Lesson Learned
From the San Simeon Earthquake 6.5
December 22, 2003 11:15:56

Prepared by
Councilmember
Gary Nemeth
The City of Paso Robles California
December 22, 2003
Downtown Minutes After the Quake
Historical Clock Tower Building

Aerial View of Clock Tower Above Park Street

Clock Tower 12th & Park Street
Downtown Paso Robles
Minutes After the Quake

Firemen Responding to the Emergency
Downtown Paso Robles
Minutes After the Quake
Downtown Paso Robles
Minutes After the Quake
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Minutes After the Quake
Natural Hot Spring Develops
in the City Hall Parking Lot
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Securing & Rebuilding the City

Marlow Building which has since been demolished and plans have been submitted to rebuild it.
Bank of Italy sustained major damaged. Today it is reopened and houses the State Department of Corrections Regional Finance Office.
Securing & Rebuilding the City

Bistro Laurent, a favorite spot, was closed for 45 days. They are now open and thriving once again.
Securing & Rebuilding the City

Historical Carnegie Library damaged. Currently closed and awaiting FEMA funding.
Remembering Marilyn & Jennifer
Lessons Learned

- Having an adequately equipped Emergency Operations Center
- Back-up electrical power systems
- Adequate numbers of trained emergency response staff (including but not limited to Police, Fire Department, and Building Inspectors)
Lessons Learned

- The ability to carry out a timely triage of damage; examples

Paso Robles used a three-color system to classify buildings (red-tag – no access until mitigated under the direction of a qualified professional; yellow tag – limited non-public access; green tag – no restrictions).

Santa Cruz used a greater number of classes, reflecting what the building official considered essential (classifying the damage in terms of repair work that is needed and can be done with or without building inspections).

- The ability to access computer systems to gather data, produce reports, etc.
Lessons Learned

- Communications between elected officials and City staff.
- Communications between the City and the Community.
- Keeping adequate financial records to facilitate FEMA and other agency reimbursements (this is a science in itself)
- A timely declaration of local disaster, including suspension of permit streamlining deadlines
- Requesting State and Federal disaster declarations as soon as possible.
Difficult situations often bring out qualities in us that otherwise might not have risen to the surface, such as courage, faith, and our need for one another.
Thank you

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