Santa Barbara County
PUBLIC Health
DEPARTMENT

INSERT YEAR
EXERCISE NAME
FACILITY/AGENCY NAME

TABLETOP EXERCISE GUIDE

CUSTOMIZING THE SITUATION MANUAL

Throughout the SitMan, there are opportunities for customization by jurisdiction/organization/facility planners. This document serves as a template guidance document. This SitMan, and particularly the objectives, schedule and selected questions should be modified to reflect the unique characteristics of your region and participants. Bracketed text (e.g., [your jurisdiction]) is provided to aid with location-specific customization. These should be removed or modified as appropriate prior to finalizing this document. Exercise planners can insert their customized language and then remove the highlight and brackets. After customizing the document, be sure to update the Table of Contents by right clicking on it and selecting "update field".

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1. After tailoring the document to your jurisdiction/organization/facility, be sure to update the Table of Contents by right clicking on it and selecting "update field."

EXERCISE OVERVIEW

Exercise Name	2018 Power Outage Tabletop
Exercise Date	**September 28, 2017**
Scope	This is a discussion based TTX planned for Facility Name to take place in Location of tabletop. The tabletop will involve administration, facility personnel, and the tabletop questions will cover activation of the Emergency Operations Plan and Power Loss Procedures.
Threat or Hazard	Long term power outage
Scenario	Insert scenario here
Objectives	▫ Exercise our facility's ability to provide essential care during a 72 hour power outage. ▫ Exercise our facility's ability to communicate with staff during a disaster with limited cell service.
Participating Organizations	Facility Name

SCENARIO

Date & Time Can be during the day or after hours

Details of power outage:
Impact: loss of power, generator (running/not running),

Sample Scenario:

GENERAL INFORMATION

EXERCISE OBJECTIVES AND CAPABILITIES

The exercise objectives in Table 1 describe expected outcomes for the Tabletop Exercise (TTX). The objectives and aligned capabilities are guided and selected by the Exercise Planning Team.

[Please insert the objectives that are most relevant and applicable to your agency/organization in Table 1. Example exercise objectives by facility type can be found in Appendix XXX.

Table 1. Exercise Objectives

Exercise Objective
[Insert Organization/Facility's selected objectives]
[Insert Organization/Facility's selected objectives]
[Insert Organization/Facility's selected objectives]
[Insert Organization/Facility's selected objectives]
[Insert Organization/Facility's selected objectives]
[Insert Organization/Facility's selected objectives]
[Insert Organization/Facility's selected objectives]
[Insert Organization/Facility's selected objectives]
[Insert Organization/Facility's selected objectives]
[Insert Organization/Facility's selected objectives]

PARTICIPANT ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

The term *participant* encompasses many groups of people, not just those playing in the exercise. Groups of participants, and their respective roles and responsibilities, are as follows:

- **Players.** Players are personnel who have an active role in discussing their regular roles and responsibilities during the exercise. Players discuss actions in response to the simulated emergency.

- **Observers.** Observers do not directly participate in the exercise. However, they may support the development of player responses to the situation during the discussion by asking relevant questions or providing subject matter expertise.

- **Facilitators.** Facilitators provide situation updates and moderate discussions. They also provide additional information or resolve questions as required. Key Exercise Planning Team members also may assist with facilitation as subject matter experts during the exercise.

- **Evaluators.** Evaluators are assigned to observe and document certain objectives during the exercise. Their primary role is to document player discussions, including how and if those discussions conform to plans, polices, and procedures.

- **Controllers.** Controllers may be used in a Tabletop Exercise (TTX) to plan and manage exercise play, set up and operate the site of the discussion, and possibly take the roles of individuals and agencies not participating in the TTX. Controllers direct the pace of exercise play, issue exercise materials to players as required, monitor the exercise timeline, and may prompt or initiate certain player discussions, potentially as described in the Master Scenario Events List (MSEL)[2] in order to ensure exercise continuity.

EXERCISE STRUCTURE

[The exercise follows the more common approach of discussion-based exercise design by dividing the participants into discipline-specific groups. Question sets have been developed with this structure in mind and are categorized by discipline. Exercise facilitators and planners are expected to carefully review the questions and tailor them to the experience and requirements of their exercise participants.]

