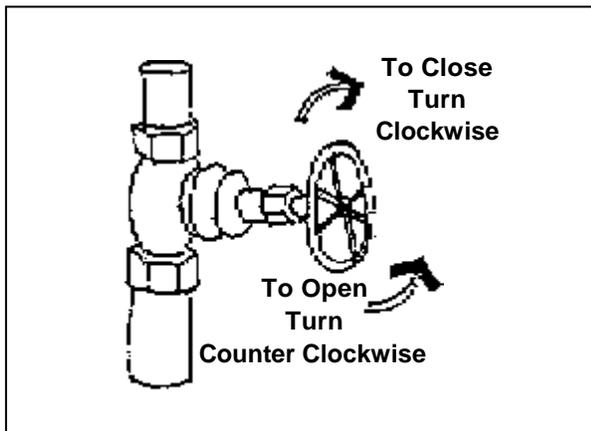


# Emergency Water Shut-Off

Prepared by the Peninsulas Emergency Preparedness Committee of Washington 11/00 ([www.pep-c.org](http://www.pep-c.org))

To be fully prepared for an emergency you should know how to shut off the water to your house. After a major disaster, such as an earthquake, make a visual inspection for leaks in your plumbing system.

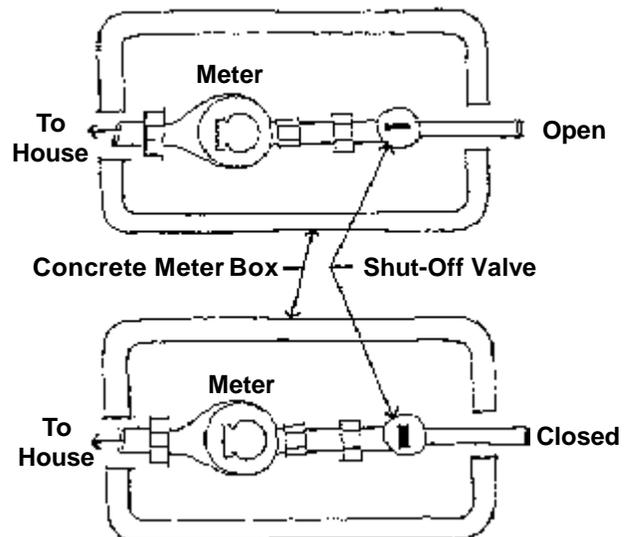
Check your water supply lines by turning water faucets on and off. If the cold water stops running, runs very slowly after a few seconds, or is dirty, you have a leak. If leaks are discovered, you can shut off the water to your house in one of two ways.



First, the water can be turned off where it enters the house. For many homes, the water valve is located at the faucet in front of the house where a hose can be connected. Just below the faucet is a valve, usually with a round or oval handle, that controls the flow of water to the house.

To shut off the water to the house, turn the handle of the valve clockwise. This valve should be checked periodically to see if it is working. To test the valve, first turn it off by turning it clockwise. Then, try to turn on the hose faucet. If water flows through the faucet, the valve is broken and should be repaired immediately.

The second way to turn off the water supply to your house is to shut off the water valve at the meter (usually located in a concrete box near the sidewalk or street). If this box is inaccessible or you cannot find it, call your local water department.



## HOW TO TURN OFF A WATER METER

- Open the cover with a long screwdriver or specialty tool.
- Locate the meter shut off valve (usually on the pipe coming from the sidewalk or street).
- Use a long-handled crescent wrench (12 inches or larger) to turn the valve one-quarter turn so that the lever is cross-wise to the pipe (see diagram). Some meters require a special valve wrench. These can be purchased at most hardware stores. You should know before disaster strikes what tool you will need to turn off the water supply to your house at the meter box.