

April 8, 2009

---

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: April 8, 2009

### Is Your Family Prepared? Personal Emergency Preparedness

Parksville, BC – The City of Parksville joins other cities across Canada to promote Emergency Preparedness Week from May 3 - 9, 2009. The main objective is to increase awareness about individual preparedness and encourage people to reduce the risks and lessen the consequences of a disaster by being better prepared. This year, Emergency Preparedness Week is focused on helping individuals prepare to cope on their own for at least the first 72 hours of an emergency.

An emergency operations centre will be set up in the Forum in the Parksville Civic and Technology Centre on May 7 from noon to 3 pm. This open house will provide residents with the opportunity to see how the City's emergency operations centre would be set up in the event of a disaster and also have the opportunity to learn about personal preparedness. As well, an information display will be set up at City Hall during Emergency Preparedness Week.

"It is so very important that everyone knows what to do in the event of an emergency," says Doug Banks, Fire Chief for the Parksville Volunteer Fire Department. "Being prepared will prevent confusion and panic, protect property and save lives when a disaster does strike. We look forward to seeing people on May 7 at the open house."

"The goal of Emergency Preparedness Week is to help residents get the knowledge and tools they will need to prepare themselves, their family and their community for an emergency", said Mayor Ed Mayne.

The City of Parksville is committed to making the community a safe place for all. To help prepare for the unexpected, the City of Parksville regularly reviews and tests the Local Emergency Plan. The City encourages all residents and businesses to plan and know the potential hazards in their area. When a disaster strikes, it may take emergency workers some time to reach everyone. Families should plan ahead and be prepared to take care of themselves for at least 72 hours.

Information on personal emergency preparedness is available at [www.parksville.ca](http://www.parksville.ca); [www.pep.bc.ca](http://www.pep.bc.ca) or [www.getprepared.ca/promo](http://www.getprepared.ca/promo).

-30-

**For more information:**

Aaron Dawson, Deputy Emergency Coordinator    250 954-4672  
Doug Banks, Fire Chief    250 954-4671

# Emergency Preparedness Week - May 3-9, 2009

## Emergency Management in Canada: How does it work?

In a country that borders on three oceans and spans six time zones, creating an emergency response system that works for every region is essential. Emergency management in Canada is a shared responsibility. That means everyone has an important role to play, including individuals, communities, governments, the private sector and volunteer organizations.

Basic emergency preparedness starts with each individual. If an individual cannot cope, emergency first responders such as police, fire and ambulance services will provide help. If the municipality needs additional assistance or resources, they can call on provincial/territorial emergency management organizations, who can in turn seek assistance from the federal government if the emergency escalates beyond their resource capabilities. Depending on the situation, federal assistance could include policing, national defense and border security, and environmental and health protection.

Requests for assistance from provincial/territorial authorities are managed through Public Safety Canada, which maintains close operational links with the provinces and territories. It can take just a few minutes for the response to move from the local to the national level, ensuring that the right resources and expertise are identified and triggered.

The emergency management system in Canada has many tiers and many players, all of whom have the common goal of preventing or managing disasters. Public Safety Canada is responsible for coordinating emergency response efforts on behalf of the federal government. More information is available on the Public Safety website at [www.publicsafety.gc.ca](http://www.publicsafety.gc.ca).

## How to survive a major earthquake

Canada has approximately 3,500 earthquakes every year. Are you prepared if one were to happen in your area? More information is available at [www.GetPrepared.ca](http://www.GetPrepared.ca)

Being prepared:

- Get an emergency survival kit.
- Identify safe spots in each room in your home. Emphasize their location by having everyone in the household physically place themselves in the safe spot.
- Move or secure objects that could fall and injure you such as books, plants, mirrors, lamps or china. Keep heavy items on lower shelves. Affix paintings and other hanging objects securely so they won't fall off hooks.

During an earthquake:

- Stay inside.
- Take cover under a heavy table, desk or any solid furniture and hold on.
- If you can't get under something strong, or if you are in a hallway, flatten yourself or crouch against an interior wall.
- Stay away from windows, glass partitions, mirrors, fireplaces, bookcases, tall furniture and light fixtures. In an earthquake you could be hurt by shattered glass or heavy objects thrown around by the shaking.

---

City of Parksville | 100 Jensen Avenue East (P O Box 1390), Parksville, BC V9P 2H3  
Phone 250 248-6144 | [www.parksville.ca](http://www.parksville.ca)

**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.