



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 that 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 the procedure your neighborhood wants implemented after a disaster to search homes that have sustained damage and/or appear to have people home that are non-responsive. For example, if the doors are locked and a neighbor is trapped or injured and unable to come to the door, what procedure should be followed 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 there is 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 flash light 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

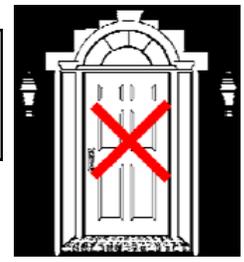
- Meet up with your other team members at the Neighborhood Meeting Site. Always go everywhere in teams of two. Make sure you are all dressed for safety.
- Help homes in this order:
 1. Homes that display the **Help** card
 2. Homes with damage that have **no card** displayed,
 3. Homes with no visible damage with no card displayed.
 4. Homes that display **OK** card
- Follow the safe search guide- lines listed on the back of this page. Before entering the building put the first half of an "X" on the door using tape.
- When you complete activity in that home and are leaving, place the second half of the taped "X" to signal the neighborhood the house has been checked and is fine. Ultimately, each home will have a taped "X" 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 of the neighborhood
- 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.



As you enter each home,
place one-half of a large
masking tape "X" on the front
door



As you exit the home,
place the second half of
the masking tape "X" on
the door



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. Eye protection, a dust mask, and a small first aid kit to take care of 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 check the back door also), respect your feelings. Do not go in.
4. Before you enter each home, placed 1/2 of a large tape "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 its 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 entry way, 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 of the area you are in for 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. Should you become disoriented, following the wall 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 tape "X" on the door. This signals to the neighborhood that the house as been checked and is okay.

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