

A Message From the CEO

LAFD Leads Way to Disaster Preparation

by John Hawkins
President and CEO, The Club

The first in the country. Maybe even the world. And it was right here in the City of Los Angeles.

When I heard the sad news of the earthquake and nuclear power disaster in Japan in March, I couldn't help but think, how do you prepare for something like this? And then, in early May in Los Angeles, I watched the LAFD's Urban Search and Rescue Task Force 1 do exactly that, which we've chronicled in this month's cover story. According to LAFD Capt. Steve Hissong, this intense simulation was the first of its kind anywhere in the United States.

The planning for the LAFD's radiological disaster started way back in January, so there was no copycatting going on here. And it was smaller in scale than the Japan emergency mostly because it was an exercise, and the LAFD and the FEMA managers wanted to monitor everything carefully. They wanted to learn all that they could.

It was great to know how much the LAFD is preparing for just such an emergency.

Can you imagine wearing a jacket in 90-degree heat? Okay, then take it one step further – can you imagine wearing a plastic suit, sealed and covering your whole body? And then, can you imagine carrying around pounds and pounds of equipment at the same time? And crawling through some dangerous and dark areas? And then rescuing someone, and perhaps carrying them, too? Well, that's what these brave guys did during the exercise. They lasted 30 to 40 minutes. I'm not sure I would have lasted a quarter of that time. Maybe not even a tenth.



Club CEO John Hawkins talks to a member of the LAFD's California Task Force 1.

Here at the Club, we talk about celebrating the lives of City Employees. While we have fun every day, we take our motto very seriously. We celebrate everyone in the City, but it's at moments like this when I really think about what I'm seeing, that I'm really proud of what the City accomplishes. Nice going, guys. Glad you're on the job!

As this is June, that means there are a couple of things that end this month, and who doesn't need a final reminder! First is the open enrollment period for the Club's Long-Term Care insurance product for DWP employees. This is a great opportunity, Club Members, to be smart and forward-thinking. Who could take care of your medical expenses if you're debilitated in some way? Long-Term Care insurance is the answer. I recommend you step up and take advantage of this great chance now. It might not come back again for a long time.

And it's also the final month for applications to our annual Joannie Mukai Club Scholarships. We're very proud to help Club families with these stipends, in a time of escalating college expenses. Every year I'm amazed at the level of quality of our graduates. So get those applications in.

Finally, as I write this, it's nearly Memorial Day, and then after that, Father's Day. It's awesome how many of you sent in photos and greetings to honor your dads. They play such an important role in our lives! I'm a big fan of this feature every year, and I'm happy that so many others are, too.

Speaking of Memorial Day, it's time for me to head home, close the door behind me and have a relaxing weekend while I honor those we've lost in defense of this country. Let's keep them in mind as we begin our great summers ahead. See you next month!

JOHN

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Alive! Behind the Scenes

Club Photographer Tom Hawkins sets up at the busy simulation site for an overall shot of the main staging area.



Tom Hawkins, Club Photographer