



EPH Summary and Mission

[Emergency Prep Help](#) (EPH) was formed in the summer of 2021 by three women over fifty, one of them a wildfire survivor. In addition to the three co-founders, the EPH team includes an Advisory Board and three dedicated volunteers. *Our mission is to educate and prepare as many seniors as possible for natural disasters and other emergencies.*

We have a unique and interactive two-part workshop, tailored to seniors. At the first session, participants receive an emergency go-bag containing basic supplies. Their homework for session two is to personalize their go-bags, fill out their emergency contact sheet, sign up for emergency alerts, and make a plan for evacuation. Those who bring their go-bag back, two weeks later, and show how they have personalized it, receive a special incentive gift (lantern, flashlight, multi-use utility tool, etc). This engages the seniors in the process of preparing and ensures they are able to carry their go-bags in an emergency.

Objectives

- Educate and prepare seniors for natural disasters and other emergencies.
- Increase awareness of seniors in the importance of *staying* prepared.
- Free up first responders to focus on other priorities during disasters.
- Strengthen community culture around working together on emergency preparedness.

Who We Serve

Currently serving seniors in Sonoma County, the majority being low income.

Program Implementation

- Deliver workshops at senior housing communities, senior centers, and other places seniors gather.
- Coordinate speakers from local agencies (such as Police and Fire Departments, City and County Emergency Services, American Red Cross, and Animal Services).
- Educate participants on:
 - preparing for potential hazards for their local area (including earthquakes, floods, wildfires, and heat waves)
 - planning for evacuations, including alternate evacuation routes
 - staying prepared for extended power outages
 - signing up for emergency alerts and staying informed during a disaster
 - caring for pets in disasters and emergencies

- Equip participants with emergency go-bags and walk them through personalizing their bags (medications, spare glasses/hearing aids, clothing, cell phone charger, batteries, etc.).
- Promote community-building to ensure the most vulnerable residents are taken into account. Suggest ways that seniors can cooperate to keep everyone safe, including buddy systems and sharing expensive equipment, such as generators.

Community Impact (from pilot workshops in Sep 2021, through Dec 2022)

- 311 seniors equipped with preparedness education and an emergency go-bag
- 28 workshop sessions given to 14 senior communities in Sonoma County:
 - [PEP Housing](#) (7)
 - [Village Network of Petaluma](#)
 - [Brookdale Paulin Creek](#) (2)
 - [Leisure Lake Village](#)
 - [Petaluma Estates](#)
 - [Burbank Housing](#)
 - Petaluma Senior Center
- Goal is to serve 700+ seniors in 2023. We are currently in the process of scheduling 16 senior communities throughout Sonoma County and plan on serving a total of 30 communities this year.

Current Funding Needs

- To continue this essential work, we will need to secure funding for capacity-building and sustainability – grant writer, part-time pay for 3 employees (currently all-volunteer staff), database, volunteer management, and marketing.
- Go-bag supplies, storage unit, website hosting, database, travel expenses.

Supplemental Information

- We first piloted our workshops in fall of 2021 with PEP Housing, raising funds through a GoFundMe page.
- After two successful pilots we researched avenues to obtain 501(c)(3) status and signed with Community Initiatives as our fiscal sponsor in January 2022.
- Our focus in 2022 was to refine our workshop content and format, network with senior housing communities and emergency services agencies, and present workshops.
- Recently, we have gained traction in securing in-kind and financial donations for the go-bag supplies from the housing properties we serve and from the Department of Emergency Services of Sonoma County.

Community Partners

- PEP Housing senior affordable housing communities
- Sonoma County Department of Emergency Management
- Petaluma Police and Fire Departments
- Santa Rosa Office of Emergency Services

- Santa Rosa Fire Department
- Windsor Police and Fire Departments
- American Red Cross
- Sonoma County COAD (Community Organizations Active in Disaster)
- Burbank housing communities
- Halter Project
- Rebuilding Together Petaluma
- Cool Petaluma

Community Initiatives

EPH is a fiscally sponsored project of [Community Initiatives](https://communityin.org/) (https://communityin.org/), a registered tax-exempt 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, EIN# 94-3255070. Community Initiatives acts as a thought-partner and provides professional services to nonprofit startups, established initiatives, networks, and collaborations. They sponsor projects for the benefit of communities in service to social change.