

Participation in October 18 ShakeOut Drill Encouraged

The annual Great BC ShakeOut drill will be conducted on Thursday, October 18 at 10.18 am and the City of Parksville encourages residents to participate. In 2017, millions of people worldwide including 890,000 registered in BC to participate and create an understanding of the importance of earthquake awareness and emergency preparedness.

An opportunity to practice how to be safe during earthquakes, residents and businesses are encouraged to register at <http://shakeoutbc.ca> to be counted in the drill and to obtain resources and information. Intended to create public awareness of earthquake hazards and encourage personal preparedness, participants *Drop, Cover and Hold On* for two minutes in response to a simulated earthquake event.

When a significant natural disaster occurs around the world, we realize how little we are, playing a small part on this constantly moving planet. We consider our infrastructure, or how prepared we are at home or at the office. We think about the people affected and speculate about what we, our co-workers, or our loved ones would do should a disaster occur. The devastating hurricanes and earthquakes of the past several weeks are a reminder to take steps to be prepared.

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.

The BC Shakeout website has a wealth of information about how to 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.



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 previous ShakeOut drills, 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, get email updates, and more.
- Have a *Drop, Cover, and Hold On* drill at 10:18 am on October 18.
- Discuss what you learned and make improvements.

Get Prepared for Earthquakes:

- The City of Parksville has made available a comprehensive emergency preparedness guidebook and encourages residents to obtain a copy from City Hall then read and complete the book which will help you to 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.
- 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>

An optional addition to your ShakeOut participation which may help to improve preparedness for a large earthquake or other emergencies is *Seven Steps to Earthquake Safety*. Details may be found on these steps at www.earthquakecountry.org

1. Secure your space
2. Plan to be safe
3. Organize disaster supplies
4. Minimize financial hardship
5. Drop, cover and hold on
6. Improve safety
7. Reconnect and restore

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