

What is the OES?

The OES is the Office of Emergency Services which is a State Level Emergency Response Organization. They are responsible for designing and defining a plan in the event of a major disaster.

On the heels of Katrina, we all saw the mass shelter and care that was required during a disaster of that magnitude. No one was prepared. The OES is developing a rapid care, mass evacuation and shelter plan for El Dorado County.

What is a VOAD?

Volunteer Organizations Assisting in Disaster. At all levels, our law enforcement, medical personnel and first responders realized through the experience of Katrina that local churches and civic organizations **MUST** play an important role in caring for our community before, during and after a major disaster. From planning to recovery, the need for our community to take an active role in a major disaster is great.

VOAD's are critical to the success of developing a plan for our community. The El Dorado County Sheriff's Office operates an Emergency Operations Center on Fair Lane in Placerville. They have asked the Faith Based Community to be a first responder to the mass care shelters in the event of an emergency as well as an active participant in developing a plan for our future.

We have begun the planning process to the extent that we know what the VOAD's will be responsible for. We will be serving the shelters, however that is needed. We will be assisting the first responders with food, clothing and other support services. We will be stationed at 'posts' according to geographic location and congregation size and capability. We will play an important part in the health of our community by providing spiritual support to traumatized families.

Your time commitment will be mostly up front until we have our plan in place and have practiced it in detail. You, as a team leader for your congregation will have the responsibility of completing approximately 15 hours of training through various disaster response organizations and will then be responsible to train your congregation.

René Evans of Emerging Hope Ministries of Green Valley Community Church has taken the lead to organize the Faith Based Community. We get to work together just as we did in response to the tragedy of Hurricane Katrina. Now, with your help, we can be prepared and as the OES likes to say, "Go ugly, early". Help us to serve our community as we embark upon a planning campaign complete with training for your individual congregations.

Let's help each other to help ourselves.