

## What is a Disaster?

A large-scale event that:

- Affects many people or an entire community or region;
- Overwhelms first responders' ability to respond to 9-1-1 calls;
- Requires a prioritized response from the government (help going first where it is needed most);
- Often disrupts infrastructure lifelines such as transportation networks, utilities, water and food supplies;
- May cause residences to become uninhabitable, displacing people for days, weeks, or months;
- May include secondary impacts such as power outages, landslides, floods and fires; and
- Often devastates the local economy and can take years for full recovery.

## More Benefits from Volunteerism

The Stanford Center on Longevity research shows “there is a link between volunteering and improved physical health and cognitive function.” Their research also shows that volunteers report elevated mood and increased social interactions and support, and better relationship quality.

## About MPC Ready

MPC Ready's sole mission is to work collaboratively to help build disaster prepared, and climate-change ready neighborhoods.

**Neighborhood-level disaster preparedness efforts, such as those from MPC Ready, help to meet major gaps in community-wide disaster preparedness.**

In a disaster, studies show that our most immediate source of help will be the neighbors living closest to us. Emergency response personnel will be overwhelmed and there will not be nearly enough.

Relationships with neighbors is the cornerstone of disaster preparedness.

We invite you to learn more. Visit [www.mpcready.org](http://www.mpcready.org). Call 650-380-3028 or email [info@mpcready.org](mailto:info@mpcready.org).

## Some Sources

Daniel P. Aldrich. *Building Resilience: Social Capital in Post-Disaster Recovery*.

Kathleen Tierney. *Disasters: A Sociological Approach*.

Amanda Ripley. *The Unthinkable: Who Survives When Disaster Strikes – and Why*. 2008.

# Become a Block Coordinator



**A neighbor who builds resiliency in their home and on their block.**

Revised April 12, 2024



## Would you like to know more neighbors?

The best way to prepare for a disaster is to reduce its risks before disaster strikes. Preparedness starts with knowing our neighbors. Why?

Because a major disaster, such as a large earthquake, is likely to leave transportation routes and infrastructure lifelines (power, water, utilities, etc.) severely impacted. Restoring each service may take weeks or even months. Professional first responders will be overwhelmed, they will prioritize their response, and there will not be nearly enough.

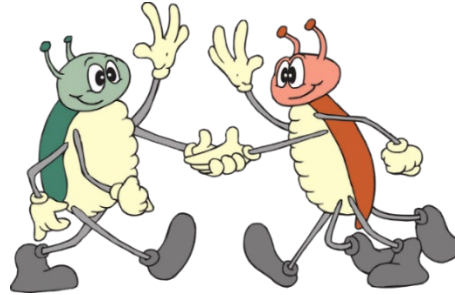
Until outside help arrives, people will have to count on each other to be safe until services are fully restored.

Getting prepared also includes storing emergency supplies of water, food and other necessities.

Most people prepare over time. The task can be easier when done in community! We invite you to join us! Subscribe to our newsletter and attend a monthly community meeting. When you are ready, we can help you to hold your first neighborhood social tradition!

## Build Social Capital!

Your connections with us and with counterparts will help you to build something disaster researchers term “social capital.” This is directly linked to improved post-disaster outcomes.



## What is a block coordinator?

A block coordinator is a neighbor who builds resiliency in their home and on their block by encouraging stronger neighbor-to-neighborhood connections. Connections can start through introducing an organized program, such as Firewise USA, Neighborhood Watch or Cool Block. Some neighbors come together over a shared issue facing the neighborhood. More often, someone starts a social tradition, however small.

When disaster strikes, BCs become a critical link to city resources by assessing damage on their block and reporting it to the next level up. **Note: neighborhood-based post disaster protocols with practice, and how we communicate with each other, and the next level up, are under pilot development now.**



## Block Coordinator 2.0 Program

- Stronger focus on building community across the BCs;
- Newsletter with people profiles;
- Groups i.o communications
- Quarterly BC social events;
- FRS/GMRS/HAM radio practice
- Post disaster capability building via protocols and neighborhood drills;
- New website (Future); and
- **Increased collaboration with the City of Menlo Park, and the Menlo Fire Community Resilience Unit.**

## How do I begin?

Visit [www.mpcready.org](http://www.mpcready.org) to sign up for our newsletter. There, you will see notices for events. Please attend when you can.

The website includes a contact form. Please reach out! You may also call or text to 650-380-3028. We would love to meet you for coffee too!