

OperationOC Disaster Preparedness & Recovery Partnership

OperationOC's Disaster Preparedness & Recovery Partnership is a strong collaborative of faith-based organizations poised to support the Orange County Operational Area through its affiliation with local government, Social Services Agency, **COAD-OC***, and key community agencies, such as Red Cross and [Second Harvest Food Bank](#).

The preparedness efforts of OperationOC's Partnership center on developing a coordinated response of Orange County faith-based organizations, as well as national and international groups active locally. [Mariners Church](#), [Cottonwood Church](#), [Billy Graham Evangelistic Association](#), [Salvation Army](#), and [Hope Force International](#) are among our partners. Each member brings expertise to the collective body, enabling the Partnership to respond with immediate relief in the form of essential supplies, mass and mobile feeding, emotional and spiritual care, medical services, sheltering, and more. The breadth of the Partnership enables an increased range and duration of response. OperationOC serves as the central hub, coordinating field responses from their Emergency Operations Center – Recovery (EOC-R) located at the Orange County Rescue Mission in Tustin, which is staffed by ICS-trained OperationOC volunteers and representatives of partner organizations.

Aware that many in the community will turn to their house of worship for comfort and care during an emergency, OperationOC DP&RP offers support to churches throughout Orange County in the form of Personal Emergency Preparedness classes, plus guidance to create emergency operations plans for their facilities.

At the request of Red Cross-Orange County, OperationOC developed a Faith-Based Track for the 26th annual [Red Cross Disaster Preparedness Academy](#), held Wednesday, Oct. 27, 2010, at the Anaheim Convention Center. Workshops included:

- Preparing Your Home for Disaster
- Prepared to Serve: How to Start a Disaster Response Team in Your House of Worship
- Preparing Together: A Partnership to Prepare Those with Access and Functional Needs
- Getting Involved: How You Can Help!
 - A panel presentation with representatives from:
 - Billy Graham Rapid Response Team
 - Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints
 - Hope Force International
 - OperationOC
 - Tzu Chi Foundation

Preparedness Initiatives currently being undertaken by OperationOC include:

- Localized meetings with City Emergency Managers and the churches in their city

- Facilitate certification of partner churches as **POD sites**** and **Emergency Volunteer Centers*****
- Train volunteers in churches throughout Orange County in the [Salvation Army program Preparing Together](#)
 - Preparedness for access and functional needs populations
 - Pair volunteers with at-risk families and/or individuals
 - Encourage trusting relationships
 - Develop an emergency plan
 - Assist with evacuation, if necessary
 - All volunteers complete a background check

All OperationOC service areas are tested on a regular basis through participation in Golden Guardian and Great Southern California ShakeOut exercises.

OperationOC has seen a steady increase in its volunteer base (nearly a 100% increase since January 2010) and substantial growth in the Disaster Preparedness & Recovery Partnership as the effectiveness of their relational, supportive approach becomes more widely recognized.

Is your church or ministry interested in learning more about our Partnership? Email Vicki at vicki.mcguinness@rescuemission.org or call (714) 247-4362.

Definitions

***COAD-OC** – Collaborating Organizations Active in Disaster – Orange County; a collaboration of local government, businesses, and private nonprofits working together to more effectively provide resources and meet the needs of our community during disasters

****POD sites** – Point of Distribution; for mass distribution of food, water, and ice during emergencies

*****Emergency Volunteer Center** – Regional registration point for spontaneous (unaffiliated) volunteers responding to the needs of a local emergency