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For further info go to: [mercergov.org/emergencyprep](http://mercergov.org/emergencyprep)

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The following is provided by King County Office of Emergency Management and the City of Mercer Island's Emergency Management Department

## **Plan now to survive an earthquake**

If the recent [New Yorker article](#) has you paralyzed regarding a predicted mega earthquake and tsunami in the Puget Sound region, take a deep breath and consider practical steps you and your household can take NOW to be better prepared should the "really big one" hit anytime soon.

The City of Mercer Island's standing goal is to be prepared to respond and recover from any hazard as safely and quickly as possible. Mercer Island is fortunate in the fact that we have an emergency water well at Rotary Park, a cadre of trained volunteers, and extensive emergency plans in place that will make our goal a reality.

Apart from City government preparations, all residents must also be part of the solution. It is important that every resident is prepared to take care of himself or herself, and also their neighbors, for **10 days** after a disaster. The below information can assist you with that planning.

### **Ways emergency personnel are preparing**

During any large disaster, fire, law enforcement, utility, and other responders across the region coordinate their efforts to reach people in need and restore essential services as quickly as possible.

- Emergency management agencies have developed [regional disaster plans](#) for dealing with earthquakes, tsunamis, severe winter storms, and other hazards that threaten our region.
- We test those plans regularly to identify in gaps in our ability to respond quickly and effectively.
- There are protocols in place for elected officials to proclaim a state of emergency and request state and federal resources to be brought in to impacted areas.

- American Red Cross and other organizations work closely with emergency managers to establish shelters and other resources for residents in need.

However, following a large earthquake, communication lines, roads, water, gas, and electricity may not be accessible for weeks, or longer. So, you need to be personally prepared to be self-sufficient and on your own for 10+ days.

### **Ways you can prepare and stay safe**

1. Prepare for earthquakes in advance (and secure greater peace of mind) by:

- [Making a plan](#) for how you will communicate and where you will meet if separated. Practice your plan at least annually.
- [Building emergency kits](#) for your home and vehicle. If finances are tight, start small and add supplies as you are able, or band together with a neighbor to share resources.
- [Helping each other](#) by knowing your neighbors, their special needs, and available community resources.

2. When the ground begins to shake, “[Drop, Cover, and Hold On](#)” until the shaking stops. Do this during any aftershocks that are likely to follow.

### **Let’s be frank**

As uncomfortable as it might be, [we need to have these conversations](#). Surviving an earthquake, or any other serious disaster, takes all of us doing our part to plan ahead, update and practice those plans, and helping those around us stay safe and secure. This is one “to do” item you don’t want to put off. Get started today. Helpful tips and checklists can be found at [Ready.gov](#).

### **For further information in response to this discussion:**

<http://www.mercergov.org/emergency-preparedness>

King County Emergency News blog - [www.kcemergency.com](http://www.kcemergency.com)

Public Health Insider blog - <http://publichealthinsider.com/2015/07/14/surviving-the-really-big-one/#more-1084>