How to Get a Disaster Preparedness Group Started in Your Neighborhood

1) *Get to know your neighbors socially.* Organize a block party (you can get a permit from the city to cordon off the street so it's safe for kids).

2) *Host a presentation at your home* (ask a firefighter, a police officer, or a disaster preparedness advisor (contact Berkeley's Office of Emergency Services at 510.981.3473) to come give a brief presentation … it's free! But make it social. Allow some time before and after and event for mingling.

3) *Get the help of a mentor!* BDPNN has mentors available to help you get started. You can email them at info @bdpnnetwork.org or visit the website at www.bdpnnetwork.org. Don't have a computer? Call 510.540.5616.

4) *Pass out info*. THE BDPNN has lots of information that you can download from the website. Pass it out to raise awareness.

5) *Collect and share information*. Once a basic level of trust has been established with your neighbors, start gathering contact information (see example, attached) including phone numbers (home, work, cell, out of state), emails[*], and information about the people in the house, anyone with special needs, etc. People will understandably be wary about giving out private information, so it's important to establish guidelines about how this information will and will not be shared.

6) *Educate*. Encourage people to attend CERT (Community Emergency Response Training) classes (sign up online at the website listed in #2 above) such as Disaster First Aid, Fire Suppression, Search and Rescue, etc. Encourage people to come to the BDPNN meetings.

7) *Begin your own neighborhood emergency supply*. Get people to contribute items they may already have in their homes to a neighborhood supply cabinet.

8) *Get details*! There is a much more detailed guide, "The Startup Kit to Organize Your Neighborhood Disaster Group," online at BDPNN as well as on CD; we plan to get hardcopies into Berkeley library reference sections as well!

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[*] It's important to keep track of who does NOT have email so that they're contacted through other means and don't get left out.