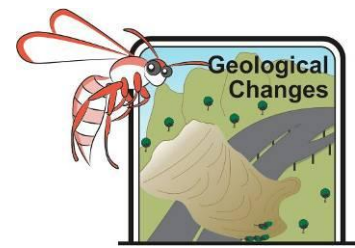


Prepare, Act, Survive – Teacher Notes



San Francisco - A case of poor planning

The western American city of San Francisco lies on a major transform fault line. One tectonic plate grinds its way north past another grinding south. Earthquakes are common. The city had a devastating earthquake in 1906. 3,000 people died and 80% of the city was destroyed. 90% of the damage was not caused by the ground shaking but by fires that followed the earthquake. There was no city plan for earthquakes and earthquake damage. Many of the houses were built of wood and were close together. Wood fires were used in kitchens for cooking and on this occasion breakfast fires spread quickly from collapsed houses to their neighbours. Some of the fires were also caused by untrained firemen using dynamite to bring down dangerous buildings. It is believed that many others were started by building owners in an attempt to get insurance compensation, as companies did not provide cover for earthquake damage. No one was prepared. No one knew what to do. People and trade moved elsewhere and it took years for the city to regain its infrastructure and status.

Being prepared is essential for survival.
In 1979 Jimmy Buffet sang:
"I don't know.
I don't know.
I don't know where I'm a gonna go
when the volcano blows."



We certainly have little chance of stopping natural disasters from happening but we can, with scientific research, understand what is happening and how to mitigate their outcomes.

Bushfire or fire caused by lightning strike - what can we do?

Bushfires are not uncommon in Western Australia. Country schools have established plans, which are known to staff and students. Recent hot summers have shown that suburban metropolitan schools can be threatened as well. Schools may wish to use the generic fire plans.

DFES suggests that we "**Prepare, Act and Survive**". Information can be found at:
<http://www.dfes.wa.gov.au/safetyinformation/fire/bushfire/Pages/default.aspx>

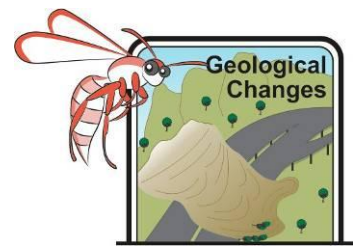
Your school has plans for how to act in case of any kind of fire.

1. **PREPARE**

What has already been **prepared** in case of a fire at your school?
Building with fire retardant materials, clearing flammable materials (scrub, rubbish, and leaves etc.) to form a firebreak, fire extinguishers/blankets, sprinklers and fire escapes. Staff and students informed of fire drill and "random" fire practices organized. Bushfire warnings noted and monitored. Designated wardens/monitors established.

How would you know there was a fire at your school? Bells, horns, whistle





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2. ACT

How should teachers and students act teachers and students be advised to do?

Don't panic. Switch off gas, leave everything, take students to fire assembly area in an orderly fashion, provide information on names of students present, contact fire brigade, school contact roll taken, inform brigade of location of fire and any dangers. Look after your mates and those less able than yourself.

3. Survive

What would be done if anyone had been hurt? Calm those panicking. Local first aid people alerted. School administration to call ambulance, contact parents and contact authorities.



What should those who have not been hurt do? Keep calm, follow directions and help if asked. What would happen if the building had been badly damaged? Will vary on location. Students are moved to another safer location. Usually parents are contacted and asked to take students home. Usually a temporary arrangement is made with nearby schools or local halls. Later demountable classrooms may be moved in.

Planning for natural disasters requires:

1. Understanding the cause of disaster events and whether it may occur locally.
2. Suggesting what may happen if the disaster occurs.
3. Suggesting what can be put in place before the disaster event to reduce damage during the event.
4. Informing and training personnel to act effectively.
5. Advising local people what to do during the event to keep their families as safe as possible.
6. Creating plans for rehabilitating the area and supporting displaced people in advance.

Natural Disasters

List five natural disasters you can think of below

Drought, bushfire, floods, cyclone or extreme storm, tsunami, earthquake and volcanic activity.