

Homework Assignment (This assignment is due in one week.)

Find an article about an earthquake disaster that was published within the past five years. This article may be from the popular press, a book, a technical journal or magazine, the Internet or elsewhere. The only requirement is that the article be at least five pages long and about something that involves, or could involve, hazard management in relation to protection of life and/or property or recovery from the destructive effects of an earthquake disaster.

The article may be about a specific disaster (for example, structural failures that occurred in the 1994 Northridge Earthquake) or it may be generic to earthquake disasters (for example, strategies for prevention of structural earthquake damage).

1. Read the article and identify and summarize the important issues related to hazard management that are contained in the article. List things you believe you should know about or be able to do to resolve the issue, advise a client, rebuild a damaged area, or protect against losses in a future event, etc. In other words, how does the article relate to the subject matter in this course, which should prepare you to deal with as a hazard manager. Your summary should be approximately two pages.
2. Complete the following:
 - a. define the following terms:
 - hazard
 - disaster
 - emergency
 - b. Describe the difference between “earthquake hazard” and “earthquake disaster.” In the context of this class—earthquake hazard and emergency management— and the stated objectives of this course, what do these definitions mean?

Homework Assignment 1.1 (Answers)

1. Article – open ended
2. See following:
 - a) Definitions follow.
 - **Hazard** is defined as a rare or extreme event in the natural human environment that adversely affects human life, property, or activity to the extent of causing a disaster (UN, 1992). Hazards can be natural or human-induced.
 - **Disaster** is defined as a serious disruption of the functioning of society, causing widespread human, material, or environmental losses that exceed the ability of affected society to cope. (UN, 1992).
 - **Emergency** usually can encompass a more general period in which there is clear and marked deterioration in the coping abilities of a group or community, or coping abilities are only sustained by unusual initiative by the group or community or by external intervention
 - b) **An earthquake disaster** is defined as a catastrophic event resulting in significant loss of life, economic losses and disruption of community services for an extended period of time.

Remember, we should distinguish **earthquake hazard** from **earthquake disaster**-- the disaster stems from the fact that certain communities are settled in areas susceptible to earthquakes. Remember, the earth's processes are dynamic and have been occurring for millions of years, and we have located our built environment in harm's way. That is, the dynamic **earth is causing the "hazard"**, whereas **we (by our actions in terms of building practices, locations in seismic areas, etc.) are causing the "disaster."**