



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Mayor Becker Marks National Emergency Preparedness Month in Salt Lake City

Mayor signs proclamation urging Salt Lake City residents to get better prepared for emergencies

SALT LAKE CITY, UTAH – Mayor Becker kicked off National Emergency Preparedness Month in Salt Lake City today, urging residents and businesses to take measures to be better prepared for an emergency in Salt Lake City. Salt Lake City was recently designated by Homeland Security as one of the 62 U.S. urban areas at highest risk for a natural or man-made disaster.

National Emergency Preparedness Month is held each September as part of an effort sponsored by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security to increase public awareness about the importance of preparing for emergencies and taking action on an individual level.

The Mayor was joined by Dr. Walter Arabasz, Director of the University of Utah Seismograph Stations, who addressed how earthquakes pose the greatest natural threat for destruction of life and property in Salt Lake City and the entire state of Utah.

Dr. Arabasz explained that the probability of a large surface-faulting earthquake on the Wasatch fault in the Salt Lake Valley in the next 50 years is in the range of 3 to 11 percent and that annually, there is a chance ranging from 1 in 450 to 1 in 1600 that Salt Lake City could experience a 7.0 earthquake.

Salt Lake City's Emergency Management Director Cory Lyman also spoke at the press conference and detailed steps residents can take to make themselves and their families better prepared for an emergency.

Lyman shared a list of preparation tips for families that include creating a three-day emergency supply kit, developing a plan that addresses sheltering in place or evacuating the area, staying informed about different threats that could affect the community, and getting involved by training in first aid and emergency response programs such as CERT (Citizen Emergency Response Teams).

"One of the most important duties government has is to ensure the safety and security of its citizens from emergencies and disasters of all kinds," said Mayor Becker. "In addition, all residents have a

responsibility to contribute to their own safety and security in the event of an unexpected emergency. The more prepared our residents are helps government extend its ability to respond to and recover from unexpected emergencies.”

According to estimates by Federal and State emergency managers, damage from a magnitude 7.0 earthquake on the Salt Lake City segment of the Wasatch fault would include:

- \$42 billion in economic losses related to damaged buildings
- 9,000 life-threatening injuries and fatalities
- 150,000 displaced households

Of particular concern is the high number of unreinforced masonry buildings in Salt Lake City. Popular when the State of Utah was founded and continued into the 1970s, unreinforced masonry is one of the most dangerous building types. Many Salt Lake City residences, in addition to commercial buildings, are built with unreinforced masonry and were constructed without knowledge of how these structures would perform in earthquakes. Evidence of its poor performance in earthquakes throughout the world is well documented.

Emergency preparation resources can be found on a host of websites including:

www.slcalert.com

www.slcgov.com/em

www.bereadyutah.gov

<http://www.ready.gov>

Salt Lake City residents can also contact the City’s Emergency Management Department at emergencypreparedness@slcgov.com for more information.



10 Ways to Prepare Your Family for Emergencies

Salt Lake City was recently designated by Homeland Security as one of the 62 U.S. cities at high risk for a natural or man-made disaster. The following are a list of suggestions to help prepare families and neighborhoods for an emergency or disaster.

1) Have Emergency “Evacuation”/”Shelter in Place” Plans

- Identify escape routes from your home/work with safe places and gathering points. Ask the question – “What would we do if . . .” a particular set of emergency circumstances was to arise? Think about the possibilities of different events: flood, earthquake, winter storm, etc.

- Make considerations in you plan for family members with special needs and/or pets.
- 2) **Have a Family Communications Plan**
 - Identify an out of state contact. After a disaster it's often easier to make a long distance call then a local call in an impacted area. Family members could call this person and relay messages about where they are and if they are ok.
 - 3) **Have a 72 hour "Go Kit"**
 - Portable 72 hour kit that is easily accessible in case you need to leave your home.
 - Three day supply of non perishable food items and water (a gallon per person per day). Include a flashlight, a radio, first aid supplies, prescription medications (insulin, blood pressure, allergy, etc.), a whistle, hygiene products, batteries, clothing, and blankets.
 - 4) **Equip your Car**
 - Keep your gas tank full and a 72 hour "Go Kit" in your car.
 - 5) **Reduce home hazards**
 - Mitigate hazards at home by keeping heavy objects on lower shelves, securing bookcases and large furniture to walls and installing a water heater strap.
 - 6) **Prepare for Utility Disruption**
 - Plan for alternate sources of power and heat in case normal utility (gas and electricity) services are interrupted.
 - 7) **Vital Records and Documents**
 - Store in a safe place like a safe deposit box but keep copies in your go kit.
 - 8) **Get involved in neighborhood preparation programs.**
 - More information can be found at http://www.slcgov.com/Departments/emergency_man/.
 - 9) **Insurance and Inventory**
 - Be aware of specific hazards that threaten your area and then check to see if you have adequate insurance to protect your family from financial loss.
 - 10) **Pay attention to "Alert" Notifications**
 - During an event listen for alert notifications and follow the instructions given. Know which radio, television stations and which web sites will have emergency information in your area.
 - Sign up for emergency text message alerts from the City at www.slcalert.com.

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