

5 Life Saving Actions After a Disaster

Understanding what steps to take after a local incident may help save your life and others.

- 1) **Doing a head count and checking for injuries** is important after a major disaster. Stay put until you know the extent of the damage. Remain calm and don't overreact. Account for everyone in the house or workplace. Do you have an exit plan? Is anyone injured? Having a coordinated meeting place, that everyone in your family is a part of, can help avoid confusion and worry directly after a disaster. In advance of a local incident, agree among yourselves on a place to meet after the incident.
- 2) **Surveying the scene** around you is also a priority in order to avoid injuries. **Checking for broken electric, gas, and water lines** to protect yourself and your loved ones. It is ideal to know how to turn off your power lines before an incident occurs. Clean up any spilled flammable liquids. If you smell gas (rotten egg smell) exit the premises. If you see sparks or smell hot insulation turn off electricity at fuse box or circuit breaker. Before using your fireplace, inspect the entire length of the chimney for damage. If you suspect that a water or sewer line has been damaged, do not flush the toilet and contact the water company if possible. Click [here](#) for a list of local utility providers.
- 3) After a major disaster the phone lines will be needed most for rescue providers. **Avoid making unnecessary phone calls and turn on your radio** in order to get up to date information on the recovery process. Radio stations that will provide information include [KCLU 88.3 FM](#), [KVEN 1450 AM](#), and [KHAY 100.7 FM](#). Once status is known and the situation is safe, listen to the police/fire updates and what not to do. Another good source for local information is the [City of Thousand Oaks](#) and the [Ventura County Sheriff's Department](#).
- 4) You should have an emergency plan and survival kit in place. Gather up basic supplies, clothes, and access your emergency supplies. If not, **locate survival items** and remember to eat perishable items first. Roads could be hazardous therefore it is best to stay where you are. Help will be on the way, but be prepared for the possibility of a long wait. Continuously make survival plans until help can arrive.
- 5) **Being prepared for another immediate disaster** is necessary in order to protect your safety and ensure survival. It is important to note that vehicles should be driven after an earthquake only in the direst of circumstances. Too many vehicles on the road greatly hamper the ability of rescue vehicles to move freely as well as present a hazard to the driver in the form of unstable bridges and overpasses.

For more information on how to prepare for an emergency visit the [Ventura County American Red Cross](#) and [Ventura County Fire Department](#) website's.