



Item No. 4 Town of Atherton

CITY COUNCIL STAFF REPORT – STUDY SESSION AGENDA

TO: HONORABLE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL
GEORGE RODERICKS, CITY MANAGER

FROM: STEVE MCCULLEY, CHIEF OF POLICE

DATE: FEBRUARY 2, 2022

SUBJECT: AFTER-ACTION REPORT ON THE ATHERTON DISASTER AND PREPAREDNESS (ADAPT) COMMUNITY COMMUNICATIONS DRILL

RECOMMENDATION

Review the After-Action Report and provide staff with feedback for planned next steps.

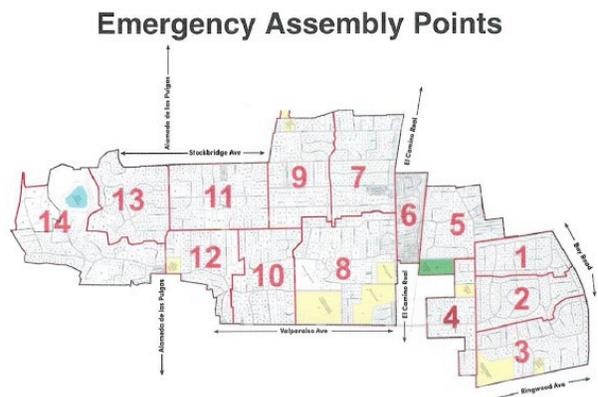
BACKGROUND

On November 20, 2021, the Town hosted a Communications Drill with ADAPT. The Drill was designed to engage all fourteen (14) Assembly Points in partnership with the Police Department. Details of the Drill synopsis and observations are included in the attached After Action Report from the Police Department.

The purpose of the Drill was to test the communications network capability of ADAPT and their subsequent communication with the Police Department and Emergency Operations Center (EOC) in the event of a localized disaster or emergency. The Drill tested communication via HAM radio, cell phones, family radio service (FRS) handheld radios, general mobile radio service (GMRS) handheld radios, and runners on foot or bicycle.

To assist with disaster response and communication with neighborhoods, Atherton is divided into 14 areas to facilitate emergency preparedness and response at the neighborhood level. Each area has its own Area Number, a volunteer leader (Area Coordinator), and a pre-assigned gathering spot (Emergency Assembly Point).

For additional details refer to the attached map of the ADAPT Areas.



When disaster strikes, establishing communication with local neighborhoods is a critical component of ensuring that limited first response resources are properly prioritized and distributed. “Get Ready Now” emphasizes that residents will need to be responsible for themselves and their families for up to 5 to 7 days.

Use of an Emergency Assembly Point (EAP) is a well-developed and well-known Federal Emergency Response Agency (FEMA) disaster management tool for communities and neighborhoods. Much like a designated assembly area at a school where children gather outside during a fire drill, EAP’s provide a convenient avenue to facilitate neighbors helping neighbors in a major emergency. In the event of a widespread emergency or disaster, residents should go to their Emergency Assembly Point in an emergency, after making sure that their household members are safe and secure, to request assistance if help is needed or to help others in need.

For details refer to the attached list of the ADAPT EAP locations.

DISCUSSION

During a disaster or large-scale emergency communications at all levels is critical for life safety and disaster resource management. The number one consistent complaint and critique after a large-scale disaster is the lack of notification and communication from emergency response personnel to members of the public.

To prepare and test emergency communications during a disaster or large-scale emergency, routine community wide communication drills, with groups like ADAPT, need to be conducted. Various communication methods need to be tested, including but not limited to landline telephones, cellular telephones, HAM radios, FRS or GMRS handheld radios, cellular phone mesh technology, and runners on foot or bicycle.

In the event of limited landline access and cellular phone systems becoming unreliable or inoperable, HAM radio is a proven effective long distance emergency communications method worldwide. Currently, HAM radio capability within ADAPT is limited and should be increased.

