

## Neighborhood Preparedness How to Establish an Emergency Shelter

**Problem:** The City of Seattle will require shelter facilities after a disaster. Currently, no facilities are designated community shelters within the City.

**Design Goals:** Individuals and neighbors can start preparing for a natural disaster at home, and with neighbors via Seattle's SNAP program. SNAP addresses the home-by-home and block-by-block aspects of preparation for an emergency. These preparations will help most people in the hours after an event.

At a slightly larger scale and longer time frame, neighborhoods will want access to community shelters and meeting points, not located on their block but within walking distance. Existing schools, parks, and other community centers are well-distributed throughout Seattle but may not be prepared to serve the community after an earthquake. SNAP already identifies public outdoor spaces as meeting places after a disaster; however, these locations do not have the ability to act as shelters.

# How can a Community Prepare a Community Shelter?

**Solar panels:** Solar panels are a long-term sustainable solution to independent power supplies. In the event of a disaster, power from the grid may not be possible. Having an independent power supply is useful for continuity of business, living conditions, and providing electricity in the need of a shelter. Back-up generators require consistent maintenance which may be over looked.

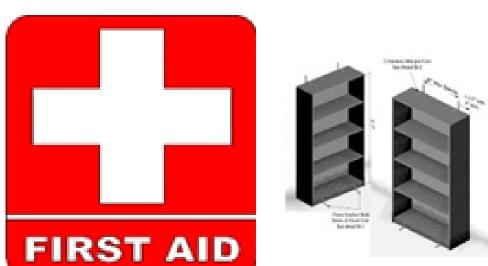
**Rain barrels:** Rain barrels collect run-off rain water. In the event of a disaster plumbing may be damaged in the earthquake and water may be limited. Rain barrels provide water than can easily be treated and used for toilets, washing dishes, and potentially drinking (if treated properly). This provides less reliance on a limited resource.

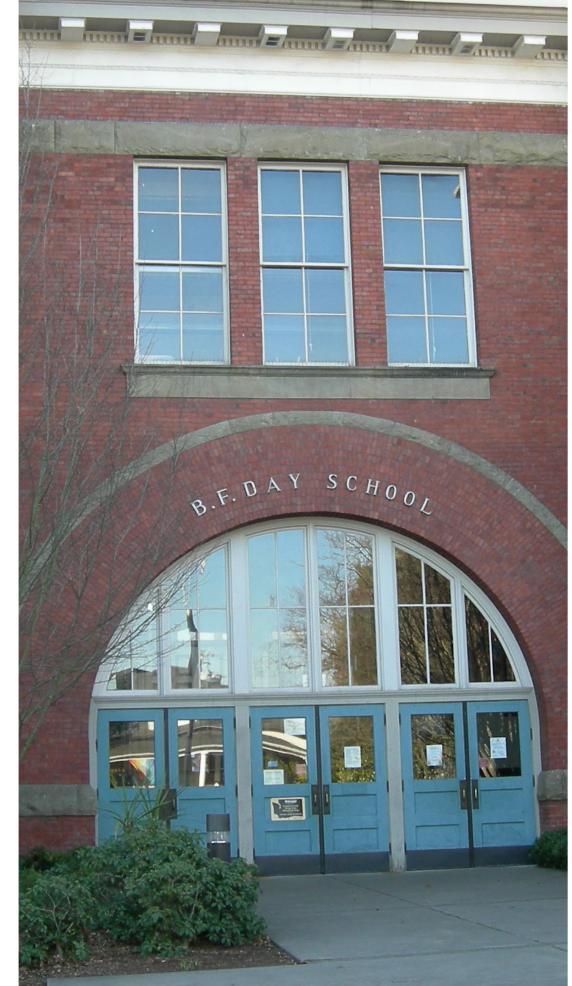
**Bracing bookshelves to walls:** Bracing heavy objects to the walls or floors prevents falling hazards in the event of an earthquake. In shelter facilities that may store large quantities of materials, it is important that these materials are not damaged due to falling shelving units. Bracing shelves is a simple solution to mitigating falling hazards.

**First Aid**: First aid is important to have handy in a shelter. As people take refuge in the shelter they may come from locations where they were hurt and may need medical attention. First aid kits can help medical professionals treat minor injuries while more critical care addresses more serious injuries.









# UNSAFE DO NOT ENTER OR OCCUPY (THIS PLACARD IS NOT A DEMOLITION ORDER) This structure has been inspected, found to be seriously damaged and is unsafe to occupy, as described below. Date Time This facility was inspected under emergency conditions for: (Jurisdiction) Do not enter, except as specifically authorized in writing by jurisdiction. Entry may result in death or injury. Facility Name and Address:





#### **How to Pre- and Post-Assess the Structure?**

The building identified as a shelter should be assessed by a structural engineer and building official to understand what the deficiencies are, and any vulnerabilities within the building. After a disaster the building should be assessed again before sheltering any people. Contact your local building jurisdiction to schedule assessments.

**Predisaster assessment:** Identify deficiencies withing the building to fix.

**Postdisaster assessment:** Necessary for the building to be occupied after disaster.

### **How to Implement?**

#### **Community/Neighborhood Emergency Preparedness Day**

Neighborhood works together to improve emergency management center. Know where your local SNAP is. Know who your neighbors are, what supplies they might have, and if they need special care (elderly, disabled). Knowing your neighbors will help a community work together after a disaster.

#### **Community Fundraising**

Fundraise within the community to improve the emergency management center for post-earthquake recovery donations of canned food and water for shelter.



