



The Benefits of Joining Santa Barbara County VOAD

Santa Barbara County VOAD fosters communication and collaboration among organizations throughout the county to increase disaster preparedness and to improve services to people affected by disasters.

Most of our members are **nonprofit organizations** that provide services to individuals and families in the immediate aftermath of a disaster or during the long-term recovery process that many disaster victims must go through to make their lives whole again. Our members also include **government agencies** and **for-profit companies** that help community members prepare for, respond to, or recover from disasters.

We conduct quarterly meetings focused on **improving our members' disaster resilience**, and we sponsor additional training programs to develop critical capabilities. Upcoming events include:

- [Business Continuity Planning—Ensuring Operational Survival After a Disaster](#). At our all-member meeting on June 7, we will kick off a planning process for our members that will lead them through developing more robust plans for protecting their critical functions and assets, so they will be able to continue operating in support of the community's disaster recovery efforts.
- [VOAD EOC Liaison Training Program](#). The County Emergency Operations Center (EOC) plays a central role in coordinating the deployment of resources after a disaster. On June 16 we will conduct a specialized training program for VOAD members who wish to serve in the EOC as the central communication link for VOAD members.
- [Earthquake Recovery Exercise](#). On September 6, we will conduct a county-wide exercise to help our members evaluate and improve their capabilities to help the community recover from an earthquake or other major disaster in a coordinated manner.

In addition to sponsoring meetings and workshops, we provide the following resources to our members:

- **Disaster Resource Directory.** We maintain a directory of the resources and services that our members anticipate providing to the community after a disaster. This tool helps the EOC to coordinate effective and efficient delivery of disaster-related services.
- **Disaster Procedures.** Our members work together to develop standard operating procedures in different functional areas such as feeding, in-kind donations, and long-term recovery. One of our goals for 2011 is to convene an Access and Functional Needs Committee to develop guidelines and procedures for addressing the needs of vulnerable populations, including elderly, disabled, homeless, and non-English speaking county residents.
- **Emergency Volunteer Center.** In past disasters, hundreds of previously unaffiliated and often untrained volunteers have contacted relief agencies and government agencies wanting to help. To free individual agencies from the burden of managing this outpouring of goodwill, we will open an Emergency Volunteer Center where volunteers can go to find out about volunteer opportunities, register, and be assigned to organizations that can use their help.

To find out more about Santa Barbara County VOAD, visit www.VOADSbc.org.

To become a member, go to www.voidsbc.org/join or call (805) 679-6675.