



# What's Happening

Northwest Region Emergency Medical Services  
and Trauma Care Council

November 2009

## Are You Prepared for a Winter Storm?

We are fortunate in the Pacific Northwest that the worst we usually get in the weather department is the occasional wind, rain, or snow storm. While we don't usually get hurricanes or tornadoes which remind people how important is to be ready for a natural disaster, spending a few days in a house without electricity, heat, or warm food provides a pretty solid reminder that preparing early is the best defense against unpredictable weather. Here's how to get ready for this winter's storm season:

- Always have basic emergency supplies on hand. Flashlights with extra batteries, a wind-up radio, enough bottled water and canned food to last all family members for a week or more, some non-electric sources of entertainment, and other necessary supplies can be a life saver when the power goes out for an extended period of time.
  - Have a plan. Do you know what your children's school's snow closure plan is? Do you know where to check during inclement weather to see if the school will be open or closed? Do you know your employer's inclement weather policy? If you take public transit to work, do you know their inclement weather plan? Many things that we rely on such as clear roads, open bridges, a bus or work shuttle that runs on time, and schools being open for our kids can change in hours when snow or ice is predicted. Know ahead of time what the plan is so that you will be able to plan as well.
  - Make sure your car is ready for winter. Do you need snow tires? Do you know where the chains are for your tires? Do you have cold-weather emergency gear in your car? Do you have basic emergency supplies (food, water, flashlight, etc) in your car? Do you (if you are new to the area) or your kids (if they are new to driving) know how to drive in rainy, icy, or snowy weather? If not, do you have a plan to address this?
  - Know where to find resources to help out during a storm. Many communities have a number of resources they can roll out during cold weather, ice storms, and snow storms. Do you know what these are? Many counties have plans to open shelters during extremely cold weather, mainly for the homeless but these can also be useful if you find yourself without power or heat for an extended period of time. Information on school closures, road closures, snow, and flooding conditions can be found on the local television news, local radio stations, and local newspaper's websites.
  - Have storm supplies on hand before you need them. It is a good idea, if you live in a flood-prone area, to have sandbags available before flooding is predicted. Do you have a snow shovel to get yourself out of your driveway if needed? Do you have de-icer at the ready for both your walkways and your car windshields?
  - Keep an eye on elderly or infirm neighbors. Many elderly rely on caregivers, friends, or family for things such as picking up prescriptions, dropping off food, and otherwise checking on them on a regular basis. During a major storm, these people may not be able to get in to check on their elderly or infirm friends or relatives which is why having neighbors check up on them can be incredibly important.
  - Be aware of the danger of carbon monoxide poisoning. Each winter, without fail, there will be news reports of people in our area dying from using barbeque grills in their homes or improperly venting their generators. Never use any device that generates carbon monoxide in an enclosed area.
  - Prepare before the bad weather gets here. This includes purchasing tire chains *before* it snows, stocking up on flashlights and batteries *before* the power goes out, and purchasing a generator *before* you need one.
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# Mark Your Calendar!

## Northwest Region ALS OTEP

- November 5th—Jefferson County Base Station Meeting in Pt Townsend. Topic: Skills Lab. Info: 360-385-5589
- November 5th—Kitsap County Base Station Meeting in Bremerton. Topic: Child Assault and Documentation. Info: 360-447-2066
- November 10th—EMS Live@Night: Topic: Burns Info: 509-232-8155
- November 19th—Mason County Base Station Meeting in Shelton. Topic: PHTLS I. Info: 360-426-1611

## Training Course Calendar

- November 4th—Tacoma Trauma Conference at the Greater Tacoma Convention and Trade Center in Tacoma.  
[www.tacomatraumaconference.org](http://www.tacomatraumaconference.org)
- November 6th—ACLS for Experienced Providers course in Bremerton. Kitsap County EMS 360-447-2066
- January 23rd & 24th—Northwest Region EMS Geriatric's Conference at Suquamish Clearwater Resort in Poulsbo, WA 360-479-5631

## Northwest Region DUI Panels

- November 10th—Kitsap Youth Panel in Bremerton at 7pm. 360-731-5139
- November 12th—Clallam County Panel in Pt Angeles at 6:30pm. 360-417-2385
- November 14th—Jefferson County Panel in Pt Townsend at 8:30am. 360-385-9153
- November 17th—Kitsap Spanish Panel in Bremerton at 7pm. 360-731-5139
- November 18th—Mason County Panel in Shelton at 7pm. 360-427-1686
- November 24th—Kitsap Adult Panel in Bremerton at 7pm. 360-731-5139

