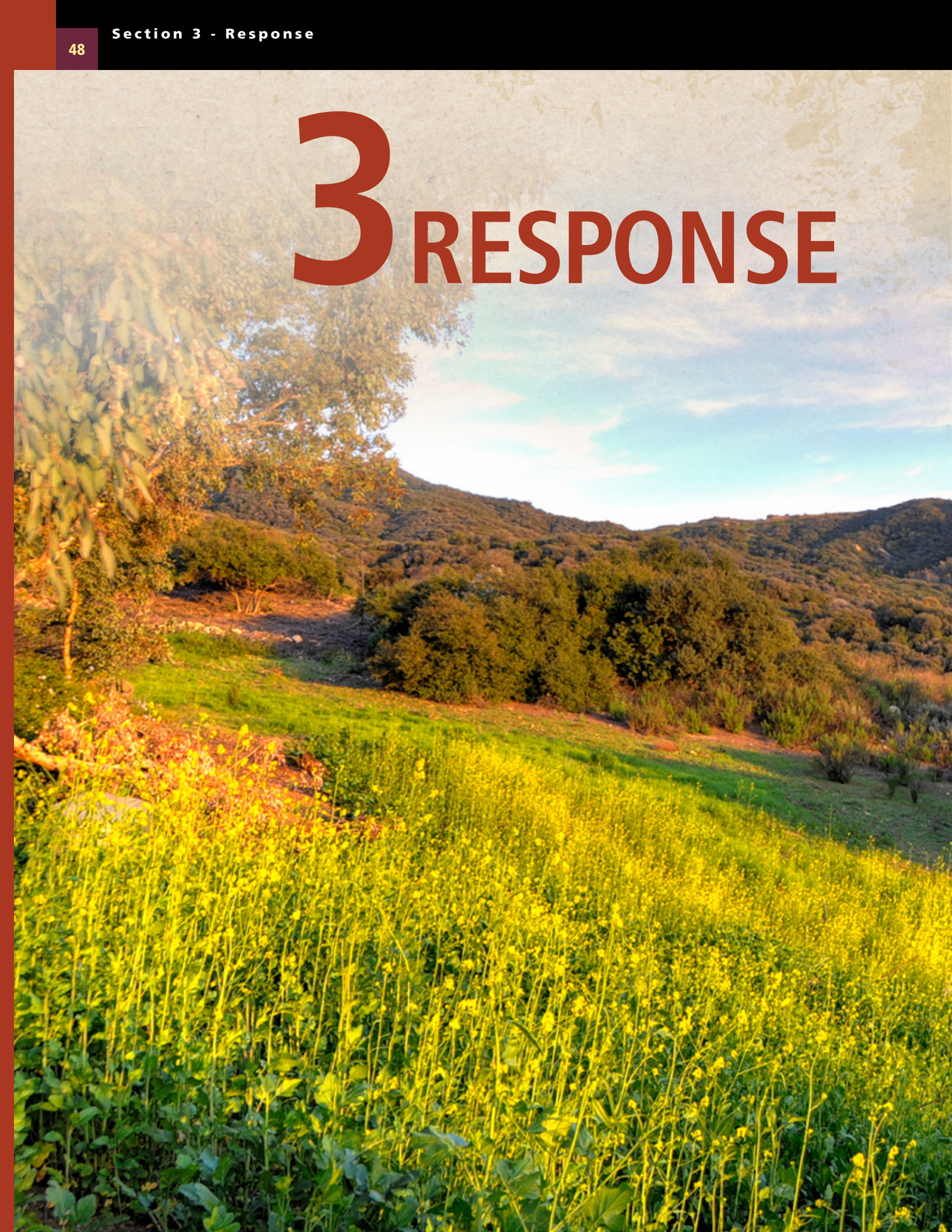


3 RESPONSE



3 - RESPONSE

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GENERAL EMERGENCY RESPONSE

911

CALL 911

For any type of emergency, including medical situations, traffic accidents, house fires, wildfires, or other scenarios that require professional response, **call 911**.

Many Topangans think that calling local Fire Station 69 directly will result in a faster response. This may actually delay response in an emergency due to the way emergency calls must be logged and dispatched in LA County.

If you can, call 911 using a landline phone, so your location can be accurately recorded. Never assume that someone else has already called. If you witness an emergency, call 911 and report it. The more people who call 911 about the same event, the better. Each call helps to gather additional information, which can assist dispatchers in sending the proper equipment and personnel to the scene.

