

Meet the People Who Show Up in a Disaster: San Mateo County's Disaster Preparedness Day, August 1

Annual, multilingual, all-ages event brings residents together with first responders for live demonstrations, hands-on workshops, and two program firsts

REDWOOD CITY, CA, UNITED STATES, July 22, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- San Mateo County will

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Sandra Firpo, Emergency Coordinator, SMC EM

hold its 22nd annual Disaster Preparedness Day on Saturday, August 1, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the San Mateo County Event Center. Admission is free, and every resident, worker, and visitor across the county and the broader Bay Area is invited to learn practical steps to prepare for disasters and meet the first responders who show up when it matters most.

There is no other day quite like it. Where else can an eight year old take her first CPR class, a grandmother learn household readiness in Spanish, and a toddler bandage a teddy bear in the back of a real ambulance while his mom climbs in beside him? Disaster Preparedness Day is built so

that a grandparent, parent, and a first grader each walk away with something they did not know when they arrived.

This annual event is shaped by what residents have asked for. San Mateo County Emergency Management built this year's program around the languages, questions, and recovery concerns the community raised, from workshops offered in three languages to sessions on the insurance and legal hurdles families said worry them most when disasters strike.

“Every family in this county is safer when we prepare together,” said Dr. Shruti Dhapodkar, San Mateo County Emergency Management Director. “Disaster Preparedness Day is where residents meet the people who will be there for them in a crisis and learn the simple things that make the difference when minutes count. Whatever comes next, we face it as one community.”

This year brings two firsts. KCBS All News Radio (106.9 FM and 740 AM) joins the event for the first time and will broadcast live from the fairgrounds throughout the day. The Hillsborough and

Friends K9 Unit also debuts with a live working dog demonstration. A CalFire crew will run a hands-on “cooking show” on preparing emergency meals, complete with samples of emergency rations for the audience to try.

Families can move through the day at their own pace. A How to Pack a Go Bag workshop runs in English, Spanish, and Mandarin, and Storytime with a Firefighter is offered in the same three languages for younger visitors. Master Gardeners will talk through native plants and landscaping that stand up to both fire and drought. Insurance and legal experts will walk residents through the questions that surface when it is time to recover after a disaster. Young people weighing a

career or a college path will find a wide range of vocations on display, including the county's amateur radio operators, whose ham radios keep neighbors connected when cell towers go dark and the power is out.

“We built this day by listening. Residents told us what they needed, in the languages they speak and for the ages they are caring for, and that is what August 1 delivers. Come as you are, bring the whole family, and leave knowing your neighbors and first responders have your back,” said Sandra Firpo, an Emergency Coordinator with San Mateo County Emergency Management who leads community outreach and directs the Disaster Preparedness Day program.

Updates will be posted at www.SMCDisasterPrep.org as the event approaches.

This year's event is made possible by AMR (American Medical Response), the San Mateo County Event Center, The Daily Journal, Kaiser Permanente, and KCBS All News Radio.

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