



## GREAT WASHINGTON SHAKEOUT THURSDAY, OCTOBER 19, 10:19 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.** Make several disaster preparedness packs **NOW!** to ensure you have everything you need in case of an emergency. There is no planning for disasters, and they happen at the most inopportune time. As an auxiliary, we can organize an event where everyone brings something to contribute to putting this together and making it a fun event. Grab some bags and fill them with mini flashlights, bandages, energy bars, Ramen/Cup o' Noodles, water (check expiration dates frequently) and items that your group feels would be helpful to them should they need such a bag. If possible, collect and store clean blankets. The items you collected for your bags would be similar to those you assembled for your 911 baskets for First Responders. Remember the recent disaster that hit Maui and our own Spokane Valley in August? Have your Auxiliary work as a team (after all, that's what we are, a Team)#**AuxTribe**. Don't limit yourself to your comfort zone and think outside the box. Share your ideas, as you would with anything you do for this program. If you have taken on this challenge, please let me know how it went. We need you to push yourself a little harder so that our communities know that they can turn to the VFW Auxiliary for assistance in any way they need. Our Patriotism and Americanism can be spread throughout our communities when we work together.

### DO IT FOR THOSE WHO CAN'T

Doreen Dale  
Americanism/Patriotic Instructor