

Safety Zone Article – by Herb Yonge
Clayton Pioneer – May 22, 2009

“Grab and Go” Bag - A Good Way To Be Prepared

“All we can do is be prepared” was the headline recently in a local newspaper relating to the fires in the Santa Barbara area. On May 9, 30,000 had been ordered to evacuate – with another 23,000 warned to be ready to flee.

Several quick questions:

If you were in the fire area, would you have been prepared to evacuate?

Would you have had the necessary items to sustain your needs for a week to 10 days?

Would you have had your medications?

Have you established a meeting place for family members to meet if you were not all together at the time of evacuation?

Would your children know where to meet you should they be in school at the time you were ordered to evacuate?

Many in Clayton live near open space and have experienced fires on Mt Diablo, as well as earthquakes, so we need to be prepared. We do not know when the emergency will occur, but we know it will happen. Some of us have a “grab and go” bag containing things of value and importance such as family pictures, medications, extra eye glasses, family photos for identification purposes, a list of important phone numbers, granola/energy bars and money. There are additional items that we should have in the bag – copies of important documents, birth certificates, driver’s license, passport, immunization records, bank and credit card numbers. Do you have these items in one location, so you can “grab and go?”

On May 4, 31 Clayton residents attended the first of six sessions of the spring Community Emergency Response Team class (CERT). There were 11 additional participants from Walnut Creek, Concord and Pittsburg for a class enrollment of 42. The May 4 meeting dealt with emergency preparedness. The May 11 class covered fire safety to include the operation of a fire extinguisher and how to put out small fires. The May 18 class addressed emergency medical operations, with the classes scheduled for June 1 and 8 to cover additional emergency skills and CERT procedures. The final evening of the training will be a drill to practice the new skills learned in class. These are skills and information we need to put into practice so we are prepared.

We have already trained 118 residents in emergency preparedness. We will have another CERT class in the fall and hope for another good turnout of residents who want to “be prepared.” All residents should prepare a “go bag,” establish a meeting place, know who in your neighborhood may need assistance, such as a senior citizen, and start collecting an inventory of food and water and store in a safe place. Access the CERT website at www.claytoncert.org for information or feel free to email me. Also, when you go to the Website, complete the CERT application and enroll in our next class!

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