



DEPARTMENT OF BUILDINGS  
EXECUTIVE OFFICES  
60 HUDSON STREET, NEW YORK, N.Y. 10013  
RUDOLPH J. RINALDI, Commissioner

STEWART D. OBRIEN  
Executive Deputy Commissioner  
(212) 312-8001

ISSUANCE # 397

---

OPERATIONS  
POLICY AND PROCEDURE NOTICE # 7/93

---

TO: Distribution

FROM: Stewart D. O'Brien

DATE: April 13, 1993

SUBJECT: Earthquake, Natural Disasters, & Other Civil  
Disorders Contingency Action Plan - General  
Guidelines

4/13/93 SDO

Supersedes: OPPN 4/91 (New items in bold)

Purpose:

To establish general guidelines for the Department of Buildings' response in the event of an earthquake, natural disaster, or **civil disorder**. The Department is responsible for determining the structural stability of buildings throughout the City. These procedures are to alert, coordinate and direct Department of Buildings personnel, as required, and are complimentary to those established by the Mayor's Emergency Control Board for the inter-agency City wide earthquake contingency plan and Office of **Emergency Management** in other instances.

Specifics:

Determination of Emergency:

The Commissioner (or designee if the Commissioner cannot be reached) will determine that an emergency situation exists. Upon such determination, the Executive Chief Inspector (or designee) will establish a command post, and then recall and deploy the inspectorial staff as necessary, as described below.

## ESTABLISHING A COMMAND POST AND RECALLING STAFF

### Work Hours:

The Executive Chief Inspector will establish a command post (60 Hudson Street, 14th floor or at Police Headquarters) and contact the Administrative Chief(s) in the affected borough(s). If they are in the field, inspectors will be contacted by beeper and called in to the borough office(s) to receive instructions. In the event that phone communication is unavailable, but the earthquake or natural disaster, or civil disorder is apparent, inspectors are to return to their borough office(s). If the inspectors cannot return to their office(s), they should report to the nearest borough office or to the command post whichever is closest. Communication among the boroughs will be maintained via the agency's walkie-talkies.

### After Hours and Weekends:

The Executive Chief Inspector will establish a command post (60 Hudson Street, 14th Floor or Police Headquarters or any available borough facility) as directed by the Commissioner, depending on the area(s) affected.

The Executive Chief Inspector will contact any necessary support staff, and the appropriate Administrative Chief inspector(s), who will be responsible for contacting the inspectorial staff. The Administrative Chiefs must have the home telephone numbers (and beeper numbers) of their inspectorial staff readily available at all times.

If telephone communication is unavailable, but the earthquake or natural disaster or civil disorder is apparent, inspectors are to report to their borough office. If that is impossible due to blocked roadways, traffic, etc, inspectors are to report to the nearest borough office or the Department's command post to receive instructions. Communication among the borough offices will be maintained via the agency's walkie-talkies.

### Deployment:

The Commissioner and the Executive Chief Inspector will determine the boroughs or areas that require deployment of inspectorial staff. The Executive Chief will mobilize personnel accordingly.

Inspectors will be assigned areas for stability checks. Working with registered architects and professional engineers, the inspectors will conduct building by building evaluations. The Executive Chief and Administrative Chief(s) will coordinate the pairing of inspectors with the architects and engineers. Inspectors will be performing inspections in conjunction with the activities of the Police Department, Fire Department and all other emergency services agencies.

Upon inspection, buildings will be designated as:

1. Inspected - No restriction on use or occupancy
2. Limited Entry - Only authorized personnel may enter
3. Unsafe - No entry or occupancy

Vacate procedures will commence for buildings in categories two and three. In the interim, adhesive-backed signs with the aforementioned designations will be available to the inspectors (at the borough office(s) or agency command post) and must be posted prominently near the main entrance of each building.

Buildings with limited entry or unsafe designations must have signs posted at any secondary entrances/exits. Inspectors must notify **the Police Department's local precinct** if a building is unsafe, and the area must be barricaded to protect the public.

When an inspector has completed evaluating the buildings in his or her survey area, he or she must contact the borough office or command station from which he or she was deployed for any additional information or instructions (unless he or she received contingency instructions prior to going into the field).

/yaj