[Exercise facilitators and planners are encouraged to utilize the Tabletop Exercise (TTX) as an opportunity to identify objectives to test during thefull scale exercise.]

The tabletop exercise will be a facilitated, discussion based exercise. Players will participate by discussing the following questions. You can break the discussion up into modules or sections such as the one listed below or you can create your own based on the objetives and questions you choose.

        Module 1: Incident Notification
        Module 2: Incident Response
        Module 3: Ongoing Operations

The exercise facilitator will engage participants in discussion of the issues, identifying strengths in planning and areas for collaboration or improvement. Questions are provided to stimulate discussions and review the issues identified by the objectives.

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EXERCISE ASSUMPTIONS AND ARTIFICIALITIES

In any exercise, assumptions and artificialities may be necessary to complete play in the time allotted and/or account for logistical limitations. Exercise participants should accept that assumptions and artificialities are inherent in any exercise, and should not allow these considerations to negatively impact their participation.

Assumptions constitute the implied factual foundation for the exercise and, as such, are assumed to be present before the exercise starts. The following assumptions and/or artificialities apply to the exercise:

- The exercise is conducted in a no fault learning environment wherein, plans, systems, and processes will be evaluated.
- The exercise scenario is plausible, and events occur as they are presented.
- Exercise simulation contains sufficient detail to allow players to react to information and situations as they are presented as if the simulated incident were real.
- Participating agencies may need to balance exercise play with real-world emergencies. Real-world emergencies take priority.
- Decisions are not precedent setting and may not reflect your organization's final position.
- Some time lapses may be artificially used to achieve the exercise objectives.
- Participants should use existing plans, policies, and procedures. If during the course of the Tabletop Exercise (TTX) there is a disagreement with existing plans, policies, and procedures, this should be noted, and should assess the need to change documents after the TTX.
- There are no "hidden agendas" or trick questions.
- All players receive information at the same time.
- Players do not need to call someone outside of the room during the exercise. If a player would normally contact an individual or department that is not represented at the TTX, they should tell the group what information they need, and who they would contact. This action should be noted.
- Include any additional assumptions/artificialities to be used in the exercise.

EXERCISE RULES

Exercise rules are provided to assure that your tabletop runs smoothly.

You want to provide a safe, open environment for participants to explore disaster response roles and responsibilities.

The following highlighted text are sample exercise ground rules. Read these and change them as appropriate for your facility or agency.

- This exercise will be held in an open, low stress, no fault environment. Varying viewpoints, even disagreements, are expected
- Respond to the scenario using your knowledge of current plans and procedures (i.e., you may use only existing assets) and insights derived from your training.

- Decisions are not precedent setting and may not reflect your organization's final position on a given issue. This exercise is an opportunity to discuss and present multiple options and possible solutions.

- Issue identification is not as valuable as suggestions and recommended actions that could improve mission area efforts. Problem solving efforts should be the focus.

- Keep the exercise's objectives in mind throughout the exercise.

- Treat the scenario incidents as real events and play your appropriate role.

- Participate openly and focus discussions on appropriate topics – asking questions, sharing thoughts, and offering forward looking, problem solving suggestions are strongly encouraged, as these will enhance the exercise experience.

- Keep your comments focused and consider time constraints.

- Respect the observations, opinions, and perspectives of others, as the discussions will explore a variety of policies, decisions, actions, and key relevant issues from different sources.

- Participate in discussions on the issues and procedures flowing from each move presented.

- Include any additional rules to be used in the exercise.

TABLETOP EXERCISE FORMS

- Scenario Summary
- After Action Report (AAR)
- Participant Feedback Form

- Objectives

PLANS & POLICIES ADDRESED

- Emergency Operations Plan
- Evacuation Policy and Procedure
- Power Outage Procedure
- Emergency Communication Plan

EXERCISE SCHEDULE

Note: Jurisdictions/Organizations/Facilities should fill in and adjust the following timeline, breaks, etc. This schedule is to give to staff.

