

40-minute course, 18-minute video. Applying direct pressure is quickly reviewed as it has already been trained in the American Red Cross Adult First Aid, CPR, AED course. Skills practice on tourniquet application.



Welcome to OHCC SERT Basic Training. We thank all of you for your commitment to maintaining or becoming an Emergency Response Team (ERT) member. Before we move forward, we want to make sure everyone understands the difference between CERT and SERT. The CERT program is part of FEMA and applies nationally to cover responders across multiple jurisdictions. SERT is customized for OHCC. While SERT follows the general direction of CERT, some areas just do not apply to OHCC.

## *Topic Review*



- Disaster Preparedness
- SERT Organization
- Radio Control
- First Aid Operations
- Disaster Psychology.
- Fire Safety and Utility Controls
- Light Search and Rescue

## Infrastructure Damage



Resources will be applied to the highest priority need:

- **SERT** will address initial damage assessment
- **Police** will address incidences of grave public safety.
- **Firefighters** will suppress major fires.
- **EMS** personnel will handle life-threatening injuries.



ERT members will always be **SECONDARY** to 911 professional responders. ERT members step in when 911 responders are not available.

## Home Hazards



- **Gas line ruptures** from water heaters or ranges displaced by shaking, water, or wind.
- **Damage from falling contents** books, dishes, or other cabinet materials.
- Risk of injury or **electric shock** from displaced appliances and office equipment.
- **Fire** from faulty wiring, overloaded plugs, frayed electrical cords.



• SERT Basic Training Unit 1: Disaster Preparedness 3/25/2022

Hazards following an earthquake may contain all the above. **Our job is to**  
**#1 Keep ERT members safe and**  
**#2 to help others within OHCC get to safety**

## *Preparing for a Disaster*



- Know local hazards, **alerts, warning systems**, evacuation routes, and sheltering plans.
- Have the skills to **evaluate the situation** quickly and take effective action to protect yourself.
- Get involved by **participating in training** and volunteer programs.



- SERT Basic Training Unit 1: Disaster Preparedness 3/25/2022

Being prepared will help in saving life and to help minimize property damage. You should all have the San Diego County Emergency, Quake Feed and the American Red Cross emergency apps on your cellular device. If you do NOT have these, please let us know and we will arrange to help you download these.

You maybe called upon to quickly evaluate a situation, this will require practice. ERT members will have a Practice Drill annually as well as a safety class so we can keep our skills current. Also remember every 2-years you need to re-certify for the Red Cross Adult First Aid, CPR/AED course.

## *Protective Actions*



- **Assess situation.**
- **Decide to stay or change locations.**
  - This is a critical early decision in disasters.
- **Seek clean air and protect breathing passages.**
- **Protect from debris** and signal if trapped.
- **Remove contaminants.**
- **Practice good hygiene.**



- SERT Basic Training Unit 1: Disaster Preparedness 3/25/2022

First and foremost is to maintain your personal safety. Here are just some of the areas we will cover during our training sessions.

## SERT Disaster Response



- SERT members respond post-disaster by:
  - **Treating life-threatening injuries** until professional assistance is available.
  - **Helping disaster survivors** cope with their emotional stressors.
  - **Locating and turning off utilities**, if safe to do so.
  - Conducting **light search and rescue** operations.



- SERT Basic Training Unit 1: Disaster Preparedness 3/25/2022

SERT ERT members will be able to help in many ways.

A special note here: SERT members primary role is **NOT** to turn off utilities. This is the homeowner's responsibility!

# Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)



- Dress in layers
- Sturdy shoes or work boots

OHCC SERT Back-Pack Inventory List	
Weight of backpack/supplies 6 lbs +/-	
16 oz Water Bottle - 2 (you supply)	
4x4 Sterile Gauze Pads - 4	
4x4 Hemostatic Gauze - 1	
5x9 Abdominal Gauze Pads - 2	
Blue Tape - 1	
Compression Bandage - 2	
CPR Face Shields - 2	
Duct Tape - 1	
Goggles	
Helmet - Hard Hat	
N-95 Masks (3)	
Nitrile Gloves (10-Pairs)	
Pen & Pad	
Personal First Aid Kit	
QuikClot Gauze - 1 - 2-pack	
Red Cross Hand Crank Flashlight	
Scissors - <i>Return these</i>	
SERT Vest	
Space Blanket - 2	
CAT Military Tourniquet (Orange) -1	
Stretch Gauze Bandage - 4	
Tourniquet (Black) - 1	
Trauma Shears - 1	
Triage Tags - 5	
Triangular Bandage - 4	
Utility Knife	
Whistle	
Work Gloves	
Yellow Caution Tape	



White-Command    Green-ERT Members    Orange-Drivers



Red-First Aid    Blue-Reservists    Yellow-Safety Coordinator



- SERT Basic Training Unit 1: Disaster Preparedness 3/25/2022

If you have not already received your SERT backpack with your PPE, you will shortly. Every ERT member--at a minimum--will have the SAME resources in their backpack. It is your responsibility to maintain these items. If items need to be replaced, please contact SERT via the OHCCSERT email address. You can add more to your backpack, if you wish, just know that this will add weight, and you may be carrying your pack for several hours.

