



# NEWS RELEASE

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## **EARTHQUAKE A REMINDER TO BE PREPARED**

Some people felt a jolt or a bang. Many were in bed and felt their surroundings shake. Some people wondered if a car had struck their building.

However it was experienced, the 4.7 magnitude earthquake that was felt in Langley and throughout the Lower Mainland at 11:39pm on December 29 was a reminder that we live in an area susceptible to quakes.

And it is a very real reminder of the need to be prepared, said Township of Langley Mayor Jack Froese.

“We live in an earthquake zone and there is a very real possibility that a far more damaging quake could occur during our lifetime,” said Froese. “Last week’s tremor got everyone talking, but it is important that we take action, too. Now is the time to make preparations so that you and your family are able to cope, should a more severe earthquake occur.”

While the Township of Langley had no reported damage or loss of services following the December 29 quake, a stronger quake could cut power and phone services for days, shut down water and sewer systems, and overwhelm emergency responders and the health care system. Stores and gas stations would likely be closed, and while most buildings constructed to code will withstand movement, older buildings could be impacted and transportation routes obstructed.

“Last week’s earthquake was our wakeup call,” said Langley Emergency Coordinator Ginger Sherlock, who urges residents to “be prepared, not scared.”

Simple actions like putting a flashlight in a pair of hard-soled shoes and placing them under your bed will protect your feet from broken glass and help you see, should an earthquake strike. And residents should have an emergency kit on hand that includes a battery-powered or hand-crank radio, a flashlight and batteries, a first-aid kit, food and water, and seasonal clothing and footwear.

“It will be like camping for several days, as it will take time for damage to be assessed and services to be restored,” Sherlock said. “The first priority will be help those who are injured or trapped, so you will be in charge of your own personal safety, whether you are at home, at work, or on holiday. Have a communications plan with your loved ones and know how you will connect after and where everyone will meet.”

For detailed information on how individuals, businesses, and schools can prepare for an earthquake and links on how to create an emergency kit, visit [langleyemergency.ca](http://langleyemergency.ca). The Langley Emergency Program is run by staff and volunteers who help residents prepare for, respond to, and recover from emergencies, including earthquakes.

Supplies to build a kit can be found at local retailers such as Canadian Tire, Army and Navy, and dollar stores. Ready-made kits are also available at Angel Safety Products in Langley.

“The sooner you prepare yourself, your home, and your family, the more resilient you will be when a disaster strikes,” Sherlock said.

Residents can sign up for notifications and preparedness information on Facebook and Twitter through @LangleyPrepared. Updates can also be sent directly to your email by subscribing to the Township of Langley’s eAlerts at [tol.ca/eAlerts](http://tol.ca/eAlerts).

### **Background:**

The Township of Langley is located in an earthquake zone, and can experience three types of earthquakes:

1. Crustal earthquakes are close to the surface, violent, and short lasting; these happen extremely rarely, and they are not felt far away.
2. Deep crustal quakes happen frequently along the west coast and sometimes effect populated areas; examples include the 2001 Nisqually earthquake in southern Puget Sound and last week’s earthquake in Sidney, both of which were felt by Langley residents. These quakes are felt far away due to the radiating movement.
3. Subduction zone earthquakes, also called the ‘Big One,’ would last for minutes and be felt by most within the west coast regions. Langley citizens would feel like they are standing on a moving boat, as there would be a rocking motion created by the moving earth.