If you must call 911 on a cell phone, keep in mind that your location is not always captured automatically. Always give the 911 operator your cell number immediately in case the call is dropped. When asked, be prepared to report the exact location of the incident.



DO NOT CALL FIRE STATION 69 IN AN EMERGENCY!

About 40% of emergency calls in Topanga are called directly into Fire Station 69. Five years ago, this number was even higher, but it still needs to come down significantly. Calling the fire station directly may delay response to an emergency. Please spread the word among community members that in the event of an emergency, they must call **911**. It could be a matter of life or death.

WILDFIRE

EVACUATION WARNING (VOLUNTARY EVACUATION)

An Evacuation Warning is an urgent call for the community to immediately prepare for possible evacuation due to a wildfire in the area. Evacuation Warnings will be issued for particular Topanga Zones. See the Zone Maps starting on page 84.

When a warning is issued, you should prepare to leave the canyon. This is also the time to evacuate people in need of assistance and your horses. Most Evacuation Warnings become Evacuation Orders, so it's best to get your Emergency Plan together as quickly as possible and then leave as soon as you can.

Here's what you should do when an EVACUATION WARNING has been issued:

- Contact family members and make sure they are ready to leave the canyon.
- Gather all items on your evacuation lists and put them in your car.
- Attach garden hoses with nozzles to spigots and place them so that they can reach all areas of your home. (These hoses can be used by firefighters engaged in structure protection to put out spot fires once the fire has passed. Please note that garden hoses are ineffective in terms of fighting a wildland fire.)
- Fill sinks and bathtubs with water. Fill trashcans and buckets with water and place them around your house for easy access by firefighters.
- Close all windows and doors around your home to keep embers from blowing inside. Close window shutters and blinds only if they are fire-resistant.
- Move furniture away from windows and sliding glass doors to avoid their ignition from the fire's radiant heat.
- If you have children in school, follow their school's Disaster Plan.
- If you have time, cover windows, attic openings, eaves, and vents with fire-resistant material such as 1/2-inch or thicker plywood.

EVACUATION ORDER (MANDATORY EVACUATION)

An Evacuation Order is a directive from the sheriff or fire department to leave your home or business immediately. Failure to follow an Evacuation Order could put your own life and those of your neighbors, along with firefighters and other emergency responders, in jeopardy. As with warnings, Evacuation Orders will be issued for specific Topanga Zones.

When an EVACUATION ORDER has been issued for your area:

- **Gather all items** on your evacuation lists, including your disaster supply kit, and place them in your car.
- **Dress appropriately**—layered clothing, long pants (preferably jeans), sturdy shoes (no sandals or flip flops), long sleeve cotton shirt (avoid synthetic fabrics, which are less resistant to heat and flames), head covering (cap or towel), dry bandanna or scarf to cover your mouth (do not wet the bandanna), and eye covering, such as goggles or glasses. Do not wet yourself down.
- **Immediately** leave your home or business.
- **Follow directions** from sheriff and fire department personnel.
- **Drive carefully** at a safe speed with your headlights on.
- **Never park** or leave your vehicle in a traffic lane or safety area.
- **Keep pets** in carriers or on leashes.
- **Stay calm** and head to an appropriate evacuation location that you previously identified in your Family Emergency Plan.

HOSING YOUR ROOF DOESN'T HELP

Pre-wetting your home and surrounding areas will not improve the safety of your home due to rapid evaporation, and it wastes valuable water needed by firefighters.

EARTHQUAKE

It's important to have already rehearsed in your mind what you would do if an earthquake struck RIGHT NOW, right where you are! Do this at home and whenever you are out in public. Take a few seconds to size up your immediate surroundings and determine the best way to protect yourself if the building started shaking. Generally, that means drop, cover, and hold on right where you are. It can be very dangerous to move around or to attempt to get to a different location during the shaking. If you're inside a building, DO NOT run outside.

At home, identify sturdy furniture you can get under. In public stores or theaters, be aware of parts of the building or inventory that could fall on you, and scope out areas that can give you some protection.

