



NEWS RELEASE

September 24, 2010



District of Lantzville



GET READY FOR THE GREAT BC SHAKEOUT

The plan is for as many people as possible in BC to duck for cover at 10am, January 26, 2011. That's when a province-wide earthquake drill called the Great BC Shakeout is scheduled. Local government Emergency Program staff is encouraging everyone able to sign up at www.shakeout.org, and participate individually or as part of a group, business, or school by practicing earthquake preparedness.

“In this very seismically active part of the world we should always be ready for a major earthquake. We certainly weren't ready for the 7.3 magnitude quake that hit near Courtenay on June 23, 1946 causing significant natural destruction, and our population centres on Vancouver Island have grown considerably since then,” said RDN Chair Joe Stanhope. “Everyone in BC should take the opportunity on January 26, 2011 to join the Great BC Shakeout and practice earthquake preparedness together.”

All BC residents, businesses, or groups who would like to participate in the Great BC Shakeout are asked to register at www.shakeout.org. At 10am on January 26, 2011, simply practice the Drop, Cover, and Hold On protocol: drop to the ground, take cover under a table or desk, hold on to a fixed surface as if a major earthquake were happening, and stay down for at least 60 seconds. While taking cover participants should look around and imagine what would happen in a major earthquake, such as falling objects, surrounding hazards, and how things might look after the shaking stopped. After taking the time to practice and consider the possibilities, it's expected participants will be more ready to prepare for a real quake and the aftermath.

Not everyone can easily duck under a table or desk when an earthquake starts, but people with mobility difficulty are also encouraged to participate on January 26. Local government Emergency Program staff can provide tips and resources to help those with mobility issues. The Provincial Emergency Program website also provides tips, such as keeping heavy gloves nearby to assist while using a wheelchair or making your way over glass and debris: http://www.pep.bc.ca/hazard_preparedness/disabilities_information.html.

Businesses and institutions who sign up for the Great BC Shakeout can also contact Emergency Program staff for further information on planning an organization-wide drill on January 26.

Although schools regularly hold earthquake drills, registration in the drill is also open to all schools and post-secondary institutions.

While registration isn't necessary for the Shakeout, it is encouraged as it will help determine the level of earthquake preparedness across the province, and enable event organizers to provide further information to participants who request it.

The Shakeout is organized by the BC Earthquake Alliance, which includes local governments, provincial ministries and agencies, federal agencies, community organizations, and companies throughout the province.

The U.S. state of Oregon will join BC on January 26, 2011 with its own state-wide shake-out drill. Nevada and California are also organizing similar events for October 21, 2010, a variety of Central U.S. states will hold shake-outs on April 28, 2011, and Utah is planning one for 2012. California has also held shake-out drills with millions of participants in 2008 and 2009.

The earthquake hazard on eastern central Vancouver Island is rated 'moderate' in the Regional District of Nanaimo's Hazard Vulnerability Risk Assessment. In 2009 approximately 3,000 earthquakes occurred throughout BC.

Further information and background on the January 26 drill is available at www.shakout.org.

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