the back of your hand. If it is hot, do not enter. If it is cool, cautiously open the door.
6. Check the door jamb and the accompanying wall and ceiling for cracks and splinters. If the house appears unsafe, do not enter.
7. Enter the house low, preferably on your knees. Be alert. Watch for falling objects.
8. While still in the entry way, smell for the odor of natural gas. If you can smell it, open the front and back doors and as many windows as you are able *without going inside* to provide ventilation. Enter the house only when the smell of the gas is gone.
9. While still in the entryway, loudly call out, "Is anyone here?" Listen for a response. If someone answers, ask them to tell you where they are and what type of help they need. Pause occasionally during the search to listen for cries, moans or other indicators of someone needing help.
10. Systematically search each room. Stay with your partner. Communicate frequently. Pay careful attention to these critical areas: under beds, behind furniture, inside closets, under stairs, and inside tubs or showers.
11. If it is dark, slowly sweep each room with your flashlight. Frequently check the floor and the ceiling hazards. Protect your own safety.
12. If it is dark, keep in contact with the wall. It is easy to become disoriented after experiencing trauma. If you become disoriented, follow the wall. It will eventually lead you back to the original entry door.
13. If you find a victim, get several neighbors to help move her/him as quickly as possible to the First Aid Station.
14. Upon completion of the search, complete the taped "X" on the door. This signals to the neighborhood that the house has been checked and is OK.

**Remember: There is no golden rule for risking your life to rescue others. If you attempt a rescue beyond your skill or capacity, you may lose your life and endanger others coming to your aid. Sometimes it takes courage and wisdom to wait for help.**