As a backup plan, the San Mateo South County Amateur Radio Emergency Services group, which operates under the San Mateo County Sheriff’s Office of Emergency Services Ham Radio Frequency Plan, can provide emergency HAM radio assistance to ADAPT and the Police Department. However, availability of this group during a countywide disaster may be limited.

FRS and GMRS handheld radios are an inexpensive and effective short-range method of communications between ADAPT area coordinator, block coordinators, and residents of the ADAPT areas. GMRS radios have better range and capabilities than the FRS radios. Because of this, it is recommended that GMRS radios be the identified platform for APADT members and the recommended radio for residents to purchase and use.

There are also technology solutions available that work with existing smartphones to communicate when you have no cellular Wi-Fi service. The technology allows you talk, text, use maps, and

share location to other users within range when you have no cellular service. These devices can also be used as a backup battery for your smartphone. Depending on terrain, the push to talk range is up to 5 miles and the range for texting is up to 10 miles. Testing of these devices will help to determine if they would be a viable alternative to HAM radio communications.

Town News Flashes and the San Mateo County Emergency Alert Systems are also an excellent method to make advance emergency notifications to our residents. However, these systems are often dependent on internet, cellular, and landline services. Continued community outreach and education needs to be conducted to encourage residents to sign up to receive Newsflashes and County alerts.

Staff recommends the following as next steps.

- ADAPT Community Communication Drills should be conducted on an annual basis.
- Communication Drills should be conducted in July/August in preparation for the annual ADAPT emergency drill held in September.
- Increase ADAPT HAM Radio Communications (base station and handheld radios) capability in the 14 identified ADAPT areas.
- Establish General Mobile Radio Service (GMRS) handheld radios as the standard for non-HAM radio communications between ADAPT members during emergencies and drills.
- During emergencies and Emergency Operations Center (EOC) exercises, ensure EOC is staffed with an ADAPT lead HAM radio operator and ensure ADAPT NETWORK (NET) Control is activated.
- Purchase one satellite (SAT) phone for emergency communications during EOC activations.
- Purchase and test cellular phone mesh communications equipment.
- Continue community outreach efforts encouraging residents to sign up for Atherton News Flashes and San Mateo County Emergency alert information. Community outreach efforts would also include educating residents to “Get Rady” to be on their own for 5 to 7 days.

POLICY ISSUES

The improvement of emergency notification and communications within the ADAPT group and to all of our residents in the event of a disaster or large-scale emergency will greatly improve readiness and support the response of emergency responders. Continue efforts on this important initiative will improve safety, security, and assist in the reduction of fatalities and injuries.

FISCAL IMPACT

At this time, it is difficult to determine the level of fiscal impact of the listed recommendations; however, it is anticipated the fiscal impact would be minimal.

GOAL ALIGNMENT

This Report and its contents are in alignment with the following Council Policy Goals:

- Goal G - Emergency Preparedness – Be Prepared

PUBLIC NOTICE

Public notification was achieved by posting the agenda, with this agenda item being listed, at least 72 hours prior to the meeting in print and electronically. Information about this item is also disseminated via the Town’s electronic News Flash and Atherton Online. There are approximately 1,200 subscribers to the Town’s electronic News Flash publications. Subscribers include residents as well as stakeholders – to include, but be not limited to, media outlets, school districts, Menlo Park Fire District, service provides (water, power, and sewer), and regional elected officials.

COMMISSION/COMMITTEE FEEDBACK/REFERRAL

This item ___ has or X has not been before a Town Committee or Commission.

- Audit/Finance Committee (meets every other month)
- Bicycle/Pedestrian Committee (meets as needed)
- Environmental Programs Committee (meets every other month)
- Park and Recreation Committee (meets each month)
- Planning Commission (meets each month)
- Rail Committee (meets every other month)
- Transportation Committee (meets every other month)

ATTACHMENTS

- A. After Action Report ADAPT Community Communications Drill
- B. ADAPT Areas and Emergency Assembly Points



ATHERTON POLICE DEPARTMENT

Memo

To: Chief McCulley and Commander Larsen

From: Sergeant Fong

Date: 12/04/21

Subject: After Action Report for ADAPT Communications Drill on 11/20/21

SYNOPSIS OF EVENT

ADAPT and APD performed a communications drill to test the communication links from ADAPT members in the field to ADAPT's Net Control, then from Net Control over to APD and a simulated EOC at the town. The drill occurred over about a 2 hour time span. Each of the 14 areas districts reported multiple incidents to Net Control. Net Control logged these incidents and forwarded them to APD and a simulated town EOC. Net Control and the simulated EOC was set up at the old PD on Ashfield.

