

**Neighborhood Leadership Gathering
Emergency Preparedness “Preparing for Disaster”
September 17, 2019**

Meeting Summary

Nearly 100 residents gathered in the Council Chamber for the semi-annual Neighborhood Leadership Gathering on Tuesday, September 17. The recent earthquake activity both in and outside the region made “Preparing for Disaster” a topic that resonated greatly with residents. The evening kicked off with a welcome and introduction by Fire Chief Jay Hagen who stressed that the City is working hard to keep everyone safe, and the importance of community preparedness. Curry Mayer, Emergency Operations Center Manager followed with an overview of emergency management operations. Ms. Mayer spoke about mitigation, preparedness, response and recovery. In addition to immediate response in an emergency, the emergency operations center focuses on planning for hazards, educating the public, managing grants and coordinating with regional partners.

Offered in both English and Mandarin, the evening took residents through a series of interactive stations where they experienced hands-on learning to help them personally prepare for an emergency.

- A tour of the Emergency Operations Center highlighted how resources are allocated and managed during an actual disaster response.
- Visitors then moved to a “Bullex” demonstration, where they learned how fire spreads, and practiced activating a fire extinguisher. Everyone got to pull the pin, and spray to see how to put out a fire.
- At the final station, participants worked in groups as a “neighborhood” and identified simple steps to help organize preparedness with their neighbors. By mapping a neighborhood’s skills and knowledge, neighbors learn how to rely on each other before responders arrive, which in an actual emergency can take several days. Residents identified neighbors who had first aid supplies, a chain saw, rope, camping equipment, crisis counseling skills, language skills, etc.

The City of Bellevue’s Office of Emergency Management team offers regular 3-hour training workshops on disaster preparedness on selected Saturdays throughout the year, circulating through different Bellevue neighborhoods. CERT Lite is a station-style training that educates participants in four critical life-saving topics: personal preparedness, fire safety, CERT disaster medical, and CERT search and rescue. Registration is FREE and open to everyone, recommended ages 11 and up. Each session is held from 9 am to noon. See registration information for exact locations in Bellevue. CERT Lite is offered November 16, and December 7th. Please find registration on EventBrite.com with search term “CERT LITE”. This program is based on CERT training materials from FEMA; the full 24-hour CERT training is also available a few times a year with the next session in early 2020.

What You Should Know About Life Saving Skills

- Learn basic preparedness skills to protect your family and home.
- Eliminate common electrical and fire hazards around your house and property.
- Install smoke, carbon monoxide, and natural gas alarms and test them monthly.
- Teach children what to do when they hear smoke, carbon monoxide, and natural gas alarms.

- Place natural gas detectors on every level of your home and test them monthly.
- Learn how to turn off utilities like natural gas in your home.
- Talk to your landlord or building manager about evacuation routes and fire safety.
- Develop and practice a family communication plan and discuss it with your family.
- Have emergency supplies in place at home, at work, and in the car.
- Pay attention to alerts and warnings.
- Plan for two ways out of your home in the event of a fire and practice evacuation plans.