WHEN AN EARTHQUAKE STRIKES

| IF YOU ARE... | DO THIS... |
|---------------------------------------|---|
| Indoors | Drop, cover, and hold on. Take cover under a sturdy table or desk. If a table isn't available, drop to the floor against an interior wall, away from windows or objects that could fall, and protect your head. Do not run out of the building! |
| In Bed | Generally, stay in bed, roll onto your stomach, and protect your head with a pillow. Hold on to the bed. Always put on shoes before getting out of bed after the shaking stops to avoid stepping on broken glass. |
| In a Wheelchair | Get to a safe position in the room and lock the wheels. Cover your head and neck with your arms. If unable to move quickly, stay where you are and protect your head. |
| Outdoors | Move away from buildings to a clear area if you can safely do so. Avoid power lines, trees, signs, vehicles, or anything that could fall onto or move into you. |
| Driving or Riding in a Vehicle | Pull to the side of the road safely, turn off the car, and set the parking brake. Avoid stopping under overpasses, bridges, or other falling hazards. Stay in the vehicle until the shaking stops. If power lines come down on or near your vehicle, stay inside until a professional first responder says it's safe to move. |

After the Shaking Stops

- Stay calm. Aftershocks can be frequent and may cause additional damage, so be prepared to drop, cover, and hold on, at any time.
- Check yourself and those around you for injuries.
- If there is a significant fire, get away immediately and call 911. If it's just a small spot fire, try to put it out with a fire extinguisher.
- Check for damage, such as gas and water leaks, broken electrical wiring, cracks in the wall, and loose items that could fall in an aftershock. Turn off utilities if you suspect a problem. Unplug damaged electrical appliances.
- Use extreme caution in cleaning up liquid spills. Many household cleaning agents can be toxic when mixed.
- Once you've taken care of yourself and your family, check on your neighbors. Avoid downed power lines. Don't enter buildings that appear damaged.
- Do not use your vehicle except in case of emergency.
- Do not use the telephone unless there is a life-threatening emergency. This helps to keep phone lines open for emergency response requests.
- Turn on your emergency radio to listen for news reports. Follow your Family Emergency Plan.

"TRIANGLE OF LIFE" ROUNDLY DEBUNKED

If you see an email chain letter advocating the Triangle of Life as an earthquake response strategy, ignore it. The concept was based on incorrect assumptions and faulty experiments about how most buildings in California will behave in an earthquake. "Drop, cover, and hold on" is the best way to lower your risk of being killed or injured during an earthquake.

RESOURCES: For more information and tips, visit these websites:

www.dropcoverandholdon.org

www.shakeout.org

www.earthquakeauthority.com





Massive rains flooded Paradise Lane in 1980.

THE "S CURVES," 1980

Torrential rains washed out Topanga Canyon Blvd. in many places and damaged the water main. Afterward, the roadway was "hardened" by building retaining walls and fortifying the banks with boulders and Shotcrete. Repairs took over one year, forcing residents to take circuitous detours to get in and out of town.




FLOODS, SLIDES, AND STORMS

DURING THE STORM AND FLOODING

- Don't cross rapidly flowing streams. Stay on one side until the water recedes. Most streams in this area recede in a couple of hours once it stops raining.
- Don't drive through flooded intersections or flooded roadways, particularly when flooding signs are posted.
- During the storm, check drainage systems at your house and driveways to maintain a safe situation and to limit damage from backed-up water.
- Watch for signs of potential mudslides and adjust drainage to reduce the risk of mudslides.
- Keep family and animals inside and away from rapid water.
- If you notice a major mud slippage either above or below your house, move your family to a safe location, and notify your neighbors and County officials, as appropriate.

AFTER THE STORM

- Look for damage. Check hillsides for slope movement, and houses for settling and water damage.
- When driving, go slowly and be particularly alert as many roads may have mud, debris, holes, and washed-out areas.
- Bridges may be washed out and culverts overtopped. When you see water over a roadway, there is no way to see if the road underneath has been washed out or damaged. The water can be deeper and more powerful than you expect.
- Check with ladpw.org or tcep.org to find out what roads in Topanga, if any, have sustained damage.
- Logs, boulders, mud and other debris can create temporary dams, which can burst days after the rain has stopped.
- Remember, many mudslides occur as the soils dry, after an extended wet period.
- Winter is often the best time to plant slopes, so try to anticipate rainy seasons and fix problem areas before the rains come.



Survivors Carl and Jennifer Strom stand at the base of a mudslide. Surrounding them are thick-diameter rebars to keep concrete barriers in place, which prevent the mud from creeping out onto the busy street. During the storm, they watched in horror as the earth opened up in their front yard and the hillside started to move down.

IT DOES RAIN IN SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA
 Mother Nature dumped a record 64.82 inches of rain on the Robinson Road area of Topanga in 2004–2005. This topped the 55 inches that fell in both 1978 and 1998. Data kept by Lee Haines, founder of the Pierce College weather station in 1949, and augmented by Topanga residents in recent years, showed an average of 24.9 inches of rainfall in the canyon over the past 45 years.