OBSERVATIONS

The volunteers who were available and participated were fantastic! Net control was handled very well.

There is a need for more ADAPT volunteers to engage and participate in these exercises. There were not enough members to be able to staff all 14 areas. There were not enough volunteers to test FRS radios to relay information to the Area Coordinators in many of the areas. Some volunteers had to radio in for multiple areas, sometime 2 to 3 areas.

It appears that some of the Area Coordinators are not Ham Radio certified, and not all of the areas have a Ham Radio operator or radio. Ham radio coverage had been tested previously from all 14 areas. FRS radios are not standardized, and possibly have limited range.

The EOC was set up at the old PD. In the near future, the Ham Radio antenna will be re-located to the new PD building where the town EOC would be set up.

Cell phones were also used as a backup, and also because we did not have enough Ham radio operators. Although convenient, cell phones should be used as a last resort in training. If you can do it via radio, you can do it by phone but not necessarily vice versa. It is also unknown if cell phone towers would be available in an actual disaster response.

EQUIPMENT RECOMMENDATIONS

Equipment

FRS Radios - For uniformity and maximizing the interconnectivity and range of the FRS radios, I think some research should be done on which ones work well and purchase all of the same ones. They can be assigned out to Area Coordinators and a sign out sheet can be maintained so that we know where all the radios are at.

Ham Radios – ADAPT has a recommendation for which handheld Ham radio they prefer. I think the handhelds worked decent with a few areas needing their messages to be relayed by a mid point. For some of the areas that are further, we may want to consider a stronger radio than a handheld for a direct communication link. After we set up the Ham radio antenna at our new station, we should conduct a test from the 14 areas again with both a handheld and a stronger radio. Perhaps we could have communication kits that are assigned to each Area Coordinator that includes a Ham radio and multiple FRS radios in a hard waterproof case with a sign out sheet for the cases to the Area Coordinators and in each case a sign out sheet for each individual FRS radio.

APD Ham Radio Antenna – Recommend moving the antenna to a point that is as high as feasible and have an antenna connection available for Net Control at or near the EOC for use at our next drill or communications test.

TRAINING/RECOMMENDATIONS

If possible, it would be great to host our own Ham Radio certificate training to ADAPT members who are interested in becoming operators. Another communications drill should also be conducted after our new town EOC is set up.

Once the new location for the Ham radio antenna is set up, we should conduct a test of handheld and more powerful Ham radios from all 14 areas.

This drill was a baseline to plan future trainings. I think the next drill should be almost identical to obtain another baseline in our new EOC and building with equipment that we feel we will be using. This drill incorporated, where possible, the use of FRS radios to communicate to the Area Coordinator. The Ham radio was utilized to communicate to Net Control. Net Control in turn provided information to the PD and EOC. The next drill we should invite MPFD to be a part of the unified command/EOC. We should also provide communications back through Net Control to the Area Coordinators when more details are needed from the events that are being reported. It would be beneficial for the Net Control operators to do a sit along or ride along with APD so that they can gain a better understanding of the details we need for call response. This will help in

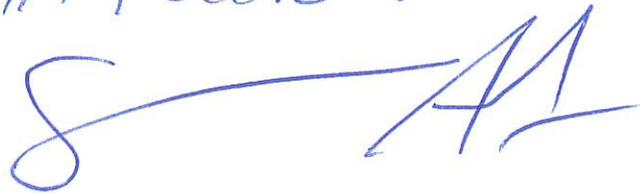
them asking the right questions at the initial report of an incident rather than trying to obtain additional information at a later time.

