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SURVIVING YET ANOTHER MAJOR EVENT IN BIG BEAR VALLEY

Are you prepared for the next one?

BIG BEAR VALLEY, CA/February 22, 2010– Big Bear has experienced many major events in the past 20+ years; including a 6.8 earthquake, March Miracle of flooding, wildfire evacuations, and now the heavy snowfall we recently experienced. We would like to think that we learn from each of these disasters and to be more prepared before another event happens. Yet, each time we experience a disaster in Big Bear, we find that there are many residents and visitors alike that are not fully prepared. All three fire agencies in the Big Bear Valley have collaborated to develop a “must do” list of preparedness along with suggestions to prepare for the future, regardless of the type of event.

STAY INFORMED! Watch, read, and go online. See what the weather predictions are. Are there any fires nearby? If you are away for an extended vacation or season, entrust your home needs to a neighbor, contract home service, etc.

TALK TO YOUR NEIGHBORS! Get to know who lives nearby, do they have any special needs, check on each other. Better yet, take the next series of CERT (Community Emergency Response Team) classes that will teach you preparedness and how to help your neighbors.

SECURE HELP AHEAD OF TIME! Establish contracts for regular snow removal service from walkways, driveways and roofs too, if necessary. Arrange for transportation off the hill.

Agencies have sandbags for flooding for temporary water diversion, a more permanent solution should be constructed before your property floods again.

STOCK UP! Check your medication supplies frequently, make sure you have enough to last you for several weeks. Is there plenty of food in the house, diapers, pet food, bottled water, etc.? Rotate these items and keep it in mind every time you visit the grocery store. If you hear of impending problems such as weather or fire, stock up a little more on items you know you may need. How about that gas tank in your car? Try not to let it get much below half to assure you have plenty of fuel to leave the mountain.

HELP HIDDEN DEVICES! Be aware of your nearest fire hydrant year round. Make sure it is clear of fences, weeds, debris, and snow. Dig out your gas meter during times of heavy snow. Watch for low utility lines.

DON'T BE IN THE DARK! Keep lots of battery operated lights on hand for when the electricity goes out. If you have to use candles, safety is of utmost importance; never leave them unattended or burning all night. Have games on hand for the kids; kids can get scared when the power goes out and bored when there are no electronics.

STAY TUNED IN! Always have a portable radio with fresh batteries handy to listen to the local radio station. KBHR 93.3 has an emergency generator and they are very helpful with current information during times of disaster. Other media resources include the internet with TV6, The Grizzly local paper, facebook, and twitter for each fire agency.

MEET YOUR BASIC NEEDS! Don't depend on emergency services for negligible needs when a major event is occurring. Fire agencies are busy dealing with the immediate need situations. Don't hesitate to call 9-1-1 for a true emergency, but use your preparedness skills for day-to-day needs.

Remember, it is not a matter of IF another major event occurs, but WHEN; will you be ready? Check out our websites regularly for further tips and tricks for disaster preparedness.

www.bigbearcityfire.org

www.bblfd.com

www.sbcfire.org

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