

## May 2017 Prepare In A Year: IMPORTANT DOCUMENTS

Fumbling through files for important papers can be frustrating. But when an emergency strikes, trying to gather up all those documents can be downright frightening.

There is a way around all the late-minute hassle, but it will take some time and a way to organize and contain them so that you can grab and go when a disaster strikes.

Container options can range from a fireproof lock box or safe, a safety deposit box, storage on the cloud, flash drives, or something as simple as a three-ring binder with plastic sleeves into which you can insert the documents.

The list of documents and records you will want to have is long, but will be invaluable after you have evacuated your home. You will need access to some of these items sooner than others, but all are important enough to include in your "must have" list:

- **Vital Records:** Driver's licenses, birth certificates, adoption papers, Social Security cards, passports, citizenship papers (such as a "green card" or naturalization documents), marriage license, divorce decrees, child custody papers, current military ID, military discharge (DD Form 214), medical and vaccination records for pets along with current photos and ID chip numbers in case you are separated.
- **Insurance Policies:** Homeowners, renters, flood, earthquake, auto, life, health, disability, long-term care; have at least the policy number and insurance company contact information for each type of coverage.

### Keep Your Important Documents Safe from a Disaster

- **Property Records:** Real estate deeds of trust and mortgage documents (at least the two-page settlement statement provided by the title company showing the actual cost of the house and purchase expenses); rental agreement or lease; auto/boat/RV registration and titles; video, photos or a list of household inventory.
- **Medical Information:** Immunization and other medical records, prescription information (drug name and dosage), health insurance identification cards, physician names and phone numbers, powers-of-attorney for health care, and living wills.
- **Estate planning documents:** Wills, trusts, funeral instructions, powers-of-attorney, attorney names and phone numbers.
- **Financial records:** First two pages of your previous year's federal and state tax returns, stock and bond certificates, investment records, brokerage and retirement account information, credit card, checking and savings account numbers, contact information for credit unions, banks, financial institutions, credit card companies and financial advisers.
- **Other:** Personal address book, *a letter with instructions for family or friends (for use*

*in a situation where you're not present*, backups of important computer files, a list of usernames and passwords for online accounts, a key to your safe deposit box, a recent photograph, fingerprints and dental records for each member of the household (some police stations and nonprofits fingerprint children free);, account and contact information for utilities and other services (you may have to provide a new billing address or cancel certain services), a list of important documents and where originals and copies are located.

Those who don't have the time or ability to gather all of these documents should focus on the most important and most difficult to replace. In addition, take time now to think about the priceless personal items you would want to protect from danger or take with you if you had to suddenly evacuate your home.

The first step is to take an inventory of your household valuables. Those who wish more complete checklists or guidance on collecting and safeguarding this important information, go to [www.ready.gov/financialpreparedness](http://www.ready.gov/financialpreparedness).

Source: <https://www.fema.gov/news-release/2015/11/18/keep-your-important-documents-safe-disaster>

## **VOLCANO PREPAREDNESS MONTH**

May is Volcano Preparedness Month in Washington, providing residents an opportunity to become more familiar with volcanic hazards in their communities and learn about steps they can take to reduce potential impacts. It is a time to commemorate the May 18, 1980 catastrophic eruption of Mount St. Helens, which not only caused massive destruction and loss of life but also became a catalyst for a new era of unprecedented scientific discovery, technology development and community awareness.



The Washington Military Department's Emergency Management Division, Washington State Department of Natural Resources, the Pacific Northwest Seismic Network, the U.S. Geological Survey's [Cascades Volcano Observatory](#) and a variety of local emergency management agencies are working together with communities at risk across the state to provide timely warnings and reduce the negative impacts of future eruptions. Together, the agencies develop and exercise emergency plans with communities, coordinate communications, conduct public education programs and plan for short- and long-term recovery in the event an eruption or lahar should occur.

Source: USGS/CVO/news

### **Opportunities in Pierce County for education on Mount Rainier as an Active Volcano! Are you Volcano READY? - [Select for details](#)**

Thursday, May 4 at 6 P.M. Orting High School, Dr. Marta Calvache, Director of Geohazards Mitigation at the Servicio Geológico Colombiano, will tell an encouraging story of effective [lahar evacuation in Colombia](#).

Friday, May 12 at 2 P.M. Steilacoom Library [Volcano Preparedness with Hydrologist Carolyn Driedger](#), Cascades outreach coordinator for the U.S. Geological Survey, works in partnership with public officials, emergency planners and news media to advance the cause of volcano awareness.

Tuesday, May 16 6:30 P.M. [What Mount Rainier Has in Store...](#), Carolyn Driedger and Seth Moran of the United States Geological Survey speaking at Puyallup Community Center.

## PREPAREDNESS ACADEMY

Find information and registration links for classes available in 2017. Below are May and June courses, more are listed [HERE](#).

**Psychological First Aid:** People's reactions to crisis vary. Learn which reactions are beneficial and how some are actually harmful. Take away some important tools you can use to connect with affected people and provide immediate emotional support following an emergency. Use the registration link to see future classes as well.

**Washington Community Chaplain Corps, May 23, Tuesday 6:30 P.M.  
Puyallup Library, 324 S Meridian, Puyallup**

**To register:** <http://piercecounty.surveymshare.com/s/AYAMWDA>

**Disaster First Aid/Triage:** Learn skills and get hands-on experience about how to perform immediate triage and use disaster first aid following an event. A First Aid Certificate is awarded, no CPR unless indicated at registration. Recommend taking CPR before this class. All classes are on Saturday. Use the registration link to see future classes as well.

*This course for PC NET, Citizen Corps, PEP-C, and CERT Team members*

**DEM EMT Staff and Volunteers, June 10, Saturday, 8:30 A.M. - 5:00 P.M.  
Buckley Fire Department, 611 Division St, Buckley**

**To register:** <http://piercecounty.surveymshare.com/s/AYAKGIB>

**Earthquake Retrofit:** If your wood frame home was built before the early 1980's, the house may not be fastened to the foundation. Learn what earthquake retrofitting does for a home in regards to earthquakes, get questions answered about what to expect installers to do receive or guidance if you are a Do It Yourself person.

**Pierce County Dept. of Public Works - Planning and Land Services Rick Hopkins  
May 17, 6:30 P.M. - 8:00 P.M., Eatonville, see registration for location**

**To register:** <http://piercecounty.surveymshare.com/s/AYASWMB>

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## What is PC-NET?

[Pierce County Neighborhood Emergency Teams \(PC-NET\)](#) provides neighbors with information and tools necessary to work together for an effective response following emergencies and disasters. Professional responders will not be available to assist your neighborhood after a major disaster—you become the first responder. If individuals and their neighbors are prepared to mutually assist one another, lives can be saved and property can be spared.





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Pierce County Emergency Management  
[www.piercecountywa.org/PREPARE](http://www.piercecountywa.org/PREPARE)

Outreach Staff  
Sarah Foster, Supervisor  
Peggy LovellFord  
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