



Katie Lichtig, City Manager

**How Your City Can Survive and Thrive After a Disaster:**  
Successful Strategies from Real-World Experiences

July 20, 2016



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**Presentation Outline**

1. Managing the Emergency
2. Balancing Day to Day Operations
3. Working With Elected Officials & Other Agencies
4. Working with the Media
5. Sometimes You Just Get Lucky



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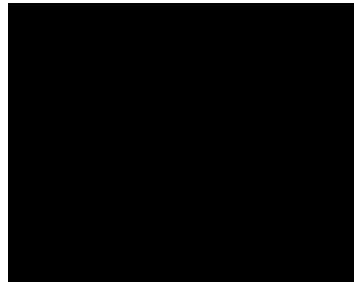
# Managing the Emergency

## 1994 Northridge Earthquake



### Quick Facts:

- Magnitude: 6.7
- 60 fatalities, 7k injured, 20k homeless
- 40k damaged buildings
- 7 collapsed freeway bridges, 212 damaged roadways
- \$13-20b in property damage



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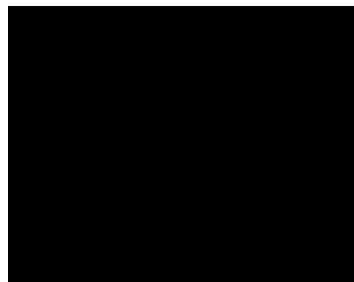
# Managing the Emergency

## City Manager/City Attorney Role

- **Declaring an Emergency**
  - City Attorney prepares documents to declare emergency
  - Works to prepare documents, declarations, meeting notices, convene Council when needed.
  - City Council affirms declaration
- **Emergency Ordinances**
  - Example: Curfew (*Northridge*)
  - Example: Prohibiting price gouging (*Northridge*)
  - City Attorney Role
    - Advises on reasonableness
    - Does the circumstance justify an emergency ordinance?
    - Affect citywide or smaller geographic region?
    - Should timeframes be established?



Katie Lichtig & President Bill Clinton – 05/20/1994



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## Managing the Emergency

### Fire Chief Callahan Sudden Passing

- Collapsed running to second based during softball game (City team)
- Passed away from heart attack

#### ■ Used Disaster Structure in Local Emergency

- Activated the Emergency Operations Center
- Authorization for City expenditures, made public purpose findings.
- City Attorney Role
  - Does the circumstance justify an emergency resolution?
  - Review policy to ensure proper use of City funds

#### ■ Large Scale Event (memorial)

- Outside agencies came to pay respects



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## Balance with Day to Day Operations

### Example: Keep services open? Or Repurpose?

- Santa Monica libraries (*Northridge Earthquake*)
  - No structural damage, only non-structural damage
  - Libraries could have continued typical operations
  - Layout of the space/functionality evaluated
  - Repurposed into call centers during the emergency



#### ■ Other Considerations

- Is Staff needed for other services?
- Is regular service safe to provide?
- Is regular service too much of a distraction?

#### ■ City Attorney Role

- Trusted advisor to City Manager
- Communicates through the CM/EOC Director
  - Attend EOC briefings
  - Advise CM and emergency response team on areas to consider/areas of concern



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## Working with Elected Officials/Other Agencies

## 2003 Malibu Fire (Pacific Fire)



### Quick Facts:

- Cause: Powerlines
- Acres Burned: 797
- 3 homes damaged, 100 threatened, 350 saved
- 56 Fire Agencies, 1,036 Firefighters, 5 Helicopters, 1 fixed wing plane



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## Working with Elected Officials/Other Agencies

### Role of Elected Officials:

- Spokesperson for Community
- Provide confidence to Community
- Provide elected officials with accurate information (keep them up to date)
- Provide defined role for effective communication
- Example: Malibu Mayor's question results in near relocation of emergency shelter



Coordination with the school district :

- Work with school Superintendent
- Are you planning to close schools?



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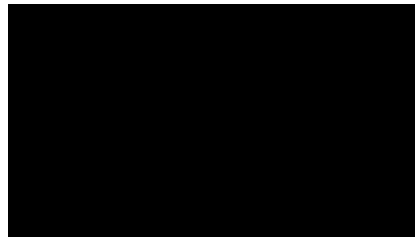
## Working with the Media

### Bomb Threat on City Bus



#### Quick Facts:

- Man declares there may be a bomb on City bus(s)
- All buses stopped/evacuated
- Cleared 500-foot radius around buses
- Buses checked by police/bomb dogs



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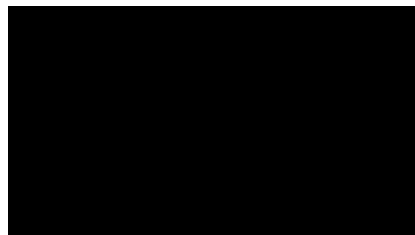
## Working with the Media

### Communication and Roles

- Learned of the threat from Cal Poly Police via student video
- Suspect informed reporter who then informed the police
- Work together, use media to broadcast accurate information
- Also, gather accurate information from the media

### City Manager/City Attorney Role

- How does this impact City Facilities?
  - Evacuated City Hall due to Bus Stop proximity
- Communication to the public
  - Press release, social media, Nixle
- Attorney involved in big picture briefings, not necessarily operational specifics
  - Ask questions when staff may be overlooking something



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## Sometimes You Just Get Lucky

### Champagne Tower

- Near collapse during Northridge Earthquake, severe structural damage
- Structural bracing after the earthquake held the building together
  - Shaking for 15 more seconds would have collapsed the building



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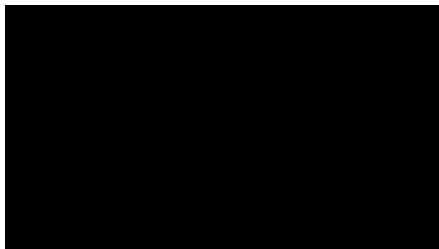
## Sometimes You Just Get Lucky

### St. Fratty's Day/St. Patty's Day

- City was prepared for event to happen Saturday night (prepared to deploy officers)
- Event happened 4:30am Saturday morning
- Lucky that no one was severely injured
- Lucky there wasn't civil unrest/riot

#### Quick Facts:

- Week before St. Patty's Day
- Large scale student planned event
- Thousands of attendees, numerous persons congregating on roofs
- Garage roof collapse
- 7 injured (hospitalized), minor injuries



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## Lessons Learned

### Make the call sooner rather than later

- Declare the local emergency or disaster, or don't.
- Request state and federal declarations also

### Start Documenting Costs

- Document costs right away for cost recovery
- Document with pictures and geo-locations as soon as possible
- *(Northridge)* Street cleanup without documentation of locations, time, or costs.

### City Attorney

- Keep hard copies of important documents
- Think ahead, what is the exit plan for the temporary situation? (e.g. Tent Cities)

### Remember:

- City Manager and City Attorney make a great team
- City Attorney can help communicate with/manage Council members



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## Thank You!



*Photo: City Attorney Christine Dietrick & City Manager Katie Lichtig*



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