



WASHINGTON STATE SEISMIC SAFETY COMMITTEE

1111 Washington Street SE

P.O. Box 47007

Olympia, WA 98504-7007

Dear Educator,

Washington State is Earthquake Country. While this may not be news to you, it is a fact of life that we tend to forget since we do not experience earthquakes on a regular basis. It is crucial that all of us know how to respond appropriately when the time comes and we feel the ground begin to shake. Experts across Washington State and throughout the world recommend one method to protect yourself during an earthquake: Drop, Cover, and Hold.

TO REDUCE YOUR CHANCE OF INJURY DURING AN EARTHQUAKE :

- **DROP to the ground onto your hands and knees** - This protects you from falling or getting knocked off your feet from the shaking and still allows you to move.
- **COVER - take cover by getting under a sturdy table or desk.** If there is no shelter close by, you should get down near an interior wall. **Cover** your head and neck with your arm.
- **HOLD on to the table/desk leg to keep it safely over you.** Be prepared to move with your shelter.

WHY EXPERTS RECOMMEND DROP, COVER, AND HOLD:

- **Trying to move during shaking puts you at risk:** Earthquakes occur without any warning and may be so violent that you cannot run or crawl. You will most likely be knocked to the ground. "Drop, Cover, and Hold" gives you the best overall chance of quickly protecting yourself during an earthquake.
- **The greatest danger is from falling and flying objects:** Numerous studies of earthquake related injuries and deaths over the past several years show that you are much more likely to be injured by falling or flying objects than to die in a collapsed building. "Drop, Cover, and Hold" will protect you from most of these injuries.

WHAT EXPERTS RECOMMEND YOU DO NOT DO DURING AN EARTHQUAKE:

- **DO NOT run outside or to other rooms during shaking:** The area near the exterior walls of a building is the most dangerous place to be. Windows, bricks, and architectural features may be the first parts of the building to break or fall.
- **DO NOT stand in a doorway:** In today's houses, most doorways are no stronger than any other part of the house. The doorway does not protect you from the falling or flying objects and may cause injury if it slams shut on your hands.
- **DO NOT get in the "triangle of life" position:** In recent years, an e-mail has been widely circulating which describes an alternative to the long-established "Drop, Cover, and Hold" procedures. This so-called "triangle of life" and some of the other actions recommended in the e-mail are potentially life threatening. The credibility of the source of these recommendations has been broadly questioned by many professional engineering, disaster response, and emergency management agencies.

We hope you will take this opportunity to spread the word to your students, faculty, staff, and parents that "Drop, Cover, and Hold" is the right move to make during an earthquake. For additional information on earthquake safety and preparedness, please visit <http://www.emd.wa.gov>.

Sincerely,

James M. Mullen
Director
Washington State Emergency Management
Seismic Safety Committee Co-Chair

David K. Norman
State Geologist
Department of Natural Resources
Seismic Safety Committee Co-Chair

Dear Principals,

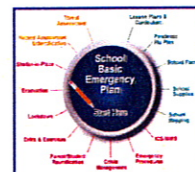
Washington State Emergency Management continues to work with the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction to provide you up-to-date information, tools, and templates that will help you prepare your school for disasters. In this packet you will find Drop, Cover, and Hold posters to place in your classrooms, along with a sample of other items that you can order for your students. To order any of our materials, please contact us at PublicEducation@emd.wa.gov or 1-800-562-6108 x 7419.

Have a great school year and thank you for taking the time to prepare!



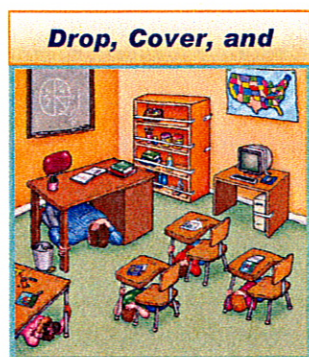
SEPTEMBER: is National Disaster Preparedness Month. Emergency management agencies, schools, and businesses throughout the United States will be participating in this campaign. It's time to take action and prepare your home and family.

How about your school - are you ready to take care of employees and children after a disaster? Our website has tools and templates that will help you - a Basic School Plan, 12-Step Planning Process, School Laws and Disaster Drill / Exercise information. Check out the new *Earthquake Procedures* now available at www.emd.wa.gov/preparedness/prep_schools.shtml, along with other important information.



NOAA Weather Radio - is yours working? Every school (public and private) was given a weather radio by NOAA. Take the time to locate yours, make sure it's programmed, and know how to use it. These radios, when programmed properly will notify you of impending weather and all-hazards situations, allowing you time to take appropriate actions. Your all-hazards weather radio will be used to initiate this year's earthquake drills.

If you need help in programming your radio you can find **programming tips** at www.emd.wa.gov/publications/pubed/noaa_weather_radio.shtml or you may contact your local emergency management office.



SEPTEMBER is Back-to-School Month. As part of the state's preparedness efforts OSPI and the State Emergency Management Division recommends that all Washington schools participate in the statewide **"Drop, Cover & Hold" Earthquake Drill on September 15, at 10:15 a.m.** (please refer to RCW 50.97).

We encourage you to add this EQ drill information to your student's weekly/monthly "take home packet".

Reminder - last April your school should have received a teacher's packet including a CD with information on how to prepare your family, home, and neighborhood and materials to be used as teaching Aids. Included were *Drop, Cover, & Hold (DCH)* drill posters and templates to print additional posters. You can find the information along with templates and children's booklets at www.emd.wa.gov/preparedness/prep_infohouse.shtml.



KIDZ ZONE - TAKING ACTION: Please visit our website; we've recently added the Kidz Zone section. Your students can learn about hazards in your community, how to take care of themselves, and work with puzzles and games. Teachers can find supporting curriculum and activity sheets on our website in the Schools Section. To order any of our Kidz materials, send an email to PublicEducation@emd.wa.gov.



www.emd.wa.gov/preparedness/prep_index.shtml