

**AGENDA**  
**EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE**  
**Wednesday, December 5, 2007 9:00 a.m.**  
**EOB Room, P- 4 Level, City Hall East**

- I. **Call to Order, Introductions, Approval of Minutes**
- II. **Subcommittee Reports and Planning Teams**
  - Budget – Mayra Puchalski
  - Community Preparedness – Carol Parks
  - Fire / Life Safety – Richard Wuerth / Lourdes Morales
  - Human Resources – Bobbi Jacobsen
  - Information Technology – Joyce Edson
  - Logistics – Val Melloff
  - Operations – Rob Freeman
  - Planning – Larry Meyerhofer
  - Shelter and Welfare – Kevin Regan
  - Training – Chris Ipsen
  - Others
- III. **New Emergency Operations Center (Prop Q) – Rob Freeman**
- IV. **Citywide Status of Homeland Security Grants – Laura Shin**
- V. **The Oaks Brush Fire Evacuation Exercise After-Action Report – Chris Ipsen**
- VI. **Old / New Business**
- VII. **Adjournment**

Refreshments to be provided by the Community Development Department

**EMC MEETING INFORMATION IS AVAILABLE ON THE EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS DEPARTMENT WEBSITE AT [www.lacity.org/epd](http://www.lacity.org/epd) - CLICK ON Emergency Operations Organization, then EMC.**

If you would like to be added to the EMC email distribution list, please send an email to [wendy.hwang@lacity.org](mailto:wendy.hwang@lacity.org) or contact Wendy Hwang (213) 978-0544.

**CITY OF LOS ANGELES**  
INTER-DEPARTMENTAL CORRESPONDENCE

Date: December 3, 2007

To: Anna Burton, Chair  
Emergency Management Committee

Emergency Management Committee Members

From: Chris Ipsen, Emergency Preparedness Coordinator II  
Emergency Preparedness Department

Subject: **THE OAKS BRUSH FIRE EVACUATION EXERCISE AFTER-ACTION  
REPORT**

**RECOMMENDATION**

That the Emergency Management Committee approve the Oaks Brush Fire Evacuation Exercise After-Action Report and forward to the Emergency Operations Board for approval at its next regularly scheduled meeting.

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

Due to the May 8, 2007, Griffith Park Fire, and the subsequent evacuation of several hundred homes, the City of Los Angeles determined that in order to better provide for the public's safety, additional training of the community and responding agencies was necessary.

On July 28, 2007 the Oaks Community Evacuation Exercise was conducted in which an entire hillside community was asked to leave their homes and report to a pre-designated re-location site.

**FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT**

Approval of this report will have no impact on the City's General Fund.

Attachment



After Action Report  
“The Oaks” Brushfire  
Evacuation Exercise

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# Executive Summary

Public safety and preparedness involves a sequence of actions that include planning, training, education, outreach, exercising and actual response to both planned and unplanned events, evaluation, and improvement. This After-Action Report (AAR) is intended to assist the City of Los Angeles in analyzing our ability to evacuate a large number of our citizens in case of a fast moving brush fire in a hillside community. This report will allow City Agencies involved to strive for higher levels of preparedness by analyzing operations during this event and achieving the following:

- Identifying strengths to be maintained and built upon,
- Identifying potential areas for further improvement,
- Providing recommendations for follow-up actions.

The recommendation in this After-Action Report should be viewed as suggestions for future evacuation events. This report also may allow other agencies to determine if future training exercises are necessary.

## **Strengths:**

Key strengths identified during this training exercise include the following:

- The response from City Agencies were very effective
- Departments required to send personnel to the City's emergency response, did so in a timely manner.
- Supervisors and Field Personnel provided an outstanding level of support and performed in an effective manner.
- Inter-agency coordination before, during, and after the exercise was impressive.
- Resource management and logistical support to field operations was effective.

## **A. Areas for Improvement**

Throughout the exercise, several opportunities for improvement on the impact of effective movement of residents were identified. Major recommendations included the following:

- Review methods and develop more effective procedures to assist and notify citizens with disabilities,
- Ensure timely notifications to residents of a need to evacuate,
- Ensure effective methods for the movement and housing of animals,
- Increase community participation at the Evacuation Center.

# Part I - Exercise Preparation

## B. Training of City Departments

As a result of the Major-Emergency Griffith Park Brush Fire on May 8, 2007, it was determined that even though the City of Los Angeles had a written plan for a major evacuation due to an emergency event, the need to exercise the plan was critical. The Departments of Fire, Police and Emergency Preparedness took lead roles in the development and implementation of this event with the assistance of numerous community organizations.

During the after-action meetings, conducted by both the Fire Department and Police Department dealing with the Griffith Park Brush Fire on May 8th, it was determined that every Department of City Government that had a responsibility during an evacuation needed to be retrained and tested to determine their level of response. During meetings with the Emergency Preparedness Department, it was determined that the Fire Department would take the lead role in developing a training curriculum and provide instruction for evacuation to the different Agencies.

The City's established procedures for evacuation were followed and the Incident Command System for handling emergencies was introduced to many for the first time.

