



Cal EMA
CALIFORNIA EMERGENCY
MANAGEMENT AGENCY



FEMA

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Contact: FEMA Public Affairs
(510) 501-1655
California Emergency
Management Agency
(916) 607-7657

Press Release

FEMA, Cal EMA signs Southern California Catastrophic Earthquake Plan into operation

Pasadena, CA. – California Emergency Management Agency (Cal EMA) and the U.S. Department of Homeland Security’s Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) today signed into operation a plan designed for responding to and recovering from a catastrophic earthquake in Southern California.

FEMA Regional Administrator Nancy Ward and Cal EMA Secretary Matthew Bettenhausen officially launched the Southern California Catastrophic Earthquake Plan (CATPLAN) in a signing ceremony at the Pasadena Convention Center. First responders, emergency managers, private sector, non-governmental and faith-based organizations, and catastrophic planners at the local, state and federal level attended the event.

When participants began the planning almost two years ago, rather than planning for a manageable event, the focus instead was on addressing the highest, most critical and widespread consequences of mass casualties, tremendous shelter and housing needs, infrastructure calamity and enormous economic disruption. By facing the “unthinkable,” what has been developed is a realistic, flexible and scalable CATPLAN.

“We know that it’s not a matter of ‘if,’ but ‘when’ the next big earthquake is going to shake California to its core,” said Bettenhausen. “Our number one priority is to ensure we’re doing everything we can to be ready for it, and have a carefully-crafted, comprehensive plan in place to enable maximum coordination between federal, state and local agencies. This plan is not the end, but another critical step in our on-going process of planning.”

“Substantial time, effort and resources have been dedicated by everyone involved in this plan and very confident in our ability to execute them,” said Ward. “The completion was possible only through the leadership and presence these organizations provided.”

In 2008, FEMA and CalEMA signed a San Francisco Bay Area Catastrophic Earthquake Plan, outlining response and recovery operations for an earthquake hitting the San Francisco Bay area.

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FEMA’s mission is to support our citizens and first responders to ensure that as a nation we work together to build, sustain, and improve our capability to prepare for, protect against, respond to, recover from, and mitigate all hazards.