## Save the Date! Region 2 Hospital Prep and Healthcare Coalition Meetings Scheduled for December

- The bi-monthly Region 2 Hospital Preparedness meeting will take place on December 3rd at 10am at Harrison Medical Center in Silverdale. All hospital reps are invited to attend this meeting during which we will discuss how federal grant funds will be spent to purchase disaster medical supplies and equipment for hospitals.
- The quarterly Region 2 Healthcare Coalition meeting will be held on December 3rd at 1pm at Harrison Medical Center in Silverdale. All who participate in the local Clallam, Jefferson, Kitsap, and West Olympic Peninsula Healthcare Coalitions are invited to attend. At this meeting we will discuss planning efforts that are taking place at the local and regional level. We will also have an education component that will feature a guest speaker.

For more information on these regional as well as local healthcare coalition meetings and activities, contact April Borbon at 360-990-3270.

# Mark Your Calendar!

## Injury Prevention Meetings in the Northwest Region

- November 4th—Mesa Redonda de Kitsap meeting; 8:30am at the Norm Dicks Government Center. 360-440-2376.
- November 18th—Mason County Inter-Agency meeting; Noon in Shelton. 360-427-1686
- November 18th—Kitsap Child Death Review meeting. 8:30am at the Norm Dicks Center in Bremerton. 360-337-5250
- November 25th—Kitsap Suicide Prevention Task Force; 3:30pm in Bremerton. 360-337-5250

## Injury Prevention Training Opportunities

- November 17th & 18th—Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training course (ASIST) at St Luke's Community Health Center in Bellingham, WA 206-297-5922 x114
- November 19th—Trauma Nurses Talk Tough Day at Legacy Emmanuel Hospital in Portland, OR 503-413-4960

## Committee Meetings in the Northwest Region

- November 12th—TED Committee meeting; 8:30am at the Lodge at Sherwood Village in Sequim. 360-479-5631
- November 12th—Injury Prevention Committee meeting; 9:30am at the Lodge at Sherwood Village in Sequim. 360-479-5631
- November 12th—QI Committee meeting; 9:30am at the Lodge at Sherwood Village in Sequim. 360-479-5631

## Healthcare Coalition Calendar

- November 13th—West Olympic Peninsula Healthcare Coalition meeting. 10am at Forks Ambulance in Forks. Info: 360-990-3270
- November 20th—Clallam County Healthcare Coalition meeting. 10am at Olympic Medical Center in Pt Angeles. Info: 360-990-3270

## Council Meetings in the Northwest Region

- November 3rd—Jefferson County EMS Council meeting in Chimacum at 7pm
- November 12th—Northwest Region Council meeting at noon in Sequim
- November 19th—Mason County EMS Council meeting in Shelton at 6pm
- November 19th—Clallam County EMS Council meeting in Pt Angeles at noon
- West Olympic Peninsula *no meeting scheduled for this month*
- November 25th—Kitsap County EMS Council meeting in Bremerton at 9am

# News You Can Use

## When Do I Use the Emergency Room?

Emergency rooms are set up for serious, life, limb, or eye-threatening issues:

- Chest pain, especially if it worsens with exercise/exertion.
- Numbness or paralysis, confusion, dizziness, or abnormal walking/talking.
- Trauma, falls, or accidents involving serious injury or loss of consciousness.
- Suspected bone fractures.
- Eye injuries, loss of vision, or double vision.
- Fever above 104 degrees.
- Severe respiratory distress.
- Deep burns or wounds, electric shock.
- Bleeding that won't stop, especially blood in urine, vomit, or stools.
- Drug or other poisoning.
- New onset or worsening of mental health concerns.

