

RESPONSES TO THE CIVIL GRAND JURY DISASTER PREPAREDNESS REPORT

Section: **EMERGENCY SHELTERING**

Finding 1: Only a small number of the Santa Barbara County residents are prepared to shelter in place in a disaster. This means that the community as a whole will not be prepared when an emergency occurs.

Responses:

BOS: Type response here....

DSS: Agree. While no data exists concerning the number of residents who are prepared to shelter in place we believe that few residents are prepared.

Finding 2: The Red Cross provides leadership in planning for and meeting sheltering needs during an emergency. Two County agencies, Social Services and the Public Health Department, assist the Red Cross in emergency sheltering.

Responses:

BOS: Type response here....

DSS: Agree.

Finding 3: The Department of Social Services does not have an adequate budget for emergency preparedness.

Responses:

BOS: Type response here....

DSS: Disagree. The DSS budget includes funding for basic emergency preparedness for our staff. This includes planning and executing building evacuations for each facility on a yearly basis; informing new staff of their disaster response responsibilities as county employees and providing sheltering training for our staff from the Red Cross. DSS plans to send staff to the SEMS Earthquake training in FY 2006-07.

Finding 4: The Department of Social Services does not adequately prepare for a disaster. Its personnel have only limited disaster preparedness training to support emergency sheltering set up by the Red Cross.

Responses:

BOS: Type response here....

DSS: Disagree. The Red Cross is the first responder for emergency sheltering and as such requests assistance from DSS when their own resources are outpaced by demand. Approximately 25% of our staff have been trained by the Red Cross for sheltering functions and our goal is to increase that each year beginning in FY 2006-07. Our goal will be to have at least 50% of our staff trained over the next two years.

Finding 5: Emergency shelter registration using a manual paper process limits the usefulness of the registration process, having no search, sort, or transmission capability.

Responses:

BOS: Type response here....

DSS: Agree. This is a Red Cross System and is not administered by DSS.

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Recommendation 1: The Board of Supervisors should fund an outreach and educational program designed to explain to all residents of Santa Barbara County how to survive in place in a disaster.

Responses:

BOS: Type response here....

Recommendation 2: The Department of Social Services should request a budget allocation for emergency planning and training.

Responses:

BOS: Type response here....

DSS: Will not be implemented. The DSS budget includes funding for basic emergency planning and training. However, if the current State budgeting system changes for FY 2007-08 and allows counties to request line items DSS will submit a request for additional funds for more emergency planning and training activities.

Recommendation 3: The Board of Supervisors should allocate funding for the Department of Social Services for emergency preparedness, to enable Social Services to quickly increase its preparedness for its role in disaster sheltering and to conduct joint exercises with the Red Cross on a regular basis.

Responses:

BOS: Type response here....

Recommendation 4: The Department of Social Services should send more of their personnel to Red Cross emergency training and plan more emergency exercises in order to support the Red Cross in an emergency.

Responses:

BOS: Type response here....

DSS: Has not yet been implemented. DSS will work with the Red Cross to increase the training to two times per year. The first training will be scheduled in FY 2006-07. We will work with the Red Cross and County OES to design one exercise each year.

Recommendation 5: Paper registration at all shelters should be supplemented with computerized filing for rapid access to registrant data and to support searches for family members who are separated.

Responses:

BOS: Type response here....

DSS: Will not be implemented. The Red Cross is responsible for the registration function.