## *Protection for Disaster Workers*



- SERT members are generally protected by:
  - “Good Samaritan” laws.**
  - Volunteer Protection Act of 1997.**
  - Relevant State statutes.**



- SERT Basic Training Unit 1: Disaster Preparedness 3/25/2022

In California, the Good Samaritan laws covers CERT/SERT responders. The law is posted on the SERT website, and you should read it to fully understand the law.

# OHCC SERT Basic Training

## SERT Organization



FEMA

## Objectives for On-Scene Management



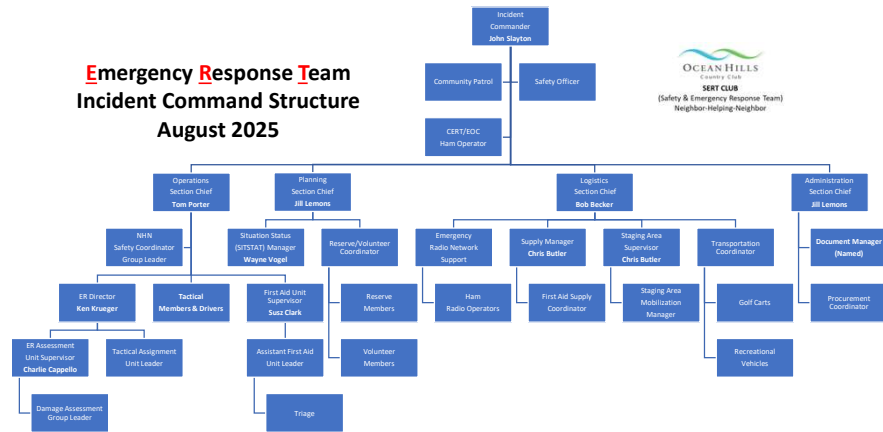
- **Maintain the safety** of SERT ERT members.
- Provide **clear leadership** and organizational structure.
- Improve **effectiveness of rescue** efforts
- **Identify scope** of incident.
- Determine **overall strategy**.
- Deploy **resources**.
- **Document actions and results**.



- SERT Basic Training Unit 2: SERT Organization 3/25/2022

When disaster strikes, we all will be shaken. Our training will help us all be more prepared than most in OHCC. **Remember our #1 priority is your individual safety!** SERT--as you will see--has a specific organizational structure. Through these training sessions you will see: the overall strategy for providing aid, the resources available to ERT members, how to document actions, and the results we should accomplish.

# Emergency Response Team Incident Command Structure August 2025



8/24/2025

# SERT Mobilization



- SERT - **First** take care of ourselves, your families and your home.
- **Proceed to staging area.**
- SERT is **flexible** and evolves based on new information.



- SERT Basic Training Unit 2: SERT Organization 3/25/2022

During a mobilization you will “probably” receive a text message to turn on your radio and to report to the staging area. If for some reason the text message system is down, and you feel a relatively strong earthquake (4+), turn on your radio and someone will respond.

The OHCC staging area will be in the Overflow Parking Lot across the street from the clubhouse. This is the “plan” however we must be flexible to respond to current situations.

## ***SERT Radio Control***

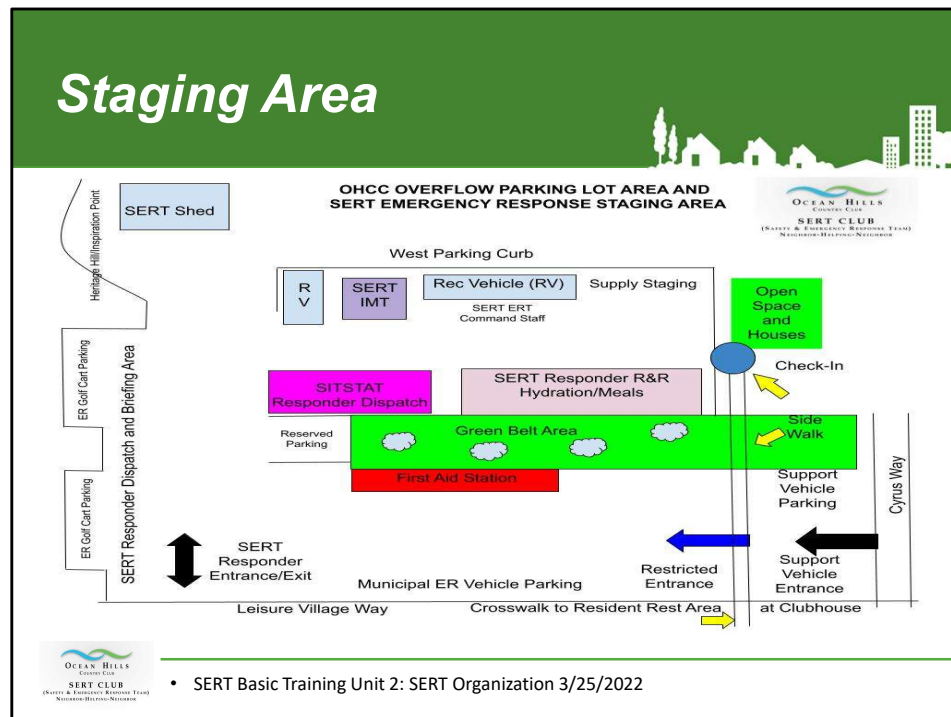


- **Ability to communicate in an emergency**
- **Process SERT follows**
- **Radio Control**
- **Radio Operations**
- **Radio Practice**
- **Radio Etiquette**
- **Oceanside EOC Communications**



