

WEEKLY SAFETY TIP – 3/8/10 – 80% CHANCE OF EARTHQUAKE IN PNW

This morning, an earthquake measuring 5.9 struck the country of Turkey. The latest news reports at least 50 dead. On February 28, a mega-earthquake of 8.8 struck the country of Chile. Over 400 are reported dead. On January 12, an earthquake of 7.0 struck the island nation of Haiti, claiming hundreds of thousands of lives. Our thoughts and prayers are offered for the victims.

What can we learn from these facts? There is a wide discrepancy in the loss from these quakes. While there are many factors that contributed to the difference, such as the location of the quakes, the depth at which each occurred, and other critical elements, we cannot help but point out that Chile was more prepared for an earthquake. Because the country of Chile had experienced a major earthquake in 1960, they knew first hand the damage that a quake can do, and had taken steps that helped to lessen their losses.

Why is this important? *Because it can happen to us.* Scientists predict there is an 80 % chance of a major quake on a fault only 50 miles offshore along the Pacific Northwest. A major earthquake would have devastating effects for cities such as Portland, Seattle and Vancouver. Follow this link to read the article from MSNBC Science News: http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/35674095/ns/technology_and_science-science/. About half way down the page, there is a very interesting link to an interactive site with more information on what causes earthquakes.

The key to earthquake safety is preparation. Earthquakes do not have a warning system. You must be prepared at all times. And earthquakes can happen anywhere at anytime. They don't just happen in California or Alaska. In fact, among the 10 US states with the most earthquakes are Nevada (#4), Idaho (#6) and Utah (#9). To see the whole list, here's a link to the US Geological Survey website: http://earthquake.usgs.gov/earthquakes/states/top_states.php. We recommend this site as one of the "go-to" locations for accurate information about earthquakes and other natural disasters.

SCM has developed a good checklist on earthquake preparation entitled "Before, During and After." This short, 2-page checklist is available on our website on our safety tip page at: http://www.scm-safety.com/weekly_tips.html. Another good site for up-to-date information about earthquake preparation is run by the City and County of San Francisco. Because after a major earthquake, it is estimated that you may not have access to assistance from public agencies for up to 72 hours, this site is called 72 Hours. We have the link here for you: <http://72hours.org/>.

If you have not taken the time to prepare your business, your home and your family for the possibility of an earthquake, please take the time to do so today. Think of it this way, if you heard a report that there was an 80 % chance of rain, you would probably carry an umbrella or wear a jacket. There's an 80 % chance of an earthquake in the Pacific Northwest. There's a potential for an earthquake or other natural disaster in your area. What are you going to do?