

# **CHAPTER 9**

## **EVACUATION PROPOSAL**

**COPYRIGHT 2008 TOM T. MOORE**

**Up to now, I've been giving suggestions for those of you that own some type of vehicle. But I realize that there are many people in the earthquake zones that do not own cars for one reason or another. What will become of those people? Will it be like the terrible scenes we saw in the aftermath of Katrina, when there was no transportation out of New Orleans and people were starving and even dying at the Superdome?**

**Or will it be like what happened in Houston and Galveston, Texas with Rita bearing down and there were 2.8 million people trying to flee simultaneously? I'm sure everyone saw the scenes on TV of freeways in gridlock heading north from the approaching hurricane.**

**So I'm directing this proposal mainly to the governors of the Pacific Coast states, especially California, due to its heavy concentration of population in metropolises of San Diego, Los Angeles, and San Francisco. The Pacific Coast will have a definite warning when the New Madrid Fault line gives way along with the rest of the Mississippi Valley. Instead of a simple 1% chance of this huge catastrophic event taking place, suddenly the odds will go up significantly—certainly over 50%-- I think most people will agree. So will these states be prepared to evacuate their citizens that do not wish to stay and take their chances, or will they have an immediate plan in effect to provide transportation for those who don't own a car or truck?**

**And how will they handle the situation when I fly immediately to the west coast after the Mississippi Valley quakes and start having press conferences urging people to leave? How will they handle the huge increase in traffic heading east out of their cities, which I hope to achieve? Will it look like Houston, but worse because of the much larger population?**

**So what I'm proposing is to have a "worse-case scenario" plan in place that can be instantly activated. Take a page from Texas' much improved evacuation plan. The Texas Governor, in preparing for the possibility of Hurricane Dean striking the Texas Coast, declared the hurricane an "IMMINENT THREAT" which put into motion a number of plans. The state of Texas spent \$5 million preparing for the POSSIBILITY of a hurricane that struck the Mexican Coast, instead of veering to the north to Texas. And state officials were quoted in the Fort Worth StarTelegram on August 23, 2007 as saying it was well worth the expense. They committed 4,500 troops from the National Guard and other military units, 80 military helicopters, 250 Game Wardens, eight ambulances and 3 helicopters with special medical**

capabilities. Additionally they had along evacuation routes Courtesy Patrol vehicles plus 200 electronic messages signs (English and Spanish), plus 1,100 commercial buses and 490 school buses were staged and ready to go.

Here are the plans that I think could work for the cities on the Pacific Coast that should be IMMEDIATELY put into effect if and when the Mississippi Valley earthquakes take place:

### WEST COAST DISASTER PLAN

1. Dispatch crews to sweep the shoulders of the major freeways of debris and other obstacles, so that they can be turned into “evacuation lanes” as the traffic increases;
2. Already have identified where all the school bus parking lots are located, so that the ones outside the damaged area could be immediately pressed into service to transport people walking out of isolated quake areas. NOTE: Know where the ignition keys are kept and ask the school districts to fill the gas tanks each night. You don’t want to have to worry about having to hot-wire the buses and then have no gas to get them to a pickup point. These buses will have to be refueled, so generators will be needed to run commandeered gas stations (under martial law);
3. Have a plan to put into motion the call-up of bus drivers who will immediately report to the various city, county and state bus staging areas and bus terminals;
4. Establish departure points where city, county, state and commercial buses will pick up those people wishing to leave the city. Some cities may already have evacuation locations in place in case of a strong, local earthquake, so it will only require immediately publicizing them;
5. Choose cities that are located far away from the earthquake zone to send these people to. For San Diego, it would be best to have the buses travel to Phoenix. For Los Angeles, Las Vegas would be the shortest distance. And for San Francisco, it’s more difficult, as Reno and Lake Tahoe will not be safe. The buses will have to travel farther to the east to be safe;
6. Work out agreements with these cities to house these people temporarily in various shelters, or provide them with hotel space if they wish to pay. Go even further establishing a working relationship with the city of Las Vegas, as it will become the headquarters for the relief effort. They have thousands of hotel rooms that will be able to house all the relief workers, plus an airport with hundreds of plane departures to ferry refugees to other parts of the country;
7. Establish a “contraflow” plan if one is not already in place. This allows both sides of freeways to be used for evacuation. Signs will need to be created to direct this contraflow of traffic. They should be blue and solar-powered as those used in Texas. Perhaps Texas could loan you theirs if the Pacific Coast states do not already have them;

