

Participation in Annual BC ShakeOut Drill Encouraged October 18, 2012 at 10.18 am

The annual Great BC ShakeOut drill will be conducted on October 18 and the City of Parksville is encouraging residents to participate. The two previous drills were successful with more than 470,000 registered participants in October 2011, creating an understanding of the importance of earthquake awareness and emergency preparedness. More than 12.5 million people were registered to participate in ShakeOut drills worldwide in 2011.

The Great British Columbia ShakeOut is an annual opportunity to practice how to be safer during big earthquakes. Residents and businesses are encouraged to register at <http://shakeoutbc.ca> to be counted in the drill and for information. Intended to create public awareness of earthquake hazards and encourage personal preparedness, participants will *Drop, Cover and Hold On* for two minutes in response to a simulated earthquake event.

BC is located in a seismically active region where a few thousand earthquakes occur each year in and adjacent to the province. While potential earthquake hazards depend on location, everywhere in British Columbia is considered at high risk in relation to the rest of Canada. The threat of a major earthquake in the province is real; therefore, we should all know how to be prepared.

With about six weeks to go until the October 18 ShakeOut drill, more than 320,000 participants are registered in BC with 106,750 registered on Vancouver Island. The BC Shakeout website has a wealth of information about how you can participate and most importantly, how to perform the *Drop, Cover and Hold On* - a quake-safe action designed to protect people from objects that can become projectiles during ground shaking.



Once registered, participation can be as simple as three easy steps:

1. *Drop, Cover and Hold On*: Drop to the ground, take cover under a table or desk, and hold on to it as if a major earthquake were happening (stay down for at least 60 seconds). Practice now so that you will immediately protect yourself during an earthquake.
2. While still under the table, or wherever you are, look around and imagine what would happen in a major earthquake. What would fall on you or on others? What would be damaged? What would life be like after?
3. Finally, you can practice what you will do after the shaking stops.

Also provided on the website is a life safety drill designed to engage people to think through their own emergency response actions during the drill, then afterwards to review and discuss what worked or what did not, in order to make improvements for the next drill or an actual earthquake. The website also provides information on participating in the exercise at your workplace.

If you participated in the ShakeOut drills in 2011, you may wish to consider some next steps after "drop, cover and hold on". When the shaking stops, stay in your place, count to sixty and if nothing has "fallen on you", then it's safe to evacuate.

How to participate:

Here are simple things individuals and families can do to participate in the ShakeOut. Instructions and resources can be found at www.shakeoutbc.ca.

Plan Your Drill:

- Register at www.shakeoutbc.ca to be counted in the ShakeOut Drill, get email updates, and more.
- Have a *Drop, Cover, and Hold On* drill at 10.18 am on October 18, 2012.
- Discuss what you learned and make improvements.

Get Prepared for Earthquakes:

- Do a "hazard hunt" for items that might fall during earthquakes and secure them.
- Create a personal or family disaster plan. For more information, please visit <http://www.getprepared.gc.ca/index-eng.aspx>
- Organize or refresh your emergency supply kits. After an earthquake you may need to remain in place for at least 72 hours or up to a week, so ensure you have the necessary supplies.
- Identify and correct any issues in your home's structure.
- Other actions are at www.shakeoutbc.ca

Share the ShakeOut:

- Invite everyone who matters to you to register.
- Have a neighbourhood party to discuss preparedness, and register for the ShakeOut.
- Encourage your community, employer, or other groups you are involved with to participate.
- Share your experience at www.shakeoutbc.ca.

For more information, please contact the City's emergency program coordinator, Aaron Dawson.

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For more information:

Aaron Dawson, Emergency Program Coordinator

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About Parksville — One of the fastest growing communities on Vancouver Island, 12,000 residents call Parksville their home. Located on Vancouver Island's sheltered east coast, Parksville offers a quality lifestyle with many activities. We are committed to being the city of choice for ourselves and future generations in a clean, safe, friendly, economically viable and sustainable environment.