TIME	ACTIVITY
[Month Day, Year]	
[0000]	Registration
[0000]	Welcome and Opening Remarks
[0000]	[Scenario and Additional Information] [Discussion]
[0000]	[Break]
[0000]	[Module 2: Day of the Incident - 30 Minutes] [Briefing, Plenary Discussion, and Report Out]
[0000]	[Lunch]
[0000]	[Module 3: Incident Update & Recovery - 30 Minutes] [Briefing, Plenary Discussion, and Report Out]
[0000]	[Break]
[0000]	[Hot Wash]
[0000]	[Closing Comments]

TABLETOP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Based on the information provided, exercise partners are directed to participate in a discussion concerning the key issues raised above. Identify any additional requirements, critical issues, decisions, key participants or questions that should be addressed at this time.

List of possible questions and topcis for an earthquake can be found in Appendix XX. The questions are provided as suggested general subjects that exercise partners may wish to address as the discussion progresses. **These questions are not a definitive list of concerns to be addressed, nor is there a requirement to address every question**. **Exercise planners are responsible for selecting, deleting, or adding the questions that are most relevant for their organization/facility.**

Include the list of questions you have selected here.

CONCLUSION OF DISCUSSION-BASED TABLETOP EXERCISE

Hot Wash/Debriefings

Post-exercise debriefings aim to collect sufficient relevant data to support effective evaluation and improvement planning.At the conclusion of exercise; controllers facilitate a Hot Wash to allow players to discuss strengths and areas for improvement, and evaluators to seek clarification regarding player actions and decision-making processes. All participants may attend; however, observers are not encouraged to attend the meeting. The Hot Wash should not exceed 30 minutes.

Possible questions can include:
1.   What did you learn during the tabletop?
2.   What worked well?
3.   What were the gaps in our plan that need to be addressed?

Participant Feedback Forms

Participant Feedback Forms provide players with the opportunity to comment candidly on exercise activities and design. These forms should be collected at the conclusion of the Hot Wash. [There is a Participant Feedback Form template avaialbe on webpage: LINK which the exercise facilitator may use to gather and record comments on the exercise and issues presented.You can insert the participant feedback form into this document as an appendix.]

After-Action Report and Improvement Plan
The AAR/IP summarizes key information related to evaluation. It primarily focuses on the analysis of ability to complete identified objectives, including performance, strengths, and areas for improvement. The AAR also includes basic exercise information, including the exercise name, type, dates, location, participating organizations, specific threat or hazard, a brief scenario description, and the name of the exercise sponsor and point of contact (POC). The improvement plan is a section in the AAR that identifies corrective actions, assigns them to the responsible parties, and establishes target dates for their completion.

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APPENDIX A: Sample Tabletop Discussion Questions

The questions are provided as suggested general subjects that exercise partners may wish to address as the discussion progresses. **These questions are not a definitive list of concerns to be addressed, nor is there a requirement to address every question**. Questions aimed at a variety of organizations and facilities are included below.

Initial Actions:

1. What actions is your staff supposed to take during an earthquake? Is this stated in a policy or safety plan? Where is the procedure located?
2. How often does your staff train on earthquake actions? And does it include how to assisting patients/clients during an earthquake
3. How will you direct staff during and immediately following the shaking?
4. Does our facility have a plan to assess and treat staff and patients/clients injured during an earthquake? If yes, where is it? When were staff trained on this plan?
5. When and how do you activate your EOP? What is our command structure during a disaster-Incident Command Structure?
6. Who do you need to communicate with initially? Internally? Externally?

Evacuation:

1. How would you decide evacuation vs. shelter in place?
2. Who is responsible for leading the preparation for evacuation?
3. What are the assigned responsibilities for staff?
4. What kinds of transportation are needed to evacuate your current residents? How many vehicles, and what kind?
5. What will you send with your residents? (Discuss both what, and how much including critical medical information).
6. What staff, if any, will accompany which residents?
7. What supplies will be sent with staff as they evacuate?
8. How will patients/residents be identified as they leave the facility? How will you track which patients/residents have left, where they went, and when they arrived?
9. How will on-duty staff be tracked either as they accompany or meet residents at relocation sites?
10. What type of evacuation equipment does the facility/organization have? Who is trained to use the evacuation equipment?
11. If you must evacuate, which agencies will you notify? What are their numbers?
12. Securing the facility: What actions would need to occur to secure the facility, including medical records?

