

San Mateo County Fire Service POLICIES AND STANDARDS MANUAL

Title: Earthquake Intensity Reporting

Policy No. 2004-04

Adopted 12/13/04

Revised 09/27/06

Purpose: To establish a standard for reporting, gathering and disseminating the intensity of seismic activity allowing a rapid geographic assessment of damage.

Policy: It is the policy of the San Mateo County Fire Chiefs that PSC and operational Battalion Chiefs on duty during a seismic event will follow the procedures outlined in this policy for reporting earthquake events and intensity.

Background: Local damage reports subsequent to a seismic event supplement regional information provided by Cal-Tech, USGS, NWS or NAWAS and are necessary for successful management of immediate threats and short term planning.

Scope: This policy pertains to notification and dissemination of information known to Public Safety Communications regarding a local seismic event. Once notification has occurred, strategies used to manage these events are the discretion of the local agency and/or Fire Mutual Aid Coordinator, including when to stand down.

Procedure:

1. Notification criteria

- a. PSC shall initiate the Earthquake Intensity Reporting process when:
 - i. PSC experiences significant shaking due to presumed earthquake activity.
 - ii. A Chief Officer notifies PSC that his/her location has experienced an earthquake.
 - iii. PSC receives a report of a magnitude 4.0 or greater seismic event in the San Francisco Bay Area.

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2. Incident entry and broadcast

- a. Once notified of a seismic event, PSC shall:
 - i. Create a single CAD .
 - ii. Ring down all stations and broadcast pertinent details including preliminary earthquake magnitude, location, etc. and request an intensity rating from all Battalion Chiefs.

3. Information collection and dissemination

- a. Battalion Chiefs shall report damage to structures using the Earthquake Intensity Rating Level Scale for their immediate location to PSC within 5 minutes via radio (or telephone if radio communications is unavailable) to their Zone Dispatcher.

Level 0	Nothing felt
Level 1	Earthquake felt, no damage
Level 2	Items thrown from shelves, windows broken
Level 3	Block walls down
Level 4	Structures shifted off foundations
Level 5	Structural collapse

- b. PSC Dispatchers shall append the CAD incident with the Earthquake Intensity Rating as reported by each Battalion Chief.
- c. PSC will, upon receiving an Earthquake Intensity Report from all Battalions but no longer than 30 minutes, page the results to all logged on Fire personnel and equipment.