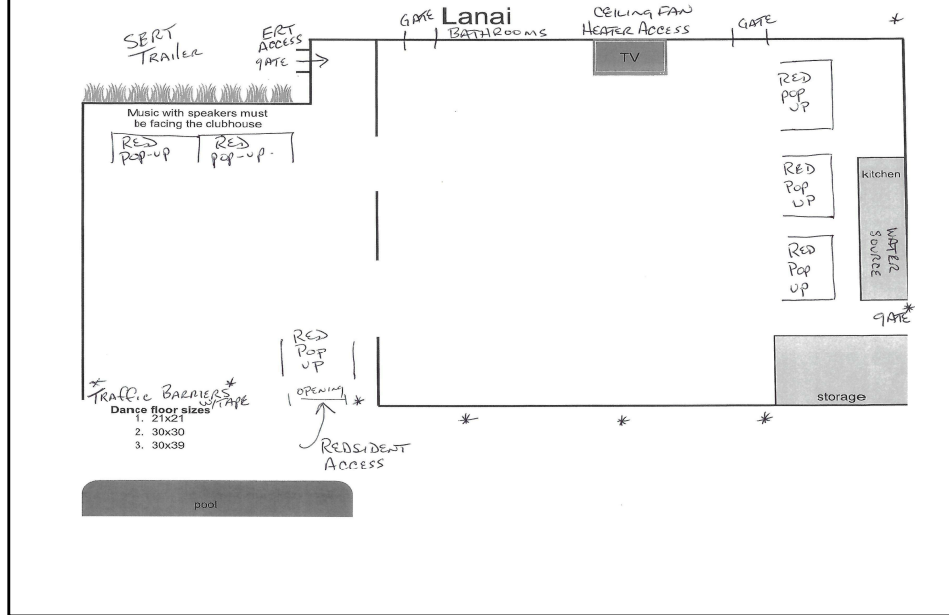
- SERT Basic Training Unit 2: SERT Organization 3/25/2022

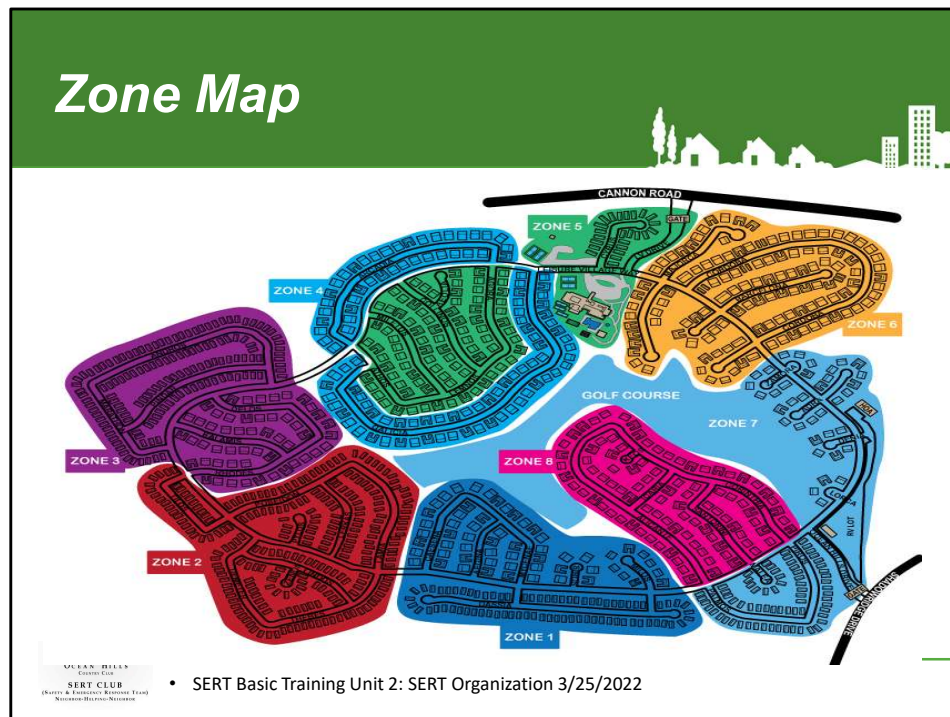
Following a major earthquake land lines and cell towers may be offline. As SERT responds, your 2-way radio is the way we will communicate. So, when an emergency of significant incident occurs, ERT will be activated. When ERT members are available, they check into the radio control operator. The radio control operator checks-in the members and has them report to the assigned staging area. The radio is programed with multiple operating frequencies, but the Primary channel 1 is used for the main communications. This is the channel that we use for our twice a month check-ins. This gives us radio practice for a real emergency. The radio use has limitations. Only one person can talk at one time, so when someone is talking and finishes, he/she says "over". The radio control operator helps coordinate the conversations. Additionally, SERT can communicate with Oceanside EOC on OHCC status via a Ham Radio.



