

September 13, 2016

Notes from:

Earthquake Preparedness Special Presentation by Everett Emergency Management

An earthquake preparedness presentation was provided by Lynn Sterbenz, Emergency Management Public Education Coordinator with the City of Everett.

Lynn provided an overview of the basics for emergency preparedness and described different types of disasters. In the Pacific Northwest, we have been told to expect an earthquake at any time. Many of our majestic mountains are dormant volcanoes. We also experience wind storms with power outages and devastating fires in eastern Washington. Hazardous materials are being transported daily. When a disaster hits, survival often is dependent on being prepared.

Lynn stressed “awareness” of hazards and types of risks. Some hazards are natural disasters and some are man-made. Possible targets in our area: Spada Lake, Boeing, Port of Everett, Navy Base, many unreinforced old brick buildings downtown.

Earthquakes

The U.S.G.S. verified a fault line from Vancouver B.C. to Southern California (Cascade fault). Historically ruptured approximately 300 years ago; we are now at the half-way mark which is causing media attention (i.e., recent articles in our local newspapers). We could have a similar earthquake as Japan had in 2011. It could last 5-6 minutes and would devastate our region.

Other earthquake faults

Juan de Fuca fault line; earthquakes can occur more frequently, but not as severe or long in duration.

South Whidbey Fault line; Victoria B.C., to Yakima.

Lynn explained preparing for an earthquake is a matter of “when” not “if”. The population of Everett is 105,000. A big earthquake in our area could cause catastrophic destruction with collapsed bridges, and roads. 911 will be severely impacted. Citizens need to understand, help will NOT be coming soon.

Prepare – Make a Plan and prepare a Kit

Think about food, water, medical supplies, prescription drugs (don't forget your pets!). Consider what you will do *without* electrical power for 3-5 days. You won't be able to charge your cell phone. How will you stay warm? How will you cook? Don't cook on a propane stove or a charcoal grill inside your home (not even inside your garage). However, sterno is safe and is good for 4 hours.

Water: have 1 gallon, per person, per day (at a minimum for drinking water only).

Food: Easy to cook, but nutritious. Pack what you like (comfort food). Rotate your canned food every 6 months. (tip: when you change your clocks, rotate the canned food in your emergency kit).

Medication: Some doctors are hesitant to give you extra medication for your emergency kit (tip: put one pill aside every day for 30 days!)

Cash: Small bills; set aside a sizeable amount.

Documents: Photo copy your driver's license, insurance information, all your important papers.

Communication: Establish an out of state contact; you will not be able to dial locally. However, you can text (learn how, if you don't know how to text).

- Know where your gas shut off valve is located. **Only**, shut off if you smell gas.
- Everyone should have under/near their bed: 1) shoes, 2) leather gloves (you might be crawling out of your house), 3) flashlight, and 4) hardhat.
- Buy a solar charge unit for your cell phone. Buy an extra propane tank if you have a barbecue.

You can stay informed by signing up for alerts from your emergency management agency. The State of Washington Emergency Management Division provides information and emergency preparedness essentials and a list of emergency management contacts. No matter where we live, or potential disasters we face, be ready. Be prepared – it's not just for Scouts!

Handouts from Lynn were distributed after her presentation.

Minutes taken by,

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