



# CITY OF OLYMPIA

## EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

Spring 2019

### SPRING FORECAST

50% chance for above average temperatures and equal chance for higher, lower, or average precipitation.

- Residents should prepare for potential thunderstorms and power outages. Flooding is also possible.
- Make sure your supply kits are well stocked and that you have extra batteries for flashlights, radios, etc.
- Update your emergency contact lists and make sure each family member has a copy.
- Add a first aid kit to your disaster supplies.
- Treat any downed power lines as if they are energized and keep a safe distance.



### WELCOME!

This is the City's Emergency Management quarterly preparedness newsletter. Each edition will look at "Prepare in a Year" action steps, the long-range weather forecast, past emergencies and disasters, and several other timely topics.

### PREPARE IN A YEAR

Prepare in a Year is a simple 12 step process to help you and your loved ones prepare for disasters and emergencies. Take a 60-minute step each month to be ready for storms, earthquakes, fires, power outages, etc. For a complete *Prepare in a Year* guide, visit the [City's Preparedness page](#).

#### March

**Under-the-Bed Kit:** An under-the-bed kit helps you to be ready to respond to a disaster day or night. You will be able to safely respond to a disaster in a more efficient and effective manner if you store sturdy shoes, work gloves, a hard hat/bicycle helmet, and a flashlight/glow sticks under your bed.

#### April

**Utility Safety:** Damaged natural gas lines can cause explosions and fires. If you have natural gas in your home, locate the shut-off valve and store a wrench nearby for opening and closing. After an earthquake, only shut off your gas if you can smell it, hear it hissing, or notice your meter is spinning rapidly.

Following an earthquake, municipal water lines can crack, draining the water from your home or allowing contaminants into the water supply. Shutting off your water supply at the main house valve typically located in the garage or basement can protect your water supply. If you lose power or expect your electrical system has been damaged, shut off electricity at the circuit box. Start with individual circuits and end with the main circuit.

#### May

**Drop-Cover-Hold:** During an earthquake, your main instinct may be to run but the best thing to do is to drop-cover-hold. Develop a drop-cover-hold plan for each room of your house, where you work, and any other place you frequent. Practice your plan and make sure your loved ones know the plan as well, especially children.

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*"The wise person foresees danger and takes precautions, but the naïve move forward unchanged and suffer the consequences." ~ Ancient Proverb*

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### IT HAPPENED IN OLYMPIA

**The February Snow-pocalypse:** For once the weather lived up to the hype as Olympia and the rest of the Puget Sound approached record levels of snowfall in February. The City of Olympia activated its Emergency Operations Center to support Police, Fire, and Public Works throughout the event. Public Works sustained around-the-clock snowplowing and storm water operations from Friday the 8<sup>th</sup> until Wednesday the 13<sup>th</sup>. The fire department call volume nearly doubled during the week and the West Bay Marina saw the partial collapse of a structure that sank three vessels. Unfortunately, many neighborhoods and individuals were isolated, as continued snowfall required re-plowing of the City's lifeline routes, preventing the plowing of neighborhood collector streets for days. If you had 72 hours of emergency supplies, then you were at most inconvenienced during that period of isolation and possible power outage. The February snow-pocalypse has provided a great reminder that we all should have 3 days of emergency supplies and be working towards 2 weeks or more. Preparedness is a process. What one-step will you take today to be better prepared for the next winter storm or earthquake?

### LONG TERM RECOVERY

**Ocean Shores:** At the end of February the City of Olympia participated in a FEMA sponsored Long Term Recovery Course in Ocean Shores, WA. Emphasis was placed on inter-jurisdictional coordination, with the understanding that the Thurston Region will recover more quickly, equitably, and resiliently if the county, cities, towns, and tribes work cooperatively following a catastrophic disaster. Participants included elected officials, jurisdictional managers, and department directors from nearly every jurisdiction in Thurston County as well as representatives from LOTT, Intercity Transit, PSE, healthcare, Thurston County Food Bank, schools, and many other community partners. The week was a tremendous success as jurisdictional leadership tested a draft recovery framework and provided feedback on how to improve regional recovery planning efforts. Course instructors were impressed by the level of cooperation already present in the region and the progress of the group throughout the week. The investment made last month, in conjunction with continued investment in mitigation and recovery planning efforts will pay dividends moving forward.

### DISASTER NONPROFIT SPOTLIGHT

**United Way:** United Way's mission is to improve lives by mobilizing the caring power of communities around the world to advance the common good. United Way fights for the health, education, and financial stability of every person in every community. In disasters, United Way serves as a trustworthy conduit for cash donations. Any gift can be designated for a specific disaster relief fund and 100% of the gift will be used for recovery efforts in the affected area. To learn more about United Way visit <https://www.unitedway.org>.

Emergency Management is available to conduct emergency preparedness training with your neighborhood, community, organization, etc. To schedule an event or for any other questions please contact: Patrick Knouff at 360-709-2701 or [pknouff@ci.olympia.wa.us](mailto:pknouff@ci.olympia.wa.us). Additional preparedness resources can be found at [www.olympiawa.gov/fire](http://www.olympiawa.gov/fire). Follow us on Twitter! [@olyfiredept](https://twitter.com/olyfiredept)