ATTACHMENTS

- Communications Drill Summary by ADAPT
- After Action comments from participants: Prussing, Grant and Hawkins-Maneulian
- Participant List
- Newflash re: Communications drill

12-21-2021

Reviewed & approved.
will make my recommendations
to Mr. Rederick

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of a large, stylized 'S' followed by a horizontal line and the letters 'AA'.

**ADAPT-APD Atherton Communications Drill – November 20, 2021
 Town of Atherton (TOA) Emergency Operations Center (EOC)
 ADAPT Net and Cell Phone Controls
 ADAPT Area/Neighborhood/Block Coordinators
 08:00 AM to 11:23 AM**

- 26 participants
- 3 APD – chief, commander, sergeant
- 2 TOA council members
- 1 Net Controller
- 20 ADAPTers

- 37 reported incidents in 52 minutes Script #1 (9:00 – 9:52)
- 37 reported incident vetting (APD and APAPT Net Control (9:52 – 10:01)
- 41 reported incidents in 26 minutes Script #2 (10:01 – 10:37)
- 41 reported incident vetting (APD and APAPT Net Control (10:37 – 10:50)
- 78 reported incidents in 88 minutes
- 78 reported incidents vetted in 22 minutes
- 78 reported incidents and vetting in 110 minutes (1 hour 50 minutes)

Area Incident Reports	Total	Script #1	Script #2
Casualties	15	6	9
Auto Accidents	14	9	5
Structure Collapse	9	5	4
Structure Smoke or Fire	17	8	9
Power Poles	10	3	7
Treefall Impacting Access/Egress	2	1	1
Gas Leak	9	4	5
Infrastructure – Train Chemical Fire	1	0	1
Infrastructure – Bear Gulch Dam Leak	1	1	0
	78	37	41

Organization

- TOA EOC
 - Chief
 - Commander
 - Sergeant
 - Council Members (2)
- ADAPT Net Control (Ham Radio)
 - Net Controller, Net Scribe, Net Runner
- ADAPT Cell Phone Net Control
 - Cell Phone Controller/Scribe, Cell Phone Runner
- Area Coordinators Reporting Solo
 - 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14
- Area Coordinators with Neighborhood/Block Coordinators Reporting
 - 6, 7

TOA EOC Communications Process

TOA EOC Opened and Setup	08:00
Net Control and Phone Net Control Activation	09:00
Script #1 Activation	
ADAPT Net Control (Ham Radio)	
ADAPT Phone Net Control (Cell Phone)	
APD Triage	
APD ADAPT Vetting	
Script #1 End	
Script #2 Activation	10:01
ADAPT Net Control (Ham Radio)	
ADAPT Phone Net Control (Cell Phone)	
APD Triage	
APD ADAPT Vetting	
Script #1 End	
Drill End	10:37
Drill After Action Review in TOA EOC	
Net Control and Phone Net Control Taken Down	
TOA EOC Closed	11:23

What we learned (preliminary):

Remove mask prior to communicating on radio or phone

Have spare set of ham radio batteries or phone charger with you

Communication improved by placing front of radio at 90° to your mouth

Ham radio communications sometimes required moving a few feet to clear up reception

Use 3X5 cards to bring information from net intake logs to APD for their triage

Adopt 3X5 card color coding to streamline APD triage:

 Pink – Code red injuries (casualties)

 Blue – Code red structural conditions (structural collapse, dense smoke, fire, gas leak)

 Green – Code red landscape situations (auto accidents, power poles, treefall impacting access/egress,

 Yellow – Code red infrastructure, utility other situations (train derailment, plane crash, Bear Gulch Dam breach, gas main explosion)

Periodic vetting of net intake log and APD 3X5 incident cards every 45 minutes; use this time to also conduct a net PAR (personal accountability report) or Welfare Check

When runner completes information transfer from net intake log to 3X5 card to be given to APD, the runner visibly confirms that the net scribe places a check on the net intake log

In the future ADAPT runner (or other) and ADAPT scribe will vet information transfer from net intake log to APD triage during the vetting period every 45 minutes

Field radio conditions varied greatly throughout Atherton

Additional observations, comments and recommendations will be collated and used to improve our ADAPT communications network going forward and be made available to participants, Town Council, Town Manager and the Atherton Police Chief.

