



The Saratogian

Fall/Winter 2012

Saratoga Prepared

In the last century, the Saratoga community has been fortunate to escape the major damage caused by the 1906 San Francisco earthquake and the 1989 Loma Prieta earthquake, both of which measured approximately 7.0 in magnitude. Both quakes were caused by the San Andreas Fault, located just several miles away from Saratoga, underneath the Santa Cruz mountains.

According to the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS), most of the loss of life and property damage during the Loma Prieta earthquake resulted from strong ground shaking. Seismic activity reports produced during the Loma Prieta earthquake show that shaking is more violent around the Bay margins than areas located on bedrock and that failure of the ground, specifically during liquefaction, can be more hazardous than shaking because it cannot support the weight of man-made structures. Visit quake.abag.ca.gov/shaking/ for information about shaking hazards and locations where liquefaction may exist in the Bay Area.

Saratoga's close proximity to the San Andreas Fault and the liquefaction areas near the Saratoga Creek make it vulnerable to future earthquakes.

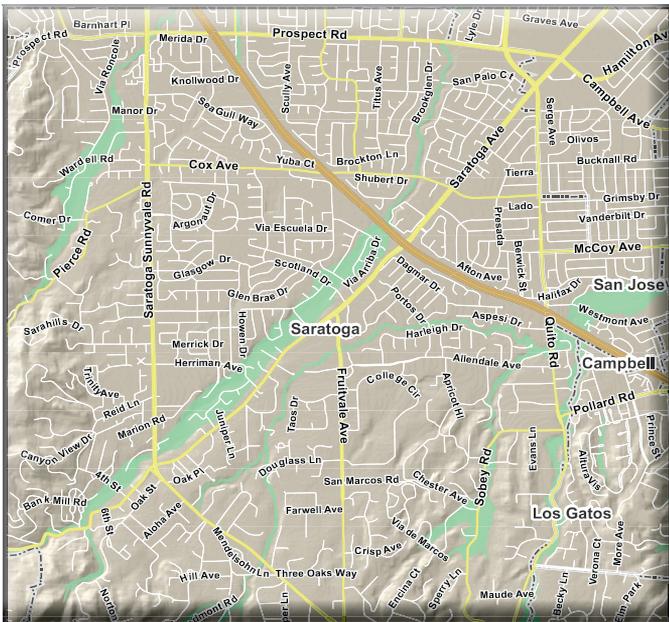


Unreinforced brick masonry building in downtown Los Gatos after Loma Prieta Earthquake

While generally unscathed by past shaking events, the City continues to proactively prepare for emergencies and natural hazards by maintaining emergency plans, providing current training for volunteer emergency responders, coordinating with the County of Santa Clara to keep residents informed, and updating the City's General Plan Safety Element.

As part of State law, each city in California is required to have a General Plan Safety Element, which identifies the potential natural hazards, vulnerable manmade structures, and gaps in processes and communication.

In May 2012, the City Council authorized staff to update Saratoga's General Plan Safety Element, created in 1987. The update will reflect current conditions in the City and meet State law requirements for Safety Elements. The update is funded by a state grant and the City will become eligible for additional grant funds related to emergency and disaster preparedness when the update is complete. The information in the Safety Element will help mitigate the severity of damage that could occur from major earthquakes and other natural hazards. For more information about the Safety Element, contact Crystal Morrow at ctclerk@saratoga.ca.us or (408) 868-1269.



Liquefaction Areas in Light Green

Community-Based Emergency Response

Saratoga residents have an opportunity to participate as emergency responders during disasters by either joining the local Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) or the Medical Reserve Corps (MRC). Both groups are part of the emergency response effort during a disaster.

- CERT members are residents with disaster preparedness and response training, such as fire safety, light search and rescue, team organization, and disaster medical operations. During a disaster, CERT members are trained to provide assistance when first responders are not immediately available. For more information, visit www.saratoga.ca.us/cert
- MRC members are comprised of medical and public health professionals such as physicians, nurses, pharmacists, dentists, veterinarians, and epidemiologists who donate their time and expertise to prepare for and respond to emergencies. MRC volunteers supplement existing emergency and public health resources. For more information, visit www.saratoga.ca.us/mrc

In the event of a disaster, both CERT and MRC members would be deployed simultaneously by the City's Emergency Operation Centers and would work together with the region's emergency management teams. If you are interested in becoming a CERT or MRC volunteer, please contact Jim Yoke, Saratoga's Emergency Services Coordinator at (408) 887-7818 or sccfd_esc@yahoo.com.



Sign-Up Today!

Nearly two years ago, Santa Clara County Fire launched the Alert Santa Clara County program or "AlertSCC," an emergency alert and warning system. AlertSCC allows the County to inform residents of large-scale emergencies, such as natural disasters, evacuations, public safety incidents, and post-disaster information about shelter, transportation, or available supplies.

