

October is Disaster Preparedness and NOAA Weather Radio Month

Local News

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CAMP MURRAY, Wash. - Gov. Jay Inslee has proclaimed October as Washington State Disaster Preparedness Month and NOAA Weather Radio Awareness Month. In keeping with the proclamation, local jurisdictions, individuals, schools and businesses across the state will promote all-hazard preparedness throughout the month.

Highlight of the month is the Great Washington Shakeout "drop, cover and hold on" earthquake drill on Oct. 17 at 10:17 a.m. The drill will emphasize the urgent need for people, organizations, schools, communities and businesses to practice what to do to be safe during an earthquake, and how to be ready before an earthquake strikes. In addition, coastal communities will test their tsunami alert sirens at the same time.

"Earthquakes are one of the greatest hazards in our state," said Robert Ezelle, director of the Emergency Management Division of the Washington Military Department. "The good thing about the Great Washington Shakeout is that so many members of the public will come out of it better prepared not only for quakes, but for other significant hazards such as tsunamis, floods, winter storms and acts of terror."

Organizers with the Military Department's Emergency Management Division are aiming for one million Washingtonians to participate in the drill. To date, more than 550,000 have registered, and the number is climbing. Last year, 710,000 people participated. People and organizations can sign up at www.shakeout.org/washington.

This is the second ShakeOut for the state of Washington. More than 37 states, Guam, Puerto Rico, American Samoa and the Province of British Columbia will run an earthquake drill on the same date and time. Participants in the Utah and in other countries will conduct their ShakeOut drills on other dates.

Gov. Inslee's proclamation also touts two other October happenings that emphasize emergency preparedness:

- The governor proclaimed October as National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Weather Radio Awareness Month. NOAA Weather Radios provide emergency alerts about approaching hazards, complementing other disaster information sources.

- The governor also took note of the Take Winter By Storm campaign that kicks off in October. Take Winter By Storm will highlight preparedness actions for the public to take to be ready for winter storms.

For information about Washington State Disaster Preparedness Month, NOAA weather radios, and emergency preparedness, go to http://www.emd.wa.gov/preparedness/prep_index.shtml.