



NEWS RELEASE

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QUAKE COTTAGE SHAKES HOME PREPAREDNESS MESSAGE

Just before midnight on December 29, a 4.7 magnitude earthquake gave residents in Langley and throughout the Lower Mainland a jarring reminder that we live in an earthquake zone.

While most people know our area is susceptible to quakes, how many are actually prepared for a major event and have taken steps to ensure they can manage in the days following such a disaster?

In early May, a unique opportunity is being offered to give Langley residents a chance to experience what it is like to live through an earthquake, and remind them of the importance of being prepared, should that scenario become a reality.

The Quake Cottage, an earthquake simulator based in California, is being brought in to select municipalities by the Insurance Bureau of Canada and will make an appearance in Langley during Emergency Preparedness Week. On Saturday, May 7, the Quake Cottage will be located in the northwest parking lot of the Willowbrook Shopping Centre, by Toys R Us, from 11am to 5pm. Members of the public are invited to step inside for free, and safely experience what a major quake feels like.

The simulator is part of a Shake Zone event being presented by the Township of Langley, the City of Langley, and the Langley Emergency Program. The free event will feature emergency preparedness information stations that will show how an earthquake will affect the day-to-day world, the science behind earthquakes, and outline actions to ensure safety during and after an earthquake. A community scrawl wall will be set up so people can write or draw how they feel about being better prepared for a real earthquake.

“Being prepared in case of an emergency is something we all talk about, but now is the time to take action and do it,” said Township of Langley Mayor Jack Froese. “Experiencing a major earthquake through the Quake Cottage will likely be very dramatic and make an impact on people. We hope they act on that feeling and take steps to help keep their families safe.”

“The Quake Cottage is coming to just a few municipalities in B.C. from the U.S. this year and we are pleased to welcome it to our community,” said City of Langley Mayor Ted Schaffer. “We hope Langley residents take advantage of this unique opportunity to visit the Shake Zone and take away valuable experiences and information during Emergency Preparedness Week.”

As part of the event, the Langley Emergency Program is running an ad in local papers which includes a draw ticket. The public is encouraged to cut out the ticket, bring it to the event on May 7, and enter for a chance to win emergency grab and go bags.

“By taking simple actions now, you will be in a much better position to survive an emergency,” said Langley Emergency Program Coordinator Ginger Sherlock, who encourages people to be “prepared, not scared.”

If a major earthquake strikes, she said, the first priority will be help those who are injured or trapped. Power and phone services could be out for days, water and sewer systems would be shut down, and emergency responders and the health care system would be overwhelmed. Stores and gas stations would be closed, and while most buildings constructed to code will withstand movement, older buildings could be impacted and transportation routes obstructed.

“Whether you are at home, at work, or on holiday, you will be in charge of your own personal safety. Having an emergency kit and a communications plan with your loved ones is a great place to start,” Sherlock said.

During Emergency Preparedness Week and throughout May, the Langley Emergency Program will offer free personal preparedness sessions so families know how to stay safe in case of an emergency such as an earthquake, fire, landslide, or extreme weather conditions. To sign up for a session, email ep@langleycity.ca. The Langley Emergency Program will also provide free, customized emergency workshops for businesses and community groups.

For more information, visit langleyemergency.ca. Sign up for notifications and preparedness information on Facebook and Twitter through @LangleyPrepared or have updates sent directly to your email by subscribing to the Township of Langley’s eAlerts at tol.ca/eAlerts.

For more information, contact Emergency Program Coordinator Ginger Sherlock at 604.514.2820 or gsherlock@langleycity.ca.