



GREAT WASHINGTON SHAKEOUT THURSDAY, OCTOBER 16, 10:16 A.M.

The Great Washington Shakeout aims to teach everyone what to do in an earthquake . It's also a chance to practice our response to any other type of disaster or threat. In years past, some of us may have had an emergency kit under our beds. If possible, bring a protective hat, gloves, shoes and other supplies. Try to secure furniture and other decor likely to fall, learn how to turn off gas at the meter and have fire extinguishers on hand.

But did you know you can assist your neighbors by being a Block Captain and showing them how to be prepared in an emergency? This is an act of patriotism with the understanding that we have responsibilities to “we the people”. Even though we may not be ready for this year's Disaster Preparedness event, we can start sooner rather than later and be prepared for next year. Practice the following information at least twice a year with your group. Establish a practice drill date and time. At the designated time of the drill:

- *Practice Drop/Cover and Hold for one minute

- *Create an OK/HELP sign to place in the front window

- *Put a Fire Extinguisher on the sidewalk or the curb in front of your house for those that may need it in an emergency

- *Get a whistle and blow your whistle when you see your block captain pass your house. (This is a test that can be heard if you are trapped inside).

- *Create a gathering spot on a map for everyone on your block to account for all neighbors

Then, check in with your block captain so that he/she will mark you as accounted for. If a neighbor won't be home during the drill, have them place the OK sign out before your practice drill. In addition, advise the Block Captain that you and your family are present.

Keep going! It's time for your auxiliary to take on a challenge. Prepare several disaster preparedness packs now! In case of an emergency, have everything you need on hand. Disasters happen without planning, and they happen at the most inopportune time. By working together as an auxiliary, we can organize a fun event in which everyone contributes something to make it a success. Fill some bags with mini flashlights, bandages, energy bars, Ramen/Cup o' Noodles, water (check expiration dates frequently) and other items that your group believes may be helpful should the need arise. Collect and store clean blankets if possible. The items you collected for your bags would be similar to those you assembled for your 911 baskets for First Responders. Do not limit yourself to your comfort zone and think outside the box. Have your auxiliary work as a team (after all, that is what we are, a team). If you have any ideas for the program, please share them. Would you mind sharing your experience if you have taken up this challenge? Our communities need to know that the VFW Auxiliary is able to assist them in any way needed if we push you a little harder. By working together, we can spread our Patriotism and Americanism throughout our communities. Go to shakeout.org for more information

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