

Preparedness Tips from Your Laurelhurst LEAP Team

Emergency Food Tips

LEAP recommends a three-day emergency kit (including water and food) for your car, in case the earthquake (or other disaster) catches you on the road, making it necessary to shelter in place or walk to shelter. (City People's, Costco, and other merchants sell basic three-day kits.)

You should also gather a home kit with 14 days of non-perishable food, water, medicines, and other necessities for *each* member of your household. A megathrust earthquake could make Seattle- area roads impassable. Bridges may be damaged and unsafe; airports closed; rescue supplies, emergency personnel – even FEMA – delayed.

Keep food supplies on hand.

If you are able to access your stored supplies, use food in your refrigerator and pantry.

What kinds of food to store? Canned meals, canned/boxed juices, salt, pepper, sugar, powdered milk and coffee and tea. Comfort foods, such as cookies, candy, wine? High-energy protein bars, peanut butter, trail mix, dried fruit. Food that requires adding drinkable water – or needs little or no cooking.

Remember to cycle out foods per expiration dates. Some foods last indefinitely – dried corn, dried pasta, instant coffee, tea and cocoa, salt, noncarbonated drinks, white rice, bouillon. (Given the likely change of diet with limited fresh fruit and vegetables available, it is a good idea to include laxatives in your kit, too.)

While food gathering and storing can seem overwhelming, many camping suppliers and online merchants prepare and sell meals for long-term storage. Some sell large sealed buckets of 50 assorted single-serving meal packets. Maybe not gourmet meals, but sustenance.

Finally, stored food is more enjoyable if you have a camping stove, propane cannisters, cooking pot and pan, cutlery, dishes, and cups to create a warm meal. For sanitation, use paper towels, a washtub, dish soap, dish cloths, and resealable containers for storing open food packets. ■

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Water Is Life. Prepare.

Water is crucial

Current guidelines say to store 14 days of water: 1 gallon/day per person plus 1/3 gallon/day per each pet.

Lake Washington myth

Many residents near the lake believe they can drink lake water after a major earthquake. Not a good idea! Lake Washington will likely be contaminated with fecal matter, oil, gas, and toxic chemicals from ruptured sewer lines, damaged boats, and broken pipes at marine gas stations. Water filtering and boiling may kill bacteria but won't remove heavy metals, salts, and other chemicals in the lake. LEAP has a safer, simpler solution: store water now.

Purchase your water supply

Purchase commercially bottled water; store unopened in any – and many – cool dark places. (Rectangular 2.5-gallon jugs have a handy spigot and stack neatly.) Store unopened water jugs for the life of the container.

Water sources in the house

There is additional clean water in your house. Check water tank, water heater, water pipes, rain barrels, toilet tanks, toilet bowls, pools, spas and radiators. First, protect your tank from contamination ASAP by turning off the water to the house and, if possible, to the tank. Teach everyone in the household where this is and how to turn it off.

Store water disinfection supplies

You must disinfect water from additional household sources. Purchase a quart of unscented 6% or concentrated 8.25% chlorine bleach. Write the purchase date on the bottle, and replace it every six to eight months. Keep an eye dropper and a printed copy of the disinfecting instructions on page 3 with the bleach bottle.

Water Disinfecting Instructions

6% bleach: Use 8 drops per gallon of water; 20 drops per 2.5 gallons.

8.25% bleach: Use 6 drops per gallon of water; 15 drops per 2.5 gallons.

Add proper amount of bleach and stir. Let water sit 30 minutes before drinking. If water doesn't have a slight chlorine odor, repeat dosage; let stand 15 minutes. If water is cloudy or very cold, double the amount of bleach.

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Putting Together an Emergency First Aid Kit

Did you know that the most frequent injuries after an earthquake are burns, breaks, and bleeds? Your earthquake-ready supplies should include a First Aid kit. Here are LEAP tips for setting one up:

Build or purchase a First Aid kit that includes the following:

- Various sizes of sterile bandages/gauze pads ■ triangular bandages
- 2-inch sterile roller bandages ■ hypoallergenic adhesive tape
- instant hot and cold compresses ■ band-aids; butterfly strips
- scissors; safety pins; tweezers ■ moistened toiles
- alcohol; antiseptic lotion or gel ■ tube of Vaseline
- latex gloves and N-95 masks ■ super glue
- aspirin or non-aspirin pain reliever ■ thermometer
- antacids and anti-diarrheal medication

Don't forget vitamins and prescription drugs.

As these medications near their expiration date, use them and replace with new medication. Keep prescriptions in labeled bottles so that refilling will be easier in a situation where doctors' offices are closed and computer records are unavailable.

For more detailed information, refer to the Red Cross website

<https://www.redcross.org/get-help/how-to-prepare-for-emergencies/survival-kit-supplies.html> ■

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During an Earthquake, Shelter in Place

A quake brings strong shaking, making it difficult to stand or move about. The shaking will be accompanied by loud noise, breaking glass, falling objects, possibly collapsing ceilings or walls. Find the safest spot nearby and protect your head and neck and stay put!

