

WSSPC Awards in Excellence 2009

Outreach to General Public

Citizens Organized to Prepare for Emergency (COPE)

City of Santa Rosa Emergency Preparedness Program

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COPE-stands for **C**itizens **O**rganized to **P**repare for **E**mergency

Program Origins – started in the late 1990s by the adult community of Oakmont in east Santa Rosa, CA to prepare for earthquake, fire and other emergencies.

Participants – Oakmont has 200 neighborhood leaders covering more than 2000 households. That is over 70% of their 2800 families. That would make Oakmont the most prepared concentration of households in the nation. In the rest of Santa Rosa, we now have an additional 240 leaders, bringing the total to over 440 COPE Neighborhood Leaders covering about 4,400 households. That is over 7% of households in the city. COPE is also being used by many communities and neighborhoods throughout Sonoma County like Sebastopol, Windsor, and Sonoma. Monterey County, Redding, Santa Maria and other communities are also establishing COPE Programs.

Community Partners – COPE has been embraced by Community Partners including Santa Rosa Junior College, Exchange Bank, Kaiser Santa Rosa Medical Center, Sonoma County Indian Health Project, North Bay Regional Center, and others, who are encouraging their employees and clients to use the program in their neighborhoods as well as in their workplace. We are looking for schools, churches, and businesses that will do the same.

COPE Training Time – It takes about **1 – 2 hours** to teach the theory of COPE preparedness to classes, groups, and neighborhoods. After attending two meetings, families can walk away with a Neighborhood COPE Response Plan.

COPE Videos & DVD – The original COPE Awareness Video was put together by award winning Avery Media and is 11 minutes in length. It is used at all training meetings and is also available on the **COPE Web Page** (cope.srcity.org). Funded by a Homeland Security grant, the new COPE DVD has been developed with 5 videos in English & Spanish:

1. COPE Awareness
2. How to be a COPE Leader
3. Putting your Kit together
4. 3 minute COPE Promotion Video (on You Tube)
5. 1 minute COPE internet site promo (on You Tube)

The City of Santa Rosa has distributed more than 2,300 COPE DVDs to neighborhood and community leaders throughout Sonoma County and northern California. The videos are now on the City Web Page and on You Tube. There are plans to develop a COPE for persons with "special needs" video in 2008.

Motivational Success – We believe that families and neighbors are motivated to action by the **small amount of time investment** required and also by **the fun** that they have with each other holding "Preparedness Parties", Pot Lucks, Grill Outs, and Wine & Cheese meetings. There is an element of fun socializing with COPE that is not found in many other preparedness programs.

Social Networking – COPE involves many individuals and groups from the community to urge the preparedness message. These include:

- The American Red Cross
- VOAD (Volunteer Agencies Active in Disaster)
- The Volunteer Center
- ACS & ARRL Amateur Groups
- Local Boy Scouts
- Nursing Homes
- Schools
- Homeowners Associations (HOA)
- Mobile Home Parks
- Faith Based Organizations
- Community Fairs & Events
- ADA & Special Needs Community
- Business & Industry
- Latino Service Providers
- Apartment Complexes
- Service Clubs
- City & County Employees
- Elected Officials
- Community Advisory Board (CAB)
- City & County Emergency Managers

Award Winning– the City of Santa Rosa **COPE Program** was presented the California League of Cities "Helen Putnam Award" in 2007 for being the best public safety program in the state. We also received the Sonoma County "Pete Peterka Award" for excellence in Emergency Management.