



Date: November 2, 2016
To: Patrick H. West, City Manager *[Signature]*
From: Reginald Harrison, Director of Disaster Preparedness and Emergency Communications /s/
For: Mayor and Members of the City Council
Subject: **Disaster Preparedness News Article**

Attached is a recent news article that summarizes the City's disaster preparedness accomplishments and highlights things residents can do to protect their family and property.

Additional information on other disaster preparedness topics is available on the City's Disaster Preparedness website at www.longbeach.gov/disasterpreparedness. Staff is also available to discuss disaster preparedness programs at community meetings. Please contact Reggie Harrison, Director of Disaster Preparedness and Emergency Communications, at (562) 570-9460 for additional information.

Attachment

cc: Charles Parkin, City Attorney
Laura Doud, City Auditor
Doug Haubert, City Prosecutor
Tom Modica, Assistant City Manager
Arturo Sanchez, Deputy City Manager
Rebecca Jimenez, Assistant to the City Manager
Department Heads

EMERGENCIES

Long Beach is prepared – are you?

By Reggie Harrison

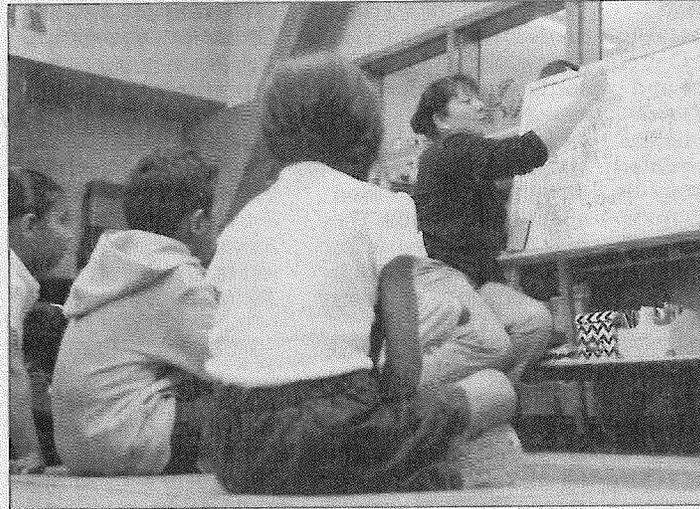
Are you ready? Now that we've concluded our training exercises for the Great California ShakeOut earthquake drill on Thursday, this is a good opportunity to remind residents of the importance of being prepared for a disaster.

Long Beach is not a one-dimensional city in terms of disaster preparedness. We operate our own airport, gas utility and the second largest deep-water port in North America. Therefore, our plans and training must be designed to adapt to natural disasters, biological incidents, and manmade and national security emergencies.

Here are a few of the city's recent disaster preparedness accomplishments and things you can do to protect your family and property.

- **Alert Long Beach:** This free emergency notification system is designed to keep those that live or work in Long Beach informed of important information before, during and after a major emergency or disaster. Alerts are sent to home phone numbers, cell phones, email addresses, text devices and in American Sign Language to impacted residents and businesses. Sign up for ALB on the City's website. In addition to ALB, the City will utilize Community Emergency Response Team volunteers, amateur radio operators, public safety personnel, and local television and radio stations to alert the public.

- **Earthquake Early Warning System:** Long Beach was one of the first cities in the nation designated as an EEWS beta test site. The early warning system detects earthquakes rapidly so that a warning can be sent before destruction hits. Many benefits to Long Beach are expected, in-



THOMAS R. CORDOVA, STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Teacher Patricia Gonzalez talks to first-grade students at Roosevelt Elementary School in Long Beach about their Great California ShakeOut earthquake preparedness drill.

cluding: Fire stations can prevent essential equipment from being trapped inside the station when power is out; the gas department can shut off gas lines in advance, and the workers at the port can safely halt cranes and place cargo safely on the docks. Once fully developed, this warning system is expected to be made available for public use.

- **Community Emergency Response Team:** The Fire Department-led CERT program has trained more than 5,000 residents throughout the city in fire safety, basic disaster medical procedures and light search and rescue techniques. Most recently a Teen Cert course has been added for youth to learn how to be better prepared in a disaster. During the recent downtown power outages, CERT teams were rapidly deployed to provide residents with information, food and water.

- **Map Your Neighborhood:** The American Red Cross program provides a step-by-step process for residents to pre-

pare their neighborhoods for emergencies. Through this program, residents learn how to complete an inventory of the skills and equipment that each neighbor has for use during a disaster; create a neighborhood map that identifies the location of resources and risks in the area for quick response, and create a contact list that identifies neighbors with specific needs, such as the elderly and disabled.

- **Ready Long Beach:** Conducted annually in September by CERT volunteers, RLB is a family-friendly community emergency preparedness expo that features emergency preparedness demonstrations and emergency food, supplies and equipment. Information booths for kids and families teach them how to sterilize water for drinking and how to make candles from household products. Various city departments, local utility companies (Edison, Verizon, LB Gas and Oil), state and county agencies, as well as military units display emergency response

equipment and vehicles and demonstrate their effectiveness during a disaster.

- **Homeland Security Grants:** Following the spate of power outages last year, the city has acquired 14 heavy-duty mobile generators for use by Long Beach and the region. Stored in strategic locations, they can be used at critical infrastructure sites like fire stations, pump stations and evacuation shelters. Long Beach also was recently awarded grant funds to upgrade and acquire a new public safety radio system to improve communications within the region during a disaster.

- **Whole Community Preparedness and Training:** On a quarterly basis, the city conducts tabletop and training exercises with city departments, hospitals (St. Mary Medical Center and Long Beach Memorial Hospital), utility companies, transportation companies (Port of Long Beach, Long Beach Transit), school districts (Long Beach Unified, Long Beach State, Long Beach City College), the American Red Cross and border cities to share information on how to work better together in the event of a disaster or major emergency.

Residents are strongly encouraged to prepare their homes and worksites for a disaster. Prepare "go kits" with sufficient food, water and supplies to be self-sufficient for at least five days following a disaster.

Please visit the city's Disaster Preparedness website at longbeach.gov/disaster-preparedness for additional information on these and other disaster preparedness topics.

Reggie Harrison is director of the Long Beach Disaster Preparedness and Emergency Communications Department.