Tom Prussing

The TOA EOC may need a situation board to track disaster event activity similar to that used by the Situation Unit in Atherton Community Emergency Drill

ADAPT Comm Team may want to conduct several neighborhood radio relays to test FRS ranges in various neighborhoods to improve block/neighborhood coordinator to the area coordinator

ADAPT Comm Team may want to revalidate ham radio range strength after the TOA EOC is completed and their equipment has been tested

ADAPT should consider incorporating the ADAPT Communications Drill into its "trifecta" of its preparedness and response training program along with the ADAPT First Aid Training and Certification, and the Atherton Community Emergency Drill.

Rebecca Grant

Passing along some of the feedback that I received via email/text from folks in the field (Susan Warren, Barbara Kostick, Aiden Jemelian, and Matt McWright)

- The transmission wasn't coming through at first, but after removing the antenna the ham radio worked perfectly.
- A few Block Coordinators drove with their FRS to determine the range of their walkie talkies.
- The FRS reception was as good as or better than ham.
- Could hear net control very clearly, but could not hear the other area reports well.
- Barbara and Susan were at the fire station; Mary Lou and Mat and Virginia Kiraly joined/stopped by.
- Overall it was a successful drill.
- Things went very smoothly.
- Suggestion: Provide Council with a report, including a budget for communication equipment.
- Suggestion: Have all those who communicated incidents email someone central what they had reported, so an audit of sorts could be done between what was captured at net control and what was reported out of the field.
- Suggestion: Practice with radios at our monthly meeting for 10 minutes so people can learn proper technique.
- Suggestion: Use 4x6 cards instead of 5x3 cards, and pre-mark them for the info required (Call sign:____)

Diana Hawkins-Manuelian

I spoke with Zack Whitman who told me that the city of Atherton passed out small emergency radios to the residents in the 1970?? (Zack, when was that?) Here is a photo of it below that he shared with me. Super interesting idea. I wonder what the 2021 version of this would be. Check it out.

Thanks for a thorough feedback and I'm really happy that you and a group did the FRS testing. Would be great to chat further into the details of the testing, etc.

It is a goal to have cohesive neighborhood groups all over Atherton and those groups/pods/nodes can/should have their own, hyper local, EAP and FRS radio "group". In the

2 hours I spent on Isabella at Spencer I met 4 different neighbors of the area, all now further interested in A.D.A.P.T. and completely understood the value of FRS vis a vi amateur radio and how they could use it to check on each other and work together in their smaller area. Perfect! As for use of phonetic "jargon" etc... Not needed. There is a reason and the ham folks are aware and can use where helpful. It is *not* a requirement or pre-requisite, especially in the neighborhood/EAP level, these folks know each other by name. (e.g. "Hey Tom, It's Diana, I see some smoke on Shearer, I'm going to walk down and get a closer look" Then maybe, like the drill, "building collapse, gas line ruptured and fire from break" "Thanks Diana, I'll get on ham and relay to APS/EOC". Thus, plain English is fine and neighbors are helping neighbors. This was a good baseline for the Town/PD and A.D.A.P.T. I too am looking forward to the "After Action Report" and building upon this success. Thanks again for the feedback and I'm looking forward to getting together when our schedules allow.