Included in your reading material is a diagram of the staging area, how it will be set up and the functions within each areas.

# Casualty Aid Station - Lanai





Following an activation, we may be called upon to complete a Life and Property Damage Assessment of OHCC. We have divided OHCC into 8-Zones. Each Zone is color coded and have the similar number of structures and/or areas to check. Based on the type of event the Zones that will be assessed may vary.

If you are assigned to do the assessment for a Zone, you will be provided will a clip board that will have a map of the Zone you are to assess and a list of all street addresses within the Zone.

Note in the case of Zones 5 they will assess the Clubhouse, sport courts and the front gate. Zone 7 will also assess the Golf Course, back gate, RV lot and HOA Office area.

# Damage Assessment Form (Sample)

OHCC - SERT Damage Assessment Form																										
Date:		Event:		Person(s) Recording:										Page:		of										
First 3 Hours										Complete Within 6 Hours																
Zone 7		Help Signs			Road Blockage	Hazard (All that apply)										Building Damage			People (State # of each)			Injured (State # of each)			Comments	
Time A/P	Street #	Street	None	OK	Help	Yes	Time A/P	None	Fire	Gas	Water	Electrical	Chemical	None	Light	Moderate	Severe	OK	Trapped	Displaced	None	Immediate	Delayed	Minor	Dead	
	6004	Piros																								
	6005	Piros																								
	6008	Piros																								
	6009	Piros																								
	6012	Piros																								
	6013	Piros																								
	6016	Piros																								
	6017	Piros																								
	6020	Piros																								
	6024	Piros																								
	6025	Piros																								

Note forms are printed display the actual street address based on the Zone Map.



- SERT Basic Training Unit 2: SERT Organization 3/25/2022

This is a copy of a portion of the Damage Assessment form for Piros in Zone 7. As you can see each street address has its own row so you can easily record your assessment.

# Damage Assessment Form Instructions

**OHCC - SERT Damage Assessment Form**

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Event: \_\_\_\_\_ Person(s) Recording: \_\_\_\_\_ Page: \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_

**Zone #** \_\_\_\_\_ **First 3 Hours** **Complete Within 6 Hours**

Time A/P	Street #	Street	None	OK	Help	Time A/P	N	F	G	W	E	C	N	L	M	H	OK	Trapped	Displaced	N	I	D	M	X	Comments
<b>Definitions First 3 Hours</b> <b>Help Sign</b> Enter "1" for Help Sign display <b>None</b> No sign visible <b>OK</b> Resident(s) say they are OK <b>Help</b> Resident(s) say they need HELP <b>Road Blockage</b> Enter short description						<b>Hazard</b> (All that apply) Enter "1" for all that apply <b>N=None</b> No hazards observed <b>F=Fire</b> Fire/Smoke observed at this address <b>G=Gas</b> Natural Gas Pipe to Meter is broken or you smell gas <b>W=Water</b> Flowing water observed from the street <b>E=Electrical</b> No power at this address <b>C=Chemical</b> Chemical spill visible (Gasoline, etc.) <b>Building Damage</b> Enter "1" <b>N=None</b> Nothing visible <b>L=Light</b> Broken Windows, Cracked/Fallen Plaster <b>M=Moderate</b> Visible Cracks, Major damage to interior contents <b>H=Heavy</b> Partial/total collapse or tilting, heavy smoke or fire <b>People</b> (State # of each) Enter "1" for all that apply <b>OK</b> # of residents that report no problems <b>Trapped</b> # of residents trapped within the structure <b>Displaced</b> # of residents that can no longer live at address <b>Injured</b> (State # of each) Enter "1" for all that apply <b>N=None</b> No one is injured <b>I=Immediate</b> # of people needing IMMEDIATE medical attention for life-threatening injuries (airway, bleeding, or shock) <b>D=Delayed</b> # of people needing medical attention NOT life-threatening (broken limb, severe sprain, etc.) <b>M=Minor</b> # of people are "walking wounded" and generally ambulatory <b>X=Dead</b> # of people with NO respiration or heart beat <b>Comments</b> Enter "brief" important information																			

**Search and Rescue "X-code"**


**Date**

**Search Unit**

**Hazards & Notes**

# of people found alive and dead. 0 indicates nobody found

IF BLUE TAPE "X" IS USED ON GARAGE DOORS  
ADDITIONAL INFORMATION CAN BE ADDED USING ABOVE TEMPLATE.


 • SERT Basic Training Unit 2: SERT Organization 4/11/2021

We will cover how to fill out this form during an upcoming "tabletop" training exercise. You will note there are two parts of the assessment form. The first part is to be filled out within the first 3-hours of the assignment. Basically, to record if the OK/Help sign is visible and if there are any road blockages. You then report your results to the Command Center.

If you are assigned to perform and complete assessment, you use the same form as was originally used and complete the further assessment within 6-hours of the assignment. As some of the situations you encounter may be serious you will be to radio in these observations to SitSat so they can be prioritized for further assistance.