To inform residents of emergencies, AlertSCC sends messages to home phones, mobile phones, personal digital assistants (PDA's), laptops, desktop computers, and TTY/TDD devices for the hearing impaired. Currently, there are only 1182 Saratoga residents participating in this program. The City encourages residents to register to ensure access to important information and any available resources during emergencies. Please visit www.alertscc.com to enter mobile phone numbers and email addresses.



Sample Text from AlertSCC

Change in Seasons, Change in Watering

The change in season brings with it shorter and cooler days, which eliminate the high watering rate that is usually maintained during the mid-summer season. The City encourages residents to adjust their automatic sprinkler and irrigation systems to help prevent pollution in the Saratoga creeks, while also reducing water bills.

When overwatering occurs, excess water will run off the property and into catch basins that drain directly into Saratoga's creeks. Yard runoff picks up fertilizer and pesticides before it flows into creeks, polluting creek water. The presence of fertilizer encourages algae growth, which consequently provides ample nourishment for bacteria. Algae and bacterial contamination transform the clear creek water into slimy and unhealthy water.

This was recently demonstrated by Sacred Heart 6th Grader, Alicia Marley with her first-place school science fair project that examined bacteria in creek water. Her research showed that bacteria in creek water increased as water flowed from the hills and through the developed, residential areas, where there is greater use of fertilizer.



For further information on preventing runoff pollution in local creeks, or for help with science fair projects related to creeks, contact West Valley Clean Water Program at info@cleancreeks.org or (408)354-5385.



Ask Our Staff

Have a question? Send your question(s) to mcabute@saratoga.ca.us or (408) 868-1275.

Dear City Staff,

I am interested in hosting a large community event to celebrate Veterans Day in Saratoga. Does the City provide any funding for community events?

Event Organizer Evelyn



Dear Evelyn,

Yes, in fact, the City has recently established a community event grant process for events in Saratoga. Visit www.saratoga.ca.us/services/communityeventgrant.asp for information on eligibility.

Crystal Morrow, City Clerk

Dear City Staff,

I would like to build a storage shed in my yard; where can I put it?

Shed Building Steve



Dear Steve,

Sheds less than 120 square feet in floor area do not need a permit. Sheds up to 8 feet tall and 250 square feet in floor area may be located no closer than eight feet from the rear property line. Taller and/or larger sheds must comply with standard building setbacks. Section 15-80 of the City code describes regulations regarding sheds and other accessory structures. The code is available online at www.saratoga.ca.us or at City Hall.

Cynthia McCormick, Planner

Upcoming Community Events

- | | | |
|--------------------|----------------------|---|
| • Sat., Aug. 11th | Wildwood Stock | 12 p.m. to 6 p.m. at Wildwood Park |
| • Sat., Aug. 25th | Let's Walk Saratoga | 9:30 a.m. at Montalvo |
| • Sun., Aug. 26th | Stride for Susie 5 K | 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. at Saratoga High School |
| • Sun., Sept. 16th | Celebrate Saratoga | 12 p.m. to 6 p.m. at the Village |

Coyotes in Saratoga

Being nestled in the foothills of the Santa Cruz mountains gives Saratoga residents the opportunity to share space with a variety of wildlife that thrive near mountains and creeks. Saratoga residents frequently see coyotes near the creek areas.

Coyotes are nocturnal animals and resemble medium-sized dogs. They have a reddish coat and a bushy tail with a black tip. The female coyote gives birth to pups in April or May with a litter of approximately six that stay in the den for 10 weeks. During this period, female coyotes may have an increased need for food. They may also exhibit more aggressive behavior if found near their den. Coyotes have solitary hunting habits, and mostly feed on rodents, vegetation, and insects. Coyotes are also opportunist eaters and thrive on food sources often found in residential areas including unsecured waste, rodents attracted to bird feeders, and pet food left outside. If you have a coyote encounter, remember the following:



Coyote Photo taken by Chris Alston of Saratoga

- Never feed or attempt to tame a coyote.
- Avoid direct eye contact.
- Do not turn your back or run from a coyote. Attempt to leave the area calmly.
- If followed by a coyote, make loud noises and make yourself look big. If this fails, throw rocks.
- Always keep yourself between the coyote and small children.

Did You Know?

- Many of Saratoga's roads and streets were built using rocks mined from the Congress Springs Quarry located off of Highway 9. The Quarry was recently purchased by the City from the County of Santa Clara for future recreational use.
- The City of Saratoga recently installed a total of five Electrical Vehicle (EV) charging units throughout the city. There are two dual chargers at the City Hall parking lot, one dual charger at the Saratoga Library parking lot, and two single EV chargers at the Village Parking District 3: one at 14493 Big Basin Way, and the other at 14413 Big Basin Way.



To learn more about *The Saratogan*, make comments, suggest story ideas, or include events in the Events section, contact Mainini Cabute at mcabute@saratoga.ca.us or (408) 868-1275. You can also find *The Saratogan* online and sign up for email alerts at www.saratoga.ca.us/saratogan.