

Meet Your Street Disaster Plan

Neighbors helping neighbors after The Big One:

*A guide to staying safe and helping each other
after a major earthquake.*



Why is this important?

Our roads, electricity, and communications will be impacted for weeks after an [earthquake](#) on the [Cascadia Subduction Zone](#) or the [Seattle Fault](#). First Responders will NOT be available for normal emergency responses. Prepared community members will need to bridge the gap and come to the immediate aid of neighbors after the quake. In the weeks that follow, neighborhoods will need to sustain themselves with food and water they set aside in advance. It could be many weeks before stores are open to sell food or other supplies.

How do I get started?

Start with a few interested neighbors on your street and invite others to join you for an introductory meeting. It's great to include food if you can. Don't be discouraged if your group starts out small. Over time, other neighbors will join you. When you meet, take 30–45 minutes to go over the content of this guide and then [record](#) what skills, resources, and background experiences each of you has that would contribute to helping each other in a crisis.

After your initial meeting, gather once or twice a year to review this plan. This will keep the information fresh in your mind and will allow the circle of participating neighbors to grow. You are on your way to helping the neighbors on your street to strengthen their resiliency to earthquakes, major winter storms, and other types of disasters!

A Major Earthquake has happened, What should I do?

Step 1 – Know what to do to stay safe:

- Learn the importance of [Drop! Cover! And Hold On!](#)
- Stay in bed until the shaking stops if the earthquake strikes at night.
- Keep a pair of sturdy shoes, leather gloves, bike helmet, flashlight, and headlamp under to stay safe if you loose power.

Step 2 – Check on those in your home:

- Remember that an earthquake can be a scary experience and it's normal to feel afraid.
- Provide first aid if needed. Make sure your first aid kit is accessible before the quake.

Step 3 – Secure your home:

- Set out battery powered candles/lanterns.
- Turn off water going into the hot water heater. You can use this water for cooking and drinking. It is now protected from contaminants that have entered the water system or your well.
- Be alert, smelling and listening for natural gas or propane leaks. Know the tools needed to turn off the gas if it's leaking and keep them easily accessible. Remember, a technician from your gas provider is required to turn your gas back on if you turn it off.
- If the power is out, check to make sure that the oven and stove are turned off. Fires can be triggered by earthquakes. Be sure to have a Go Bag for every member of the family in case you need to evacuate quickly.

Step 4 – Message your neighbors:

- Place the [OK/HELP sign](#) in your window or door. Have it ready in advance on the inside of a closet door or kitchen cabinet. Attaching it with a loop of blue painter's tape will allow you to quickly transfer it to your door or window.

Step 5a – Stay inside your home if:

- It is still dark and/or weather conditions make it unsafe to go out.
- You need to provide care for children or assistance for family members. However, everyone will need to evacuate if it's not safe to remain in your home.

Step 5b – Report to your street's Gathering Spot:

- Be sure to take your Survey Response Kit with you. Have these supplies in a small backpack where you can easily grab it on your way out the door: flashlight, headlamp, walkie talkies, gloves, clipboard, the [Disaster Impact Survey](#), pen/pencil, a small first aid kit, two bottles of water and snacks.
- Meet at the designated Gathering Spot to cover 10-20 households. Set up a canopy and table if needed.

Step 6 – Check on your neighbors:

- Divide the group into teams of 2 or 3 people. Assign homes for teams to check.
- Designate two people to stay at the Gathering Spot and gather the information each team collects.
- Prioritize homes with the "Help" sign displayed. Give assistance if possible and/or report immediately to the team stationed at the Gathering Spot.
- Next, go to homes NOT displaying the Help/OK sign.
- Finally, check on the homes with the "OK" sign displayed.
- Report back and provide a list of supplies and tools needed to provide additional assistance. This could include ladders, rope, tools, generators, and chainsaws.

Step 7 – Establish a base of operations:

- Using your gathering spot or a different location, set up a base for first aid, develop a water and sanitation plan, and create a temporary sheltering plan.
- Send messengers in pairs to connect with other nearby streets and, if possible, provide support on those streets as well.

Step 8 – Merge into a Neighborhood Base:

- Anticipate having your base of operation activated for 2–8 hours.
- Close your street’s operation base as soon as a Neighborhood Base is established.
- Comprised of multiple streets and/or apartments, a Neighborhood Base will continue to support Neighborhood Checks, First Aid, Water, Sanitation support and Sheltering support for multiple days.
- The goal is for your Neighborhood Base to be no more than a 15-minute walk from your home.

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Resources

- **Online version of Meet Your Street:** <http://kcowa.us/mysplan>
- **Help/OK window sign**
- [Sign up for KitsapALERT](#) Emergency Notifications
- [ShakeAlert](#) early earthquake warning system – available as an app for your phone
- [Build a list](#) of participating households skills and resources
- [Disaster Impact Survey](#) for your Survey Response Kit
- Choosing and using [fire extinguishers](#)
- Build up your [disaster supplies and an evacuation Go-Bag](#)
- Check out [Kitsap Dept. of Emergency Management volunteer teams](#)

This plan was drawn from Kitsap County’s Getting Ready guide to Personal & Neighborhood Preparedness, 2004.

Produced by Kitsap County Department of Emergency Management April 2024