

Home Improvement Corner

Bringing the Boyscout motto home.

Your home's value is more than financial. It's the lasting comfort and enjoyment for your loved ones. Preparing your home will provide a value you probably did not consider when you bought it. If you are considering investing in your home, consider preparing it for the big one.

Winter is fast approaching. Last year, our region experienced crippling snowfall. When you recall your personal experience struggling to get around in the snow: imagine what it would have been like if a major earthquake knocked out power to the region, dropped trees across local roads, and shook your home off its foundation.

Experts report the Pacific subduction zone is building pressure for the next seismic event, and if it happens during the winter, the emergency services may not be able to respond for weeks. The more prepared you are, the more comfortable you will be in the wake of a major earthquake.

One way to promote self-reliability for your family and neighbors is by organizing a Map Your Neighborhood (MYN) event. The program is designed to include a group of up to 25 adjacent neighbors and literally map the homes that will be designated for certain tasks following a natural disaster. In the event of a natural disaster, the City of Redmond has a radio station that will be broadcasting alerts on AM 1650. Additional resources are: govlink.org/3days3ways and everyoneprepared.org/.

Another way to prepare is by ensuring the structure of your home is adequately fastened to the foundation. Certified seismic retrofit specialists can be contacted to assess and recommend mechanical fasteners that will reduce the amount of damage an earthquake could cause a home. Current building codes dictate the degree to which older homes should be retrofitted. Newer homes likely do not require an assessment, but for peace of mind, I recommend a qualified individual to inspect the foundation system of your home. For more information about retrofitting your home, search for Project Impact on the City of Seattle website.

Self reliance will keep you and your family relatively comfortable, safe and nourished should your neighborhood become inaccessible to emergency responders. Be prepared is more than just the Boyscout motto, it's what geologists and community organizations have been promoting. I trust you won't be left out in the cold.

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