### ***Session 1***

The agencies identified as having responsibilities during an evacuation situation met for the first time eight weeks prior to the evacuation exercise event. During this meeting the following items were discussed:

- General Goals and objectives
- General Duties and Responsibilities
- Timelines
- The Mayor's Directive for Emergency Situations
- Press / Public Information

### ***Session 2***

The Agencies during session 1 were directed to have the level of management attend Session 2 that would be capable of making decisions for their respective Departments. During Session 2 very specific duties and responsibilities were discussed and assigned. During this session the concept of an Incident Action Plan was introduced and agencies were tasked to work on developing one for the event.

### ***Session 3***

This session was held to answer questions and address concerns from the participating City Departments. During this meeting the final Public Information Plan was approved.

### ***Session 4- Walk Through***

This meeting took place at the actual evacuation site, with the exercise planning team members being able to walk through the Command Post, drive the evacuation area and visit the relocation center. This was the most productive meeting, for it allowed everyone the ability to gather an understanding of the complexity of the task of moving such a large number of residents through the narrow, winding streets of the community.

## **Part II - Community Preparation**

Early into the exercise it was determined that community involvement in all phases of the exercise would be critical for exercise success. The targeted groups included the Neighborhood Council, the local homeowners association and various ancillary groups that had ties to this area of the City. These groups were involved in the following:

- Planning
- Public Relations
- Community Outreach
- Oversight / Field Observers

This portion of the planning process proved to be one of the most important aspects of the exercise because, by providing for community ownership the necessary critical information was distributed and received more effectively than by having City Government force training on the participating community groups.

### *Local Media*

The Area Neighborhood Council took a lead role by involving the local media and even held several community meetings to deal with the local concerns involved with such a large-scale exercise. The local paper ran six articles advertising the importance of evacuation planning and the exercise.

## Part III - Activation Overview

### **C. Activation Name**

Oaks Community Evacuation Exercise

### **D. Duration**

Five hours

### **E. Activation Date**

July 28, 2007

### **F. Lead Agency**

Los Angeles Fire Department

### **G. Type**

Evacuation

### **H. Scenario**

Major Wildland Fire

### **I. Location**

Griffith Park and surrounding residential area

### **J. Participating Agencies**

- Los Angeles Fire Department
- Los Angeles Police Department
- Emergency Preparedness Department
- Department of Transportation
- Los Angeles Unified School District
- Animal Regulations
- Department of General Services
- Information Technology Agency
- Office of the Mayor
- City Council
- Department of Recreation and Parks
- American Red Cross



## Part IV - Action Event Synopsis

A response exercise, involving a major wild land fire that started in the Griffith Park area (Western Canyon), was conducted on July 28, 2007 that simulated the threat to the surrounding communities, necessitating a planned evacuation.

### K. Exercise Evaluation

Due to the May 8, 2007, Griffith Park Fire, and the subsequent evacuation of several hundred homes, the City of Los Angeles determined that in order to better provide for the public's safety, training of the community and all responding agencies was necessary. On July 28, 2007 an evacuation exercise was conducted, in which an entire hillside community was asked to leave their homes and report to a pre-designated re-location site.

The simulated fire was first observed at the intersection of Mt. Hollywood Drive and Observatory Drive. The first calls to the dispatch center were received at 0900 hours. Reports from the first arriving fire companies was that 10 acres of brush was burning in the Western Canyon area of the park which was being driven by winds of up to 20 mph.

The Incident Command System was established at this time and the Fire Department took the role of Incident Commander with the assistance and support of numerous City Departments. Based upon situational awareness and the established trigger/activation point for evacuation of the Oaks Community, the Los Angeles Police Department was assigned the task of Evacuation Branch Leader.

- 0920 hours, Fire Companies were dispatched into the communities surrounding the Griffith Park boundaries to establish a method to protect the structures from the approaching fire. At 0940 it was relayed back to the Command Post that all structures had fire companies in place.
- 0925 hour, the Evacuation Group Leader ordered the staffing of the relocation center, Cherimoya Ave. School. This site was staffed with members of the Red Cross, LAFD Community Response Team Members and staff from the LAUSD.
- 0940 hours, the determination was made by the Incident Commander that the fire had reached a critical point and he ordered an evacuation of residents from the Oaks Community.
- 0945 hours, the Evacuation Group ordered his officers to start an evacuation of the designated areas.
- 0950 hours, LAPD units started evacuation of the area.
- 1005 hours, Evacuees first arrive at the Evacuation Center.
- 1050 hours, Units reported that all homes in the effected community had contact made and direction to exit was provided.

- 1100 hours the exercise in the Oaks Community was complete and the exercise shifted to the Evacuation Center.
- 1200 hours all evacuees were complete with check in procedures and the exercise was complete.

## **Part V - Analysis of Activation and Recommendations**

This section of the After-Action Report provides an analysis of how well participants as a whole responded during the evacuation and describes the areas for improvement and corrective action.

### **Strengths**

- The field level response by the Incident Commander was very effective.
- Departments provided information in a timely manner.
- The Incident Command System provided outstanding structure and guidance for the incident.
- Resource management and logistical support to field operations was effective.

### **L. Recommended Area of Improvement/Corrective Actions**

- Need to improved communications with and for the disabled populations.