

<b>TITLE</b> O P E R A T I O N S M A N U A L		<b>STANDARD</b> I N S T R U C T I O N 02		<b>DEPARTMENT</b> F I R E
<b>SUBJECT</b>  FIRE SUPPRESSION: EARTHQUAKE PROCEDURES		<b>SECTION</b>  28	<b>PAGE</b>  1 of 3	<b>EFFECTIVE DATE</b>  21 December 2017

**I. PURPOSE**

To establish procedural guidelines for conducting and coordinating initial actions by first responding fire resources following an earthquake.

**II. SCOPE**

This policy shall apply to all San Diego Fire-Rescue Department (SDFD) personnel.

**III. AUTHORITY**

The fire chief authorizes the information within this policy.

**IV. POLICY**

**A. Safety**

Whenever an earthquake occurs, no matter how slight, personnel shall immediately take steps to ensure their personal safety, using the following guidelines.

1. If indoors, stay there. Duck and cover under or next to a desk, table or stable object, or stand in a corner or doorway of a non-bearing wall. Stay clear of unsecured large objects (e.g., TVs, file cabinets, refrigerators, etc.) that may become unsteady during the seismic event.
2. If outdoors, get into an open area away from trees, buildings, walls, and power lines.
3. If driving, pull-over to the side of the road and stop. Avoid overpasses and power lines. Stay in the vehicle until the shaking stops.
4. As soon as it is deemed safe, personnel should remove apparatus from the fire station to a safe area nearby and monitor the radio.
5. Conduct a quick damage assessment of the fire station's immediate area or when out of quarters, assess the area where located.

**B. Communications**

Metro Zone Emergency Command and Data Center (ECDC) will initiate an alert to all stations to remove apparatus from the stations whenever seismic activity is apparent or reported within the City of San Diego and notify the on-duty Deputy Chief of Operations and Executive Command Staff. All companies will be advised by ECDC to standby for a radio check on their respective battalion training channel.

1. Each battalion chief will request the following information from companies in their respective battalions:
  - a. Injuries to personnel.
  - b. Damage to fire station or equipment (include checking the fire station's telephone to determine if working and to ensure receivers are in place).
  - c. Station is on normal power, emergency generator power or no power.
  - d. Ability to respond.
  - e. A quick damage assessment of the immediate area.

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1. Example of earthquake radio check:
  - B1: *“All Battalion One companies standby for a radio check and conditions survey on (correct radio channel).”*
  - B1: *“Engine 3.”*
  - E3: *“Engine 3 copy, no damage, no injuries, available.”*  
(Continue for all Battalion One companies then switch from battalion training radio channel to fire admin channel to report conditions)
  - B1: *“Metro, Battalion One on Admin.”*
  - ECDC: *“Battalion One, Metro, go ahead.”*
  - B1: *“Metro, all Battalion One companies report no damage or injuries and are available.”*
2. After completion of the radio check, battalion chiefs will report their findings to ECDC on “Fire Admin”.
3. If the earthquake is minor and no significant damage has occurred, the on-duty Deputy Chief of Operations will determine if and when units can return to quarters.
4. In the event that a company cannot be contacted, first by radio, then by telephone, the respective battalion chief shall be responsible for a timely company status investigation.
5. If communications with ECDC is disrupted, battalion chiefs may establish an area command position, serving as a single point for resource ordering and a clearing house of incident status recording/reporting within their administrative battalion.
6. Communication failure policies should be implemented in accordance to Standard Instruction 03, Section 14 Radio System Failure.
7. If the assessment indicates that the earthquake may have caused significant damage, companies should standby for direction from their respective battalion chiefs to conduct a field survey of their first-in district, noting life-threatening emergencies first and damage assessment second.
  - a. It is important to remain uncommitted and mobile in a triage mode, remaining in the apparatus while conducting a “windshield survey”.
8. If there is significant and/or widespread catastrophic damage to areas, battalion chiefs shall establish area commands to be inclusive of their administrative battalion.
9. The on-duty Deputy Chief of Operations or duty chief will initiate a notification to all Executive Command Staff and activate the Department Operations Center (DOC).

C. Earthquake Windshield Survey Plan

Every fire company shall conduct a pre-earthquake assessment and develop an

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“Earthquake Windshield Survey Plan”. A hard copy of this document shall be carried on each apparatus, and an electronic copy is located on the S-drive (EARTHQUAKE INFORMATION). This plan shall conform to a standardized format, and should include the following:

1. Recommended route(s) to drive when conducting the survey, considering major routes that may afford views down side streets and across large areas of the district, bridges/overpasses and provide a logical progression to methodically see all areas of the district.
2. Locations of critical infrastructure sites in the district which need to be given a primary (cursory) evaluation, such as schools, hospitals, police stations and detention facilities, high occupancy facilities, retirement homes and centers, locations storing hazardous materials with potential for large toxic release, rail lines, reservoirs/dams, pipelines, tank farms, power and telecomm substations, water pump stations and tanks, water treatment facilities, radio repeater sites, etc.
3. Locations in the district with the highest elevation and vehicle access. This information could be useful for locating a command post or for a vehicle to serve as a local repeater in the event of system repeater failure.