8. Station the search-and-rescue teams outside those areas most susceptible to the collapse of land into the ocean and resulting “backlash” tsunamis. They can then be helicoptered to where they are most needed;
9. Put all National Guard units on alert. Station them far enough away so that they can work their way back towards the coast, either by trucks or helicopters. Equip the helicopters with loud speakers to communicate with trapped people on the freeways to direct them to the nearest shelters;
10. Alert all local fire and police departments to be disaster ready;
11. Ask motor fuel suppliers to immediately increase gasoline deliveries to the coastal area in anticipation of increased demand;
12. Set up a plan, if not already in place, to have fuel trucks stationed along the highways to help people who run out of gas;
13. Move water and food supplies away from the coastal areas. They will not be of use to anyone if they are swept away by tsunamis.
14. Notify the American Red Cross Service Areas to come to full alert and request that surrounding Service Areas do the same;
15. Have portable broadcast transmitters and generators that can be airlifted into all the areas with no radio communication—which will be every earthquake zone. The people will need information and there will not be any radio or TV broadcasters on the air;
16. This is **THE MOST IMPORTANT SUGGESTION!** Establish food and water supply stations or dumps every five miles on the major highways heading east out of the cities. These supply stations can be stocked with simple MRE’s so no cooking is required (please include baby formula and pet food), and can be staffed with just a couple of people plus National Guardsmen or police to prevent theft.

They should have enough food and water for seven days for thousands of people—not only those blocked on the freeways because of overpass collapses and giant cracks in the freeway—but also for the surrounding area for each station, as supermarkets and other food facilities may be destroyed. Perhaps you can work with the military to transfer a large supply of MRE’s on a “loan” basis that could be returned if not needed. These stations **MUST BE RESUPPLIED** at a minimum every six days, or as needed, to avoid desperate people over-running the guards for the last meals. People should be encouraged at these supply stations to park their cars on the side of the freeways and walk out to the next station and then the next until they reach a place where buses and trucks can pick them up to take them to regular shelters. It will take too long to repair the freeways sufficiently to reach these people. Thousands of people can be saved from starvation with this plan in effect!

Of course, sometimes governments move at glacial speed, so it will help if you take the time to send emails asking for the above plan to be put into preparation, “just in case.” It’s best if you make it personal, as you live there. Here are the email

addresses of the governors, plus mailing addresses if you do not have access to email:

- California:** [governor@governor.ca.gov](mailto:governor@governor.ca.gov)  
State Capitol Bldg.  
Sacramento, CA 95814
- Oregon:** [http://www.oregon.gov/Gov/contact\\_us.shtml](http://www.oregon.gov/Gov/contact_us.shtml)  
(Enter this web address and fill out the form and send)  
160 State Capitol  
900 Court Street  
Salem, Oregon 97301-4047
- Washington:** <http://www.governor.wa.gov/contact/>  
(Enter this web address and fill out the form and send)  
Office of the Governor  
P.O. Box 40002  
Olympia, WA 98504-0002
- Alaska:** <http://www.gov.state.ak.us/govmail.php>  
(Enter this web address and fill out the form and send)  
550 West 7th Avenue, Suite 1700  
Anchorage, AK 99501
- British Columbia:** [GHInfo@gov.bc.ca](mailto:GHInfo@gov.bc.ca)  
Lieutenant Governor  
1401 Rockland Avenue  
Victoria, British Columbia  
Canada  
V8S 1V9

Now I haven't forgotten those of you that live in the Mississippi Valley, but the fact is you're not going to have the advance warning that those who live on the Pacific Coast will have. The best plan for you is to leave the endangered cities in whatever manner you can. It will be very difficult to convince your government officials to adopt more wide-ranging disaster plans than are already in place. But you can try based on having more extensive disaster plans for tornadoes and floods.

Certainly, some of the above suggestions could be implemented after the earthquakes strike, such as the buses being deployed to get as close as possible to the disaster areas to take those who are able to walk out onto safety. And you can ask your government officials if there are agreements in place with other cities to shelter refugees in case of catastrophic flooding. I seriously doubt that there would be any plans at all to handle earthquake victims. What about rescue training of your fire and police departments? Could it be expanded to more units?

Everyone should demand that their governments are as ready as possible for disaster, and this one is going to be the mother of all disasters, I can assure you. But as Gaia says, our people are resilient, and we'll somehow make it through what's before us.

#####