

**Belvedere/Tiburon**  
**Disaster Preparedness**  
**Program**  
**A CASE HISTORY**

# Belvedere/Tiburon Disaster Preparedness Program A CASE HISTORY

- Prior to Katrina, public interest in disaster preparedness was frustratingly low, particularly to the professionals charged with generating programs that required citizen participation.

# Belvedere/Tiburon Disaster Preparedness Program A CASE HISTORY

- Katrina changed the psychological landscape. Taking responsibility for your own survival in a disaster was something you could no longer ignore.

# Belvedere/Tiburon Disaster Preparedness Program A CASE HISTORY

- The communities of Belvedere and Tiburon, with 4,728 households formed a Task Force to take advantage of this changed public attitude and created a preparedness program that broke through the previous apathy, achieving gratifying success:

# Belvedere/Tiburon Disaster Preparedness Program A CASE HISTORY

- In the 12 months of 2006, over 2,300 people were trained in Homeowner Disaster Preparedness, penetrating 31% of all households.

# Belvedere/Tiburon Disaster Preparedness Program A CASE HISTORY

- Embracing the right strategy was the key to this success. There are ten key elements to this strategy:

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- **1. Form a broad based Task Force**
- By forming a Task Force that brought citizen volunteers together with emergency service people as well as staff from both municipalities, we maximized the potential synergy:

# Belvedere/Tiburon Disaster Preparedness Program

## A CASE HISTORY

### Members of the Task Force

- \* Belvedere Community Foundation – 4
- \* Tiburon Peninsula Foundation – 4
- \* Police Chief & City Manager of  
Belvedere
- \* Police Chief & Town Manager of Tiburon
- \* Tiburon Fire District – 1
- \* Staff Disaster Coordinator – 1



# Belvedere/Tiburon Disaster Preparedness Program A CASE HISTORY

- 2. Limit and focus the program
- The early, crucial decision to limit the program to “shelter in place,” i.e. to be able to survive in your own household without outside help for three days gave the program focus.

# Belvedere/Tiburon Disaster Preparedness Program A CASE HISTORY

- 3. Create a manual to serve as the core of the program
- Creating a user-friendly manual tailored to Belvedere and Tiburon citizens that described what to do before, during and after a regional disaster became the core of the program.

# Belvedere/Tiburon Disaster Preparedness Program A CASE HISTORY

- 4. Limit training classes to two hours
- Employing the manual as the basis for training a household member and limiting the training exercise to two hours made it easy for citizens to become involved.
- Manual and training were free to participants.

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- 5. Create a Website that answers all questions
- Creating a comprehensive Website that answered all questions, previewed the entire manual and listed times and venues for training classes gave us a vehicle to communicate and stay up-to-date daily.

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- 6. Use a “Big Bang” strategy for marketing
- In a two-week period in late March of 2006, the two communities were blitzed with teaser signage announcing, “Get Ready” and directing people to the Website.
- We had 12,000 website hits that first week.
- Signage included 4’ x 8’ banners on numerous buildings, on-pole and in-ground signs and window posters in stores, all with highly visible black print on yellow background... a distinctive look applied to all communications.

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- Four days after signs appeared, over 10,000 inserts explaining the program appeared in Tiburon's newsletter and Belvedere's newsletter (sent to all households) as well as the local weekly newspaper, *The Ark*.
- In addition to creating interest, the Big Bang marketing effort was designed to get 100 volunteers to become trainers (a four-hour "train the trainer" class was conducted on four consecutive Saturdays). Instead, we got over 200 people wanting to train others.

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- 7. Make access to the purchase of emergency supplies easy
- We made it easy to obtain emergency supplies and equipment by gaining cooperation of our local hardware store to assemble customized kits based on an order form distributed at training sessions. Displaying these kits at various public venues also generated interest in the program.

# Belvedere/Tiburon Disaster Preparedness Program A CASE HISTORY

- 8. Use advertising and publicity to sustain awareness
- Advertising in our local newspaper was continuous for about eight weeks. The *Marin Independent Journal* and the *San Francisco Chronicle* carried feature stories. It didn't hurt that we were commemorating the 1906 San Francisco earthquake during the month of April.



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- 9. Obtain services of a paid staffer
- Having a paid staffer to coordinate and promote training classes, to deal with inevitable last-minute changes and to see that trainers had their equipment and supplies probably headed off volunteer burnout. Making this part of the program work well led to receiving many compliments, which gave us good “word of mouth.” This unglamorous activity and attention to detail was absolutely essential to success.

# Belvedere/Tiburon Disaster Preparedness Program A CASE HISTORY

- 10. Organize to reach the people
- The most difficult and likely the most important activity was organizing the communities into manageable precincts or neighborhoods for the purpose of encouraging people to “Get Trained.”
- This is a huge voluntary undertaking. This takes organizational skills and is similar to a political campaign.

# Belvedere/Tiburon Disaster Preparedness Program A CASE HISTORY

- Belvedere, because of its compactness and smaller size chose to use a trainer in neighborhoods of 15 to 20 households.

# Belvedere/Tiburon Disaster Preparedness Program A CASE HISTORY

- In Tiburon, we designated precincts, with a captain and helpers. Existing homeowner associations played a big role in this undertaking. Classes were held in public venues, including several churches and schools. A computer database helped us keep track of progress.

# Belvedere/Tiburon Disaster Preparedness Program A CASE HISTORY

- The ten elements described above gave the Task Force the right strategy for success. Each could likely be improved upon, but eliminating any one would, in our judgment, jeopardize success.
- The program took a hiatus in July and August, and we undertook a second “blitz” in September/October. This time, our signage featured “Get Trained.” The “Get Ready” tease would have been less effective.

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- The cost of the program in 2006 was approximately \$28,000. Five entities shared equally, i.e. two foundations, the two municipalities and the fire district. The Volunteer Fire Fighters sponsored a “thank you” picnic for trainers in the fall.

# Belvedere/Tiburon Disaster Preparedness Program A CASE HISTORY

- The Task Force plans to stay in tact. Our first assignment is how to extend and sustain what we've accomplished in one year.
- We did one very smart thing for just this purpose. We have an E-mail address for 98% of all trained households.

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- If you have questions, go to our Website at [www.getready94920.org](http://www.getready94920.org). If you like to speak with a live person, call our Disaster Coordinator Laurie Nilsen at Tiburon Police 415-435-7386. She can answer most questions and can also direct you to another member of the Task Force.



# THANK YOU!

- Belvedere-Tiburon Disaster Preparedness  
Get Ready Task Force