



Conducting Effective Neighborhood Drills

What makes a drill effective?

A drill is a chance to test your plan. It's only as effective as the planning and training that happens beforehand. Some drills will be short and easy. Others will take teamwork to plan and more time to conduct.

It's not what we learned in kindergarten!

Most people think of drills as what they learned in school: drills happen without warning and if you don't do what you are told, you can get yelled at!

The philosophy of neighborhood disaster drills is not to catch people doing something wrong, but to give everyone the chance to do it right and succeed. With this approach, neighborhoods should plan on starting easy and building to more advanced drills as neighbors become more comfortable with their response plan. For this reason, this part of **PREP** includes different types of drills and different levels of difficulty. Each drill clearly identifies the objectives of the drill, what training should take place before the drill, how much time the drill will take, and an evaluation to identify what worked and what needs to be improved.

Types of drills

The easiest type of drill is called an **orientation drill**. The primary goal of this type of drill is to get people acquainted with the plan and the neighborhood.

Building from the orientation is the **tabletop drill**. This type of drill is designed to create dialogue and problem solving among the neighbors.

Next is the **functional drill**. Now we start getting into the action and response types of drills. These drills are designed to test one or two of the functions of your plan. You and your neighbors divide your response plan into pieces or tasks until everyone is comfortable with their role in the plan.

The final type of drill is a **full scale drill**. This is the granddaddy of all drills. It takes the most time to plan and can test the most parts of the neighborhood response plan at one time.

How do you decide what type of drill to use?

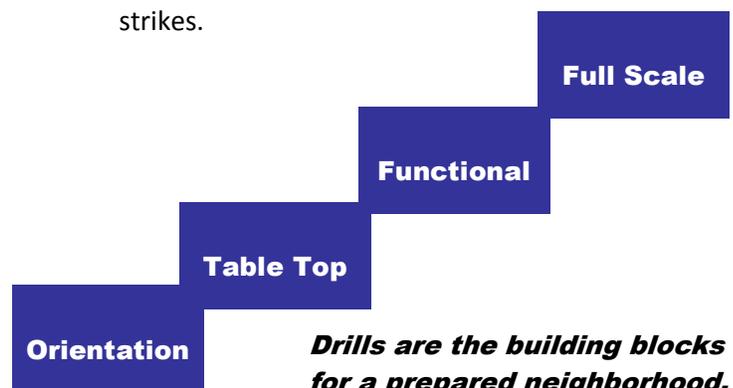
The type of drill will often be decided by the familiarity your neighborhood has with the plan and the time that can be given to designing and conducting the drill. The more complex the drill, the more time it takes to plan and the more time it takes to conduct. Most neighborhoods will have a full scale drill only once a year.

It's a good idea to bring your neighborhood group together every three months, to introduce any new neighbors, update information, and review your plan. Tabletop and orientation drills would be an excellent activity at one of these meetings.

Conduct a simple functional drill the quarter before you are having your full-scale drill. Conducting your full-scale drill will be a fun event that may take an hour or two. Many neighborhoods will add a social event such as a potluck to celebrate, or tie their drill in with "Neighborhood Night Out."

Just for fun!

Your Neighborhood Disaster Response Plan is a tool for organizing people and resources to help each other in disasters. But your disaster plan doesn't have to be just for disasters. You can use aspects of your plan for planning a holiday party, having a neighborhood garage sale and more. It's only limited by your creativity. The more you work together to accomplish goals, the better you and your neighbors will work together when disaster strikes.



Drills are the building blocks for a prepared neighborhood.