Facility Assessment:

1. Does your facility/organization have a process to assess and report damage to facility structure and infrastructure?

Loss of Power/Sewage:

1. Can the facility maintain heating, ventilation and air conditioning?
2. What is the impact on provision of medical gases and vacuum systems?
3. Will water and sewage systems be operational? Does this impact fire suppression systems? Is there a policy to ensure fire response if water systems fail?
4. Will access controls, including security systems, be operational?
5. Will communication and information technology be operational?
6. Will critical records be maintained (patient records, dispatch data, test results, etc.)?
7. What is the impact on internal and external lighting?
8. Are your parking structures impacted by a power loss? Can parking garages be accessed? Is lighting maintained?
9. Will elevators be operational?
10. Will automated dispensing systems (for medications, supplies) be operational?
11. Are all communications (both routine and redundant) systems on emergency power?
12. Are refrigeration and food preparation locations and equipment on emergency power?
13. Are diagnostic services including laboratory and radiology services impacted by a loss of power?
14. Are these areas on emergency power? Are there agreements with partners or vendors to assume these services? How will clinical care be impacted?
15. Would health information technology systems be impacted by loss of power? What back-up plans exist?
16. Are there partner organizations that can assist in providing services that you must alter or suspend due to a loss of power? Do you have Memoranda of Understanding signed with these partner organizations?
17. Have you identified what areas of your facility are on emergency power and those that would need portable generator support? Does your facility/organization have the capability to redistribute power to critical areas, within your facility, if needed? Who has the authority to initiate redistribution?

Impact of Power Loss on Partner Agencies/Organizations/Facilities

1. What is the impact of power loss on non-affiliated healthcare providers, including dialysis centers, surgery centers, urgent care clinics and others?
2. How would interruption of services at these sites impact your operations? Are the services of these providers critical to your patients?

Impact of Power Loss on Multi-site Agencies/Organizations

1. Consider the organizations and/or agencies that have multiple sites that provide services (fire stations, hospitals, community care clinics, police stations, community organizations, etc.). Can services be consolidated or relocated?
2. Are backup sites identified and stocked?

Communicaiton:

1. What are the available means of communication available to your facility? What alternative communication resources will you use?

2. Does the facility/organization have a plan to establish redundant communications internally? Externally?
3. What is your facility/organization policy/plan to communicate with staff on shift? And off shift?
4. Is there a back-up plan if communications fail due to a power loss?
5. What provisions for notification to, or communications with, families of residents and staff will you use?
6. Discuss the impact of loss of power to communication systems (both landline and cellular telephones), computer systems, traffic lights, media (television and radio in addition to the internet), street lights, security systems, mass transit, etc.
7. If your facility must close or move to another location, how will you notify your patients? Staff?

Medical Surge

1. Do you have a surge plan to address increased persons presenting to your healthcare facility for safety? Does the surge plan address the convergence of patients who use medical equipment (including oxygen) at home and are now without power?

Continuity of Operations

1. What critical functions must continue to keep your facility/organization functioning?
2. How would the facility/organization be financially impacted?
3. Would closure of daycare centers, elder care services, etc. impact your ability to sustain operations?
4. Do you expect a patient surge from the community? Do you have a process and resources to establish a triage and minor care treatment areas?
5. How will you secure the facility? What are your priority areas? Will you need to designate a stay team?
6. How would inclement weather affect your response or implementation?
7. What resources do you have or need to provide immediate and long term stress management and/or mental health services for your personnel?
8. Does your facility plan address family reunification?
9. Has your facility/organization have plans for supplies during an emergency- including food and water? Medicine?
10. What documentation needs to be initiated for the incident and future cost reimbursement submission?

APPENDIX B: SAMPLE OBJECTIVES

- Discuss the facilies ability to alert and notify personnel of the activation of the facility's Emergency Operations Plan.
- Discuss the facilites ability to establish and maintain communications with internal Incident Management Team personnel.
- Discuss the ability of the facilities Incident Commander to activate the Emergency Operations Plan.
- Discuss the ability to continue operations when there is a loss of power due to an earthquake.
- Develop Action Plan within two hours of activation of the Emergency Operations Plan
- Discuss the ability to provide situation status to all response and partner agencies.
- Discuss the facility's ability to share information with emergency management and regulatory agencies.