## On-Scene Size-up



1. Gather Facts.
2. Assess and Communicate Damage.
3. Consider Probabilities.
4. Assess Your Own Situation.
5. Establish Priorities.
6. Make Decisions.
7. Develop Plan of Action.
8. Take Action.
9. Evaluate Progress.



- SERT Basic Training Unit 2: SERT Organization 3/25/2022

Sizing up the situation is very important. While this is a 9-step process, it can be achieved very rapidly with practice.

# Rescuer Safety



- **Rescuer safety = 1st priority.**
- **Heavy damage** = No rescue.
- **Moderate damage** = Locate, assess, evacuate.
- **Light damage** = Locate, assess, continue size-up, and document.



- SERT Basic Training Unit 2: SERT Organization 3/25/2022

We cannot say this enough, **YOUR SAFETY is the #1 priority for all ERT members.** There will be times when the best decision will be to **do nothing!**

If a structure is highly damaged and you think it is unsafe ... then it is UNSAFE! You cannot help others if you are injured or trapped in the process.

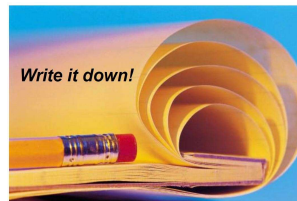
# Documentation



- **Command Staff**

- Document's situation status:

- Incident locations;
    - Access routes;
    - Identified hazards;
    - Support locations.



- **Section Chiefs**

- Provide Incident Commander with information.

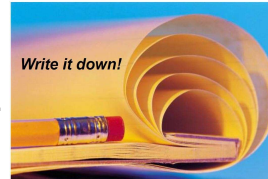


- SERT Basic Training Unit 2: SERT Organization 3/25/2022

Command staff will need your reports to communicate with emergency responders. Command will have access--even if the power is out and cell towers are down--via the HAM radio system. Information is key and it must be reported in the same format that responders will process the information. It will help everyone prioritize the situation for the proper response.

# Documentation Forms

- Damage Assessment.
- Personnel Resources Sign-In.
- SERT Assignment Tracking Log.
- Communications Log.
- Equipment Inventory.



- SERT Basic Training Unit 2: SERT Organization 3/25/2022

There are several documents that will be utilized during a response. **WRITE IT DOWN!**

When you get to the staging area, check-in so we know you are here. Wait for your assignment. Report back upon assignment completion so we know you have returned. We don't want to have to implement a search & rescue for you unless warranted.



This module is all about First Aid and we will review situations we may encounter as SERT ERT members.

## Treating Life-Threatening Conditions



- Without treatment, **severe bleeding and airway obstruction** can quickly lead to death.
- The **first priority** of SERT volunteers assisting in disaster first aid operations is to attend to these conditions by controlling bleeding and positioning a patient so they can breathe.



• SERT Basic Training Unit 3: Disaster First Aid Operations – Part 1 3/28/2021

Critical situations --SEVERE BLEEDING--you need to Stop-The-Bleed, or the person dies! If the person's airway is blocked then they cannot breathe, and the person dies! These are situations that require immediate attention and are your FIRST PRIORITY! If this help is requiring more than what you are trained to provide, call for HELP on your radio.

## Safety Considerations



- Prior to treatment, **ensure that both the patient and rescuer** are in a safe environment to administer care.
- Some **questions** SERT volunteers should consider:
  - Do I feel safe at this spot?
  - Should I leave and move to a safer location, or am I able to stay and start providing care immediately?
  - If I leave, can I take anyone with me?



• SERT Basic Training Unit 3: Disaster First Aid Operations – Part 1 3/28/2021

Before entering any situation ask yourself “IS IT SAFE?”. If the answer is NO, then don’t go. If the answer is YES, then proceed and when you find a patient ask yourself again, “IS IT SAFE?” to leave the patient here. If YES, it maybe be best not to move the patient depending on their condition. If NO, you need to decide if you can assist the patient in moving or do you need to seek assistance from another.

# OHCC SERT Basic Training

## Disaster Psychology



This next section is very important to everyone's well-being!

## Objectives



1. **Understand disaster trauma** for survivors and rescuers, including SERT volunteers.
2. List steps to take for **personal and team well-being**.
3. **Review key steps** to apply when providing aid to someone with survivor's trauma.



You think you know stress ... well, prepare for disaster trauma stress. Everyone will display a certain amount of disaster trauma which may fluctuate up and down for the period of the disaster and afterward. As a TEAM, we all need to be on the lookout and help one other when the signs occur. Symptoms may be for ERT Team members, others within OHCC or our remote family members.

## ***Causes of Disaster Reactions***



- **Dealing with your own personal losses.**
- Working within OHCC:
  - Assisting neighbors or friends who have also been injured.
  - Feeling unsafe and insecure.



You may have to deal with your own personal loss or have concerns about other family members. This is understandable, and we are all here to help one another. We live in OHCC and as 55+ residents, one's level of disaster trauma stress may be acute. This is why we have the Neighbor-Helping-Neighbor program so a friendly face can help.

## The Five Fs



- **Freeze:** “Stop, look, and listen,” or be on guard and watchful.
- **Flight:** Flee.
- **Fight:** Attempt to combat the threat.
- **Fright:** Tonic immobility (you freeze) when in contact with a predator or playing dead.
- **Faint:** Fear-induced fainting.