Name	Phone	Email	Address	Area	Bck Up	Bck Up	Bck Up	Bck Ham Radio	Call Sign
Jemelian Aiden	650 862 3426	aidenjem@gmail.com	297 Catalpa Drive	1	2	3	5	Radio	KK6VTV
Jemelian Paul	650 322 0441	jemelian@sbcglobal.net	297 Catalpa Drive	1				Radio	
Prussing Thomas	650 996 0572	tprussing@gmail.com	194 Ravenswood Avenue	4	13	14		Radio	KG6SVB
Widmer Bill	650 400 9898	bwidmer@ci.atherton.ca.us	159 Glenwood Avenue	4	TOA EOC - Town Council				
MccCulley Steve	425 681 3857	smcculley@ci.atherton.ca.us	Chief Atherton PD	5	TOA EOC				
Fong Jon	415 518 6497	jfong@ci.atherton.ca.us	Sergeant Atherton PD	6	TOA EOC				
Hodnett Joan	650 861 0757 650 366 9714	rhodnett@alumni.rice.edu	32 Belleau Avenue	6				Radio	KI6MQT
Larson Dan		dlarson@ci.atherton.ca.us	Commander Atherton PD	6	TOA EOC				
Lewis Elizabeth		elewis@ci.atherton.ca.us	99 Alejandra Ave	6	TOA EOC - Town Council				
Massey Judy	650 533 6377	judymassey2000@yahoo.com	7 Lloyd Drive	6	Phone Net Controller/Scribe				
H-Dan Diana	415 640 1823	drdianahawkins@gmail.com	89 Shearer	7				Radio	
Kostick Barbara	602 277 2041	drbarb@kostickfam.com	90 Selby Lane	7					
Robertson Julie	571 421 7419	julieann.rob@gmail.com	57 Middlegate Street	7					
Warren Richard	650 867 3994	franwarr102r@gmail.com	98 Adam Way	7					
Warren Susan	408 497 2420	susan.w.warren1952@gmail.com	98 Adam Way	7				Radio	KG6JVS
Whitman Zach	408 892 5917	z.whitman2@comcast.net	26 Selby Lane	7					
Brickley Stephen	650 867 7028	stephenbrickley1@gmail.com	191 Selby Lane	9				Radio	KO6OT
McWright Matt	650 504 6587	mmcwright@msn.com	250 Austin Avenue	9					
Schiavo Mary Lou	650 722 0266	mlschiavo@sbcglobal.net	134 Selby Lane	9					
Bramlett Lynne	(650) 380-3028	lyne.e.bramlett@gmail.com	1410 Mills Court	22	Net Control Runner				

Grant	Rebecca	415 601 8908	rgrant@yahoo.com	Sharon Heights	27	10	11	12	Phone NC Runner	KN6RFI
McClish	Robin	650 799 9935	shealsoresponds@gmail.com	Fair Oaks	45				Radio	
Mosby	Jon	650 867 8581	kf6rfq@arrl.net	Fair Oaks	45	NC Supervisor				KF6RFQ
Owen	Tom	650 796 6936	adaptvp@gmail.com	21 Stockbridge Avenue	8A				Radio	KG6DHD
Salser	Linda	650 353 6080	salsdots@gmail.com	Menlo Park	MP	NC Scribe				
St. Claire	Richard	650 274 3131	richard.stclaire@gmail.com	Burlingame	Burl	Net Controller				K6VJ



The Atherton Police Department and the Atherton Disaster and Preparedness Team (ADAPT) invite the community to come and observe a communications drill on Saturday, November 20th, from 9am-10:30am. Police personnel and ADAPT volunteers will be available to answer questions and discuss disaster/emergency response plans and procedures.

This communications drill is testing the communications network capability of ADAPT and their subsequent communication with the police department in the event of a disaster or emergency. When disaster strikes, communication with first responders is critical in order to prioritize the need for help with very limited resources. This serves as a great reminder to all to “Get Ready Now” and be prepared to take of yourself and your family and possibly be on your own for 5 to 7 days.

To assist with disaster response and communication, Atherton has been divided into 14 areas to facilitate emergency preparedness and response at the neighborhood level. Each area has its own Area Number, volunteer leader (Area Coordinator), and pre-assigned gathering spot (Emergency Assembly Point).

An Emergency Assembly Point (EAP) is a well-developed and well-known FEMA (Federal Emergency Response Agency) disaster management tool for communities and neighborhoods. Much like a designated assembly area at a school where children gather outside during a fire drill, EAP’s provide a convenient avenue to facilitate neighbors helping neighbors in a major emergency. In the event of a widespread emergency or disaster, residents should go to their Emergency Assembly Point in an emergency, after making sure that their household members are safe and secure, to request assistance if help is needed or to help others in need.