APPENDIX C: EXERCISE PARTICIPANTS

Date: **Time:**

Name   **Signature**

APPENDIX D: Instructions for Participants

1. Understand the scope of the TTX/exercise. If you're not sure about certain activities, ask the Facilitator.

2. Don't forget to sign in.

3. Outside distractions should be minimized; turn off your cell phone, Blackberry, etc.

4. Speak out loud when you are taking action, planning, or have ideas to share.

5. Act on all Facilitator instructions. Except for safety issues, if you don't agree with what the Facilitator is telling you, don't argue. Complete the required actions and make a note to discuss your disagreement at the end of the TTX/exercise during the debriefing (critique). Remember the Controller has the final word.

6. During the exercise, conversation with the Facilitator should be focused on the event. Casual conversation should only take place before or after the TTX is completed

7. Consider Observers and Evaluators to be invisible to you. Do not engage in any conversations with Observers or Evaluators.

8. Play out the scenario as if it were real.

9. If the scenario seems to be incredible, don't complain. Recognize that the TTX/exercise has objectives that must be satisfied and may require doing things that may not be as realistic as we would like.

10. If an actual emergency occurs during the TTX/exercise, it takes precedence. Notify the Controller of your intent and take the appropriate action to combat the real emergency.

11. All Players will participate in a self-critique following termination of the TTX/exercise.

12. All discussions, ideas, and actions developed during the TTX are valuable, and should be presented without concern for "the right answer" or "the wrong answer". This is a no-blame environment.

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APPENDIX E: Instructions for Facilitators/Contollers

The responsibility of the Facilitator/Controller is to ensure that TTX/exercise occurs in the sequence prescribed by the scenario, to ensure that a comfortable, no-fault environment exists, and to monitor TTX/exercise play. Facilitators must be familiar with the emergency plan and procedures that pertain to their assigned area. Facilitators are also responsible for monitoring and evaluating the adequacy of Participant/Player performance.

Before TTX Day:

1. Familiarize yourself with the TTX objectives and exercise guidebook.
2. Ensure that you understand the scenario and timeline.
3. Obtain and review emergency procedures, including the EOP and any other materials that might exist.
4. Review TTX messages and scenario information which you are responsible to provide to Players (these appear in Appendix B). Ensure that you understand how the Players are to receive this information and what their responses should be.
5. Clearly understand how personnel accountability will be handled on the TTX day. Controllers may not use normal accountability processes.
6. Ensure you sign-in on the appropriate log form prior to the TTX.
7. Familiarize yourself with the room and equipment that will be used during the TTX.

During the TTX

1. Ensure that you are readily identifiable by all Players.
2. Identify all Players that you will be controlling during the TTX, and inform them of your function.
3. Ensure that each Player has been logged on the Sign In sheet (Appendix H) and that the form identifies the appropriate facility.
4. Identify yourself to all Evaluators, and ensure that they are familiar with the Evaluator guidelines.
5. If a real emergency occurs that affects the Players in your area of control/evaluation, terminate the TTX.
6. Position yourself to maximize your effectiveness in issuing messages and/or observing the players.
7. Distribute TTX messages, as required, and provide additional input, as necessary, to keep the scenario progressing as designed. Make sure that the Players understand the messages you give them.
8. Do not allow external influences to distract the Players. The TTX should be considered "Off Limits" or "do not disturb" territory unless a real emergency occurs in the facility.
9. Do not allow Player actions to continue if they would obviously impair scenario continuity.
10.

Upon TTX Termination

1. Thank the Players/Participants, and ensure they complete the Participant Evaluation Form .

APPENDIX F: PARTICIPANT FEEDBACK FORM

[INSERT YEAR] [Exercise Name]
PARTICIPANT FEEDBACK FORM

Please enter your responses in the form field or check box after the appropriate selection.

Part I: General Participant Information

Name: _____   **Date:** _____

**Agency/
Organization:** _____

Position/Title: _____

Part II: Strengths & Recommendations

1. Based on the discussions today and the tasks identified, list the top three strengths and why:
    1.

    2.

    3.

Recommendations: Identify three areas for recommended improvement and the associated corrective actions you believe would resolve them. For each item noted, indicate if it is a high, medium, or low priority.

Corrective Action	Priority

Corrective Action	Priority

2. Who/what agency should be assigned responsibility for each corrective action noted above?

Corrective Action	Recommended Responsibility

3. List any policies, plans, and procedures that should be reviewed, revised, or developed. For each item noted, indicate if it is a high, medium, or low priority.

Documents Needing Review	Priority