There are 5-primary response to stress. Our bodies react in both physical and psychological responses of which we all need to be aware.

# Psychological Symptoms of Trauma



- Emotional



- Cognitive



- Spiritual

**Emotional** - are you putting all the pieces together?

**Cognitive** - how you are processing everything? How are your decision-making processes?

**Spiritual** – Loss of hope, reduced self-worth ...

## Team Well-Being



- Actions can be taken **before, during, and after** an incident to help manage emotional impact of disaster response work.
- Knowing possible **psychological and physiological symptoms** of disaster trauma helps manage impact.
- Learn to **manage stress**:
  - SERT volunteers for themselves,
  - SERT leaders during response.



We all have stress, and “WE” together need to help manage the stress. It is truly about the “Team Well-Being”. First, we need to be aware we are under stress. All the time and this applies to everyone. How we manage this stress for ourselves, and others is what we will be discussing.

## *Take Care of Yourself*



- **Be aware of trauma** that can follow a disaster.
- **Explain** to family members and friends what you need:
  - **Listen** when you want to talk.
  - **Do not force yourself to talk** until you are ready.



We will all react to stress in different ways. Just know we are all here for one another. We are here to LISTEN, when you are ready. The “when you are ready” is important. You will probably know when that is. Follow your gut feeling.

## *How ERT Members Reduce Stress*



- Brief SERT personnel beforehand.
- Remember SERT is a team.
- Rest and regroup.
- Take breaks away from the incident site.
- Establish a culture of acceptance.
- Eat properly, stay hydrated.
- Be aware of changes in teammates.
- Rotate teams and duties.
- Phase out workers gradually.
- Defuse after shift.



Our #1 Priority is your Safety, and this includes your mental health. We do not expect Supermen or Wonder Women. You should not try to be either. Follow these easy steps to take care of yourself and others.

## *Traumatic Crisis*



- A traumatic crisis is an event experienced or witnessed in which **people's ability to cope is overwhelmed** by:
  - Actual or potential **death or injury to self or others.**
  - **Serious injury.**
  - **Destruction of their homes**, neighborhood, or valued possessions.
  - **Loss of contact** with family or close friends.



Following a major earthquake, you may experience all of these. Even one will add stress. Now, combine that with what you may experience throughout OHCC. You will need to be able to adjust and stay focused. If you need help ... ASK!

## Stabilizing Survivors



- **Assess survivors** for injury or shock.
- Get uninjured **people to help**.
- **Provide support** by listening and empathizing.
- **Help survivors connect** with natural support systems.



Survivors want to be HEARD! People want to feel the person they are with is CONFIDENT in their ability to help. This is where your training comes in. Because you have already thought these emotions and stressors through, your ability to cope and show confidence is much greater than most.

## What Not to Say:



- “I understand.”
- “Don’t feel bad.”
- “You’re strong.”
- “You’ll get through this.”
- “Don’t cry.”
- “It’s God’s will.”
- “It could be worse.”
- “At least you still have...”
- “Everything will be okay.”



Saying the wrong thing can do more damage than saying nothing at all. Remember only the survivor “knows how they feel” Until they tell us, we are just “assuming” we know.

## Say This Instead:



- “I’m sorry for your pain.”
- “I’m so sorry this has happened.”
- “Is it all right if I help you with...?”
- “I can’t imagine what this is like for you.”
- “What do you need?”



You need to keep these statements handy. They show care and compassion. “What do you need?” is especially good as it is an open-ended question that can not be answered with a simple Yes or NO. The response will always tell you something.

## Managing the Death Scene



- **Cover the body**; treat it with respect.
- Follow local laws and protocols.
- Talk with SERT leadership.



Following a major disaster, you may be called upon to deal firsthand with death. This may also include pets!

In California for a human, all “unattended” deaths are to be considered a crime until declared otherwise by the “authority having jurisdiction”. As such, neither the body nor the area surrounding the body shall be disturbed (to preserve evidence).

If the body is in view of affected persons, it is advisable to move those persons from the viewing area rather than disturb the body by covering.

A person should be assigned to remain in the vicinity of the deceased to maintain the integrity of the scene.

Unattended means “absent the presence or knowledge by a medical professional or law enforcement officer”.

For OHCC an Authority Having Jurisdiction could be a law enforcement officer, fire fighter, or coroner.

## Summary



- **Prepare yourself**, as rescues may be unpleasant and uncomfortable.
- Know the psychological and physiological **symptoms of trauma**.
- Understand the **six emotional phases of a disaster**.
- Take **steps to reduce stress**, which affects cognition, health, and interactions.
- **Stabilize individuals**.
- Listen, protect, and connect to **support survivors**.
- Be an **empathetic listener**.



We have covered a lot of material; these are the key points.



I need to say again your #1 priority is to stay SAFE!

## *Fire Suppression Safety*

### **INCIDENT COMMANDER DIRECTIVES**

**Safety of individual SERT Responders is top priority!**  
**SERT Responders will NOT fight fires.**



OCEAN HILLS  
SERT CLUB  
(Safety & Emergency Response Team)  
Beverly Hills, California

The Incident Commander has directed that SERT Responders will not fight fires.