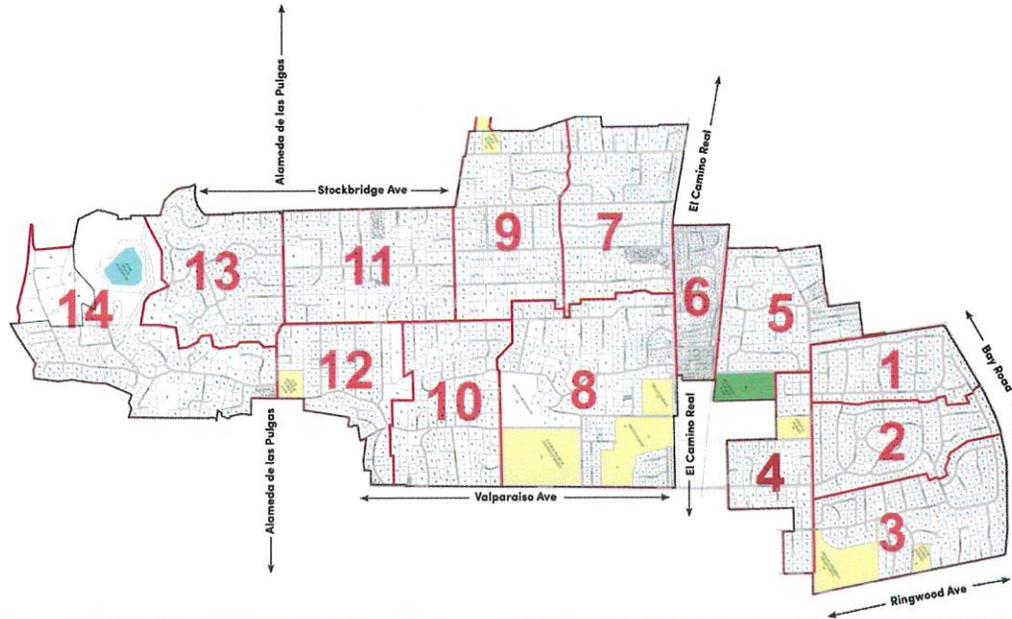
To find out what ADAPT area you live in, the location of your local EAP, and to learn more about disaster preparedness visit the ADAPT website at www.getreadyatherton.org

Although the drill will be Town wide, the main communication hub and command post for this drill will be at the former police department building located at 83 Ashfield Road. We will have donuts and coffee for all. We hope to see you there.

Date: Sat., 11/20/21



Emergency Assembly Points



Area #	Area Name	Emergency Assembly Points
1	West Lindenwood	1A: 227 Catalpa Dr 1B: 3 Irving Ave
2	Central Lindenwood	2A: 1 Larch Dr 2B: 117 Heather Dr
3	East Lindenwood	3A: 72 Manzanita Rd 3B: 11 Maple Leaf Way
4	Watkins/Ravenswood	64 Moulton Dr
5	Atherton Fair Oaks/MP Villa/Holbrook Park	To be determined
6	Lloyd Park/Atherton Station	6A: 32 Belleau Ave 6B: 50 Walnut Ave
7	Stockbridge/North of Austin	7A: 32 Almendral Ave (Fire Station 3) 7B: 98 Adam Way
8	Victoria Manor/Sacred Heart/Atherton Ave	8A: Across from 55 Victoria Dr 8B: Corner of Isabella and Spencer 8C: 61 Atherton Ave
9	Stockbridge/South of Austin	9A: 134 Selby Lane 9B: 202 Austin Ave
10	Faxon	43 Santiago Ave
11	Alameda/Polhemus/Selby	98 Parker Ave
12	Las Lomitas	26 Camino al Lago
13	Ridgeview/Stockbridge South	5 Ridge View Dr
14	Reservoir/Walsh Rd	Walsh and Reservoir (near 400 Walsh)