



# Emergency Services Coordinating Agency

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### Contact Information

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### Disaster Preparedness Month

Snohomish County, WA (April 16, 2007) – April is Disaster Preparedness Month, and we are all being urged to do our part to prepare against disaster.

No matter whether we live, there are both natural and man-made hazards that we need to be aware of and to prepare for. In western Washington, we may be subject to earthquakes, wind storms, flooding, landslides, volcanic eruptions, etc. Hazardous materials spills occur on a regular basis.

While the *majority* of these events are fairly minor in nature, they still cause disruption and are a good reminder of why we need to prepare for the large-scale events that may lie ahead.

The good news is that by preparing properly for one type of event, you are better prepared for all events.

### Preparedness "Bites"

Preparedness is not a one-step job. There are several components to an effective preparedness plan, and they can all be done in multiple steps or "bites." They are:

- Gathering
- Planning
- Training

### *Gathering*

Disaster kits are critical for disaster preparedness. Depending on the level of the disaster, and the effectiveness of individual preparedness efforts, a kit can literally make the difference between life and death. In more minor events, a well-prepared kit will at least affect the individual's comfort in waiting for "normal" to be restored.

While people often think of establishing a kit from scratch, it is helpful to remember that many things may already be found in the home. Begin identifying and assembling those items in the home that would be useful during a disaster.

A disaster kit should include items that range from foods, to adequate water supplies, to clothing and first aid kits. For a printable list of some of these items, please [click here](#).

### *Planning*

#### [Escape Routes](#)

Remember making escape plans for Fire Safety Week as a child? The same concepts apply and can be used for all-hazards preparedness.

Draw a floor plan of your home. Use a blank sheet of paper for each floor. Mark two escape routes from each room. Make sure children understand the drawings. Post a copy of the drawings at eye level in each child's room.

Where to Meet: Establish a place to meet in the event of an emergency, such as a fire. Record the locations below:

Location	Where to meet...
Near the home	(Example: the next door neighbor's telephone pole)
Outside the immediate area	(Example: the neighborhood grocery store parking lot)

#### [Family Communications](#)

Your family may not be together when disaster strikes, so plan how you will contact one another. Think about how you will communicate in different situations.

Complete a contact card for each family member. The card should include the name of a local friend of family member and their phone number as well as an out-of-state contact and phone number.

Have family members keep these cards handy in a wallet, purse, backpack, etc. You may want to send one to school with each child to keep on file. Pick a friend or relative who lives out-of-state for household members to notify they are safe.

Family Communications Plan which should be completed and posted so the contact information is readily accessible to all family members. A copy should also be included in your family disaster supplies kit.

#### Training

Training adds new skills and expands or refreshes existing skills. Many courses are available that are useful in day-to-day life as well as preparing against a once-in-a-lifetime disaster.

Included below is a partial list of some of the available classes as well as some of the agencies that provide these classes.

#### *First Aid & CPR, etc.*

Red Cross Chapter

Fire Department and/or Recreation Center.

*Community Emergency Response Team (CERT)*

This course provides training in basic first aid, fire suppression, and light urban search and rescue. The purpose is to help the individual help themselves and their family.

For a comprehensive list of the available programs in the King and Snohomish County areas, please go to the regional CERT page at: [http://www.esca1.com/regional\\_cert.htm](http://www.esca1.com/regional_cert.htm)

It's Not Just a Month...

While April is officially "Disaster Preparedness Month," the need to prepare doesn't end on May 1.

For more complete information on planning and preparedness, including additional downloadable brochures, please contact your local emergency management agency.

Emergency Services Coordinating Agency (ESCA)

(425)776-3722

[www.esca1.com](http://www.esca1.com)

Snohomish County Department of Emergency Management (DEM)

(425)388-5060

[http://www1.co.snohomish.wa.us/Departments/Emergency\\_Management/](http://www1.co.snohomish.wa.us/Departments/Emergency_Management/)

King County Office of Emergency Management (OEM)

(206)296-3830

[www.metrokc.gov/prepare/about/](http://www.metrokc.gov/prepare/about/)

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