## Role of SERT



- SERT plays a very important role in fire response by:
  - Understanding and following their level of training.
  - Practicing the three S's:
    - **S**afety
    - **S**ituational Awareness
    - **S**ize-Up



When a SERT Responder encounters a fire, the three S Process should be used –

### **S**afety:

- for yourself and residents.
- Approach fire from upwind position.
- If you can feel heat from the fire, you are too close!
- Radio to Command Post to request on-deck responder be sent.

### **S**ituational Awareness:

- What is burning?
- Are the occupants out of the structure?
- Remember that garages may contain various chemicals that can react to fire and produce toxic gasses.

### **S**ize-Up:

- Will the fire jeopardize other areas?
- Isolate at least two house either side of structure, include houses in front and in rear of property.
- Notify Fire Department Emergency Response via 911.
- Notify front and back gate monitor that 911 has been called. Verify address.

## Utility Control



- SERT Responders **should NOT turn-off gas or electrical utilities** unless under “controlled” conditions.
- Control of these two “hazardous energy” utilities are the **responsibility of the homeowner.**
- Utilities should only be **restored under supervision of qualified utility worker.**



Utility controls that have not been properly maintained can present a safety hazard to SERT Responders.

“Controlled conditions” mean the SERT responder is completely confident there is no release of natural gas or arcing of electrical connections.

- SERT Responders are not provided with the training or resources to make those evaluations.

Homeowners have been provided information during Emergency Preparedness training advising. It is the **homeowner's responsibility** to know WHERE the utility controls are and HOW to turn them off and on. SERT covers this during the In-Home Safety Survey. That is why it is so important that as many OHCC residents as possible have this information.

## Search and Rescue

SERT Responders will perform a preliminary **Life Safety Assessment** from the **Green OK** or **Red HELP** Signs deployed by the resident.



Residents have been instructed through their Emergency Preparedness Training to place the signs in a location visible from the street.

SERT Responders, along with a golf cart driver will drive the street recording status of each address (GREEN, RED, or NO sign) on the damage assessment street.

At the end of each street the SERT Responder will radio report the status where RED signs were identified. **(DO NOT stop at HELP signs while doing your assessment, that will be someone else's job.)**

If the Infrastructure Damage Assessment has cleared the street, SERT ERT will notify the residents on the street it is safe to come outside.

If there is a Safety Coordinator on the street ERT will ask them to assist in evaluating house with NO SIGNS.

A RED or NO sign provides implied consent for SERT Responders to enter property but NOT to enter the dwelling.

SERT Responders are to knock on doors and windows and yell loudly to obtain attention of

resident. SERT Responders can also open doors if unlocked (but not enter dwelling) and yell loudly.

If resident responds OK – No Help Needed, the SERT Responder will radio report to SITSTAT that no further assistance is needed, and resume assigned duties.

If resident responds HELP, the SERT Responder will radio report to SITSTAT that assistance is needed; then, standby for a second SERT responder before entering dwelling.

- While waiting for a second SERT Responder to arrive the first SERT Responder can perform a “SIZE UP”.

If NO response from resident, the SERT Responder will radio report to SITSTAT and standby for instructions.

## Important Reminders



- SERT response is primarily **information gathering** to allow emergency response by professional rescuers.
- Interior dwelling search and rescue requires at least **THREE qualified and trained responders.**
- Initial SERT response strategy involves only one trained responder – must wait for additional personnel before making a search and rescue entry.

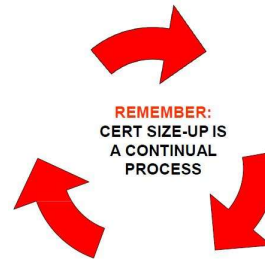


The SERT SAR strategy requires three responders; two to make entry and one immediately outside in a safe area to coordinate and act as the SAFETY OFFICER . However, because of limited OHCC ERT personnel resources, it may not be possible to perform an interior search and rescue.

## SERT Size-up



1. Gather Facts
2. Assess Damage
3. Consider Probabilities
4. Assess Your Situation
5. Establish Priorities
6. Make Decisions
7. Develop Plan of Action
8. Take Action
9. Evaluate Progress



Depending on the complexity of the Search & Rescue, the entire size-up process can take just a few minutes to a few hours to complete. The decisions made and the actions taken are based on a thorough analysis so take the time necessary.

RESTATE: Always consider the NO ACTION approach first. What are the probable consequences if you take no action? Wait for additional resources or professional help.

## Size-up Steps 3 & 4



### 3 - Consider Probabilities:

- How stable is the situation?
- What secondary factors should be considered?
- What else could go wrong?
- What does it mean for the search and rescue?

### 4 - Assess Your Situation:

- Is the situation safe enough to continue?
- What risks will rescuers face?
- What resources are needed?
- What resources are available?



**Step 3:** REMEMBER – aftershocks can occur. Damage, especially structural integrity of the building can change. Situational Awareness must be continuous along with ongoing review of the structural integrity.

**Step 4:** Assess RISK vs GAIN.

**Step 4:** Resources include personnel, tools, and equipment.

Should you get a second opinion?

If you think it's unsafe, then it probably is unsafe!