If you are indoors, stay indoors; take cover under a sturdy desk or table – hold onto one of the legs. ***Drop, Cover and Hold On***. If no sturdy table or desk is nearby, get beside a wall or crouch down between two chairs. Remember: ***Beneath, Beside or Between***.

If you are outdoors, get into the open, away from chimneys, power lines, old buildings or other structures which could fall on you.

If you are in a car, bring the car to a careful stop – not under an overpass, a bridge, or power lines. Stay in the car.

If you are near the ocean, stay clear of anything that could fall on you. Lie down and wait until shaking stops. Then get to higher ground!

If you are in bed, at night, in the dark? Shove on your sturdy shoes (kept under your bed for just such a glass-shattering event). Grab your flashlight (kept near your bed for a potential power interruption). Quickly, make your way to a place where you can be Beneath, Beside or Between.

Remember aftershocks happen. Don't assume these will be weaker than the first! Continue to shelter in place until they have passed. ■

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After the Earthquake

Like other natural disasters, a large earthquake can be expected to disrupt life as we live it. Think non-functioning banks, ATMs, mail, phone lines, means of transportation, as well as low to non-existent inventories of groceries and gas stations. Think emergency services overwhelmed or impeded by failed infrastructure. Advance preparation and provisioning is the key to recovering from the effects of an earthquake.

Cell phone lines will likely be overwhelmed. Help out by keeping your phone off line. Use your phone for texting only; in fact, keep your phone turned off unless you are texting or checking for a text.

Laurelhurst, even parts of Laurelhurst, may be isolated for some time before roads are cleared, utilities restored, and emergency services resumed. But this does not mean you have to face this on your own. Connect with your neighbors. As in frontier times, neighbors will look to each other for reassurance and assistance. Neighbors will check on each other and share knowledge and tools.

To facilitate neighborhood cooperation and planning, LEAP has divided Laurelhurst into clusters of about 20 houses each and is currently working to identify and train cluster captains. Interested? Contact LEAP at LCCearthquake@outlook.com. ■

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How to Access Water from Your Water Tank

Water is essential to survival, especially after emergencies such as earthquakes. Current guidelines recommend storing a 14-day supply of water: 1 gallon/day per person plus 1/3 gallon/day per pet.

There may be usable water in your toilet tanks – not the bowls! – and in your hot water tank. Water from these sources must be disinfected before use. (See last month's newsletter for instructions.)

To use water from a hot water tank, prevent contamination by turning off water to the house and, if possible, to the tank.

1. Find the house water shut-off valve. Label the valve with instructions to turn right for OFF.

2. Find the tank's supply pipe by running hot water in any sink. The tank's supply pipe will feel cold. Label it.

3. Store a flat-head screwdriver, RV hose, and a clean empty container near the water heater along with the following instructions about drinking from your water heater:

Shut off water to the house to keep water in your pipes clean. If you can't, close the valve that lets water into your water tank.

Cut power to the tank.

Electric: Flip the breaker supplying electricity to the tank.

Gas: Shut off the gas to the tank.

Allow water to cool, which takes hours. Attach an RV hose to valve at bottom of tank.

Break the vacuum by turning on any hot water faucet in house.

Open valve at bottom of tank and let water run through your RV hose to your clean container. If water contains rust or sediment, filter it using a towel/sock/coffee filter

Before drinking, disinfect the water.

Once life normalizes, refill the water heater tank completely before turning on its power.

Prepare for your water needs now – before a major earthquake.

Water is your best friend for life. ■

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Handling Utilities After an Earthquake

Large earthquakes can fell power lines, break water and gas pipes, and overwhelm emergency repair personnel. Protect your family and home by teaching all household members where to find and how to turn off your utilities. Share the location of your utility controls with cluster neighbors so they can handle this task if you are unable to do so.

If you don't smell or hear natural gas, you probably don't need to shut it off. Just in case, locate the shut-off valve and know how to turn off the gas. If you do turn off the gas, Puget Sound Energy (PSE) will need to relight the pilot when it is safe. PSE recommends installing an automatic earthquake shut-off valve.

Every household member also should learn how to shut off water at the main house valve. This prevents debris from pipe breaks from contaminating precious, clean water stored in hot water and toilet tanks.

Know where and how to turn off the electrical master switch in case of flooding or a live exposed electric wire in the house.

Label your shut-off valves. Hardware stores, outdoor outfitters, and Amazon sell pre-labeled tags.

Teach everyone in your household when and how to use a fire extinguisher and identify a clear exit path. Know which types of fire your extinguisher is meant to combat. Remember PASS: Pull out pin. Aim at fire base from about 10 feet away. Squeeze lever. Sweep side to side until: (a) fire is out, (b) extinguisher is empty, or (c) exiting is the safest strategy.

The ability to control utilities quickly after an earthquake may dramatically contribute to your family's and your neighborhood's safety and survival. Know "how to" before you "have to"! ■