

# Washington State Patrol Media Release

*Chief John R. Batiste*

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## **Office of the State Fire Marshal Acting State Fire Marshal Paul Perz**

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**\*\*\*For Immediate Release\*\*\***

**Date:** March 12, 2010  
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### **Spring Time Change**

As we have seen these past few months, the weather and natural disasters can be extremely unpredictable so please use the spring time change on March 14<sup>th</sup> as a reminder to check and refresh your emergency supply kit and other preparedness supplies. Make sure that your family uses flashlights instead of candles at all times during a power outage as many home fires are started by candles left unattended. Draft and practice an evacuation plan, mapping out your route toward safety and shelter. Make sure you have an out-of-town contact that knows all the important information about your family in case you are separated during the disaster.

This weekend is also a good time to check your smoke alarms and carbon monoxide detectors. Check the manufacturer's expiration date on the label, replace the batteries if needed, and clean dust away from the slots so that smoke can enter freely. All smoke alarms, hard-wired and battery-powered, should be replaced every ten years.

The Office of State Fire Marshal offers the following tips to help keep your family safe in the event of an emergency:

#### **Emergency Kit –**

- At least a three-day supply of drinking water and food that needs no refrigeration or cooking.
- A portable NOAA weather radio.
- First aid supplies and medications.
- Basic tools, such as a wrench, a flashlight and gloves.
- Portable lanterns and batteries.
- Credit cards and cash.
- Important documents, including insurance policies.

#### **Develop a Plan –**

- Prepare for different hazards. Include how to prepare for each hazard that could impact your local community and how to protect yourself.

- Locate the safest areas in your home to go to in the event of these types of disasters. In certain circumstances, the safest areas may not be in your home but within your community.
- Determine escape routes from your home and places to meet and have a single out-of-state contact person.
- Make sure everyone knows how and when to turn off water, gas and electricity at the main switches or valves.
- Make a plan now for what to do with your pets if you need to evacuate.

#### **Prepare Your Family –**

- Post emergency telephone numbers by your phones and make sure your children know how and when to call 911.
- Familiarize all family members with escape routes and put your disaster plan into practice by rehearsing what you will do if and when an emergency happens.
- Take First Aid, CPR and disaster preparedness classes. Know how to use your fire extinguishers and where they are located.

#### **Protect Your Home –**

- Protect and reinforce five critical areas: roofs, straps, shutters, doors and garage doors.
- Make trees more wind resistant by removing damaged limbs and strategically removing branches that could pose a threat to property if broken during a storm.
- Take pictures of your valuable items for insurance documentation.

For additional preparedness tips, visit the Washington Emergency Management Division website at [www.emd.wa.gov](http://www.emd.wa.gov), the Federal Emergency Management Agency website at [www.fema.gov](http://www.fema.gov) or the Energizer website at [www.energizer.com/preparedness](http://www.energizer.com/preparedness)

*The Office of the State Fire Marshal is a Bureau of the Washington State Patrol, providing fire and life safety services to the citizens of Washington State including inspections of state licensed facilities, plan review of school construction projects, licensing of fire sprinkler contractors and pyrotechnic operators, training Washington State's firefighters, and collecting emergency response data.*

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**PREVENT FIRES**  
**IT'S YOUR JOB!**