## Size-up Steps 5 & 6

### 5 - Establish Priorities:

- What should be done?
- In what order?

### 6 - Make Decisions:

- Keep in mind:
  - Safety of SERT members,
  - Life safety for survivors and others,
  - Protection of the environment,
  - Protection of property.



**Step 5:** By this point in the Size-Up process, all the hazards should be identified. It's important to remember that these hazards must be removed or mitigated before beginning the Search & Rescue.

**Step 5:** Be mindful of the goal – rescue the greatest number in the shortest amount of time – but not at the expense of your own safety.

**Step 6:** This is the point in the size-up where you will make decisions based on the priorities established in Step 5.

**Step 6:** Review sequence of response – life, environment, property.

## Size-up Steps 7 & 8



### 7 - Develop Plan of Action:

- Focus operation on established priorities and decisions.
- Provide documentation to give to responding agencies.
- Provide documentation to become part of SERT records.

### 8 - Take Action:

- Base action on plan developed during Step 7.



**Step 7:** The CERT manual suggests that documenting an Action Plan is optional. The SERT ERT IMT wants to make it clear that it is **mandatory**. The Safety Officer will develop the Plan and decide specifically how the entry team will conduct the operation considering the highest priority tasks first.

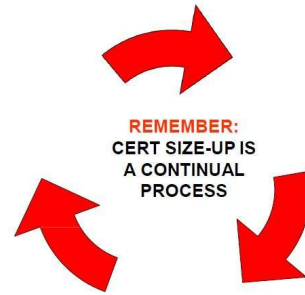
**Step 8:** Implement the Plan.

## Size-up Step 9



- **Evaluate Progress:**

- Most critical step.
- Monitor plan's effectiveness and safety.
- If you see collapsed floors or walls, **GET OUT!**



**Step 9:** Follow the Plan. If the Plan cannot be implemented as developed, then STOP and re-evaluate. It may be necessary to leave the structure and report back to the Safety Officer. Be prepared to revise the Plan based on new information.

## Search Methodology



- Remain **within arm's reach** of another SERT member.
- **Call out to survivors**, "If anyone can hear my voice, come here."
- **Ask any survivors** who do respond for more information about the building or others who may be trapped.
- Survivors might be in **shock or confused**.

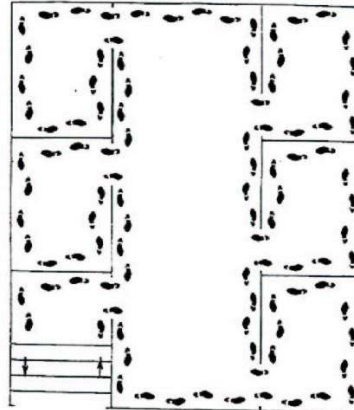


**Always use the "Buddy System".**

The responder is most effective and most safe when the responder remains stationary. **Stay near an exit and call out for survivors to come to you.** The survivors will typically know the layout of the structure better than a responder and can maneuver more easily than a responder.

## Search Methodology

- **Bottom-up/top-down** for a multi-story building
- **Right wall/left wall** for a single floor
- Stop frequently to **listen**

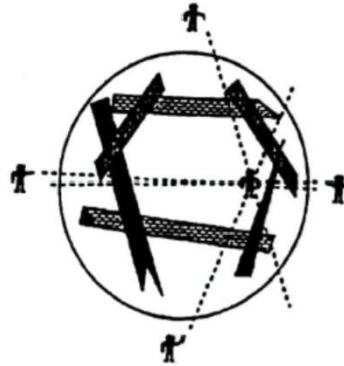


OCEAN HILLS  
SERT CLUB  
(Society & Community Resource Team)  
Beverly Hills, California

The Plan should include the search methodology. **Always keep the wall on your RIGHT.** Don't forget to check a closet or a small bathroom.

## Search Methodology

- **Triangulation** allows rescuers to view a location from several perspectives
- **Keep records** of rescued survivors and of those who remain trapped or who are dead
- **Report information** to emergency services personnel



You can also use your flashlight in a darker room and ask if the person can see your light.

## Rescue Operations & Precautions



- Maintain rescuer **safety**.
- Know your **limitations**.
- Follow **safety procedures**.
- **Remove objects and debris** to free survivors and create safe rescue environment.
- **Assess** survivors.
- **Remove** survivors.




### **SAFETY – SAFETY – SAFETY**

Continually evaluate your conditions.


Our resources and demographics have BUILT IN limitations.

It's always appropriate to STOP!

## Search Markings



Use **BLUE** painter tape on exterior of garage door to indicate the house **WITHOUT** an OK/Help sign has been inspected.

 **OCEAN HILLS**  
Search Unit  
**SERT CLUB**  
(Search & Emergency Response Team)  
Brevard County, Florida

• SERT Basic Training Unit 7: Light Search & Rescue Operations 10/23/2025

After the initial damage assessment is completed the ERT member may be assigned to identify those residences **WITHOUT** an OK/HELP sign. The ERT member will use Blue Painters Tape and place an “X” on the outside garage door to indicate the house has been searched **externally** for the resident. This will aid ERT members that may need to perform a later Zone search that the home has already been inspected.