*Information provided by Peninsula Community Health Services.*

## 10 Ways to Make Your Community Safer and Healthier

- 1) Put AEDs in public places (school gyms, the community pool, golf courses, etc).
- 2) Encourage all community members to learn CPR and AED use (these classes are often offered free at local hospitals or fire departments).
- 3) Encourage community members to become trained EMS volunteers.
- 4) Mandate the use of seatbelts, child safety seats, bicycle helmets, motorcycle helmets, etc.
- 5) Participate in grant programs that positively impact the health and safety of community members such as Safe Routes to Schools, gardening "pea patches", Head Start, etc.
- 6) Encourage open communications with local law enforcement, community policing programs, and sex offender notification programs.
- 7) Keep kids involved. Bored kids cause trouble, busy kids don't have time to cause trouble.
- 8) Bring the community together to help each other out with programs such as Neighborhood Watch, Map Your Neighborhood, and Community Emergency Response Teams.
- 9) Encourage everyone in your community to volunteer. The more people feel responsible for their community, the better they will take care of it.
- 10) Provide safe and well maintained places for community members to exercise and play (parks, sports fields, playgrounds, etc).



## EMS Websites of Note

- EMS 1 <http://www.ems1.com>
- Everyday EMS Tips <http://www.everydayemstips.com>
- EMS Responder <http://www.emsresponder.com>
- EMS Garage <http://msgarage.com>

# 10 Things to Do in November

1. Donate to a food bank. Times are tough for many people; donating even a few cans of food will make a big difference for those in need.
2. Set your clocks back an hour on November 1st, when daylight savings time ends. This is also a good time to change the batteries in your smoke detectors.
3. Remember a Veteran on November 14th, Veteran's Day. Something as simple as saying "thank you" to someone who has served in the armed forces or stopping by the local Veteran's Home will make a big impact to those who have served our country.
4. Invite someone who would otherwise be alone over for Thanksgiving dinner. While most people celebrate this holiday with their families, there are some people who do not have families or no one living close by. Sharing the holidays is a good way to make everyone's day happier.
5. If you will be alone on Thanksgiving, volunteer. The Salvation Army, some churches, and some community organizations provide a Thanksgiving meal for those in need and can always use extra help.
6. Don't forget those who will be working on Thanksgiving such as hospital staff, law enforcement, and fire/EMS personnel. Check to see if they would welcome a batch of cookies or pumpkin pie to help celebrate the holiday while they are working.
7. Have a designated driver. Always. The holidays are a great time for a party but DUI arrests also spike during this time because people drink then drive. The time to find a designated driver is *before* you start drinking as all common sense goes out the window after a few drinks.
8. Drive carefully. Did you know that studies show that approximately 195 people die in motor vehicle accidents and 171 pedestrians die each year due to the change from daylight savings time back to standard time? Driving in the early evening when it is darker than usual has been cited as the cause of this.
9. Keep exercising. While you may have to move your workouts indoors, with all of the big meals and celebrations coming up for the holidays, now is not the time to slack off on exercising!
10. Think safety. Using generators improperly during a power outage can be dangerous and this is just the time of year that we start getting reports of people being injured or dying from carbon monoxide poisoning so keep safety in mind when using this and other appliances. Ditto for cooking turkey in the deep fryer and lighting candles to celebrate the holidays.

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## Start Your (Work) Day Off on a Healthy Foot

Before you head off to a busy and demanding day at work do you:

- Pack a cooler full of healthy food? Meals and snacks can be as nutritious (or nutritiously void) as you choose. By having nutritious food at your fingertips you will be less likely to choose fast, unhealthy foods for your lunch and snacks.
- Stretch and get in a little exercise? Japanese companies were on to something when they required all of their workers to participate in exercise routines before the work day started. By stretching and exercising before a busy and physically challenging day at work you will be less likely to strain or pull muscles when going about your daily activities.
- Get organized? Whether it is a work "to do" list or having all of your gear ready to pick up as you leave the house, having everything organized will save you time and stress.
- Breathe? Busy, stressed people are often shallow breathers. Start your day with deep, meditative breathing and your whole morning will be calmer.

# Young Driver Traffic Safety Facts

The National Highways Traffic Safety Administration recently released 2008 data on young drivers aged 15 to 20 years old. Here's what the data shows:

- 6.4% (13.2 million) licensed drivers in the US are aged 15 to 20 years old.
- In 2008, 5,864 drivers aged 15 to 20 were involved in fatal crashes, a 27% decrease from 1998.
- Motor vehicle crashes are the leading cause of death for 15 to 20 year olds.
- In 2008, 2,739 15 to 20 year old drivers were killed and an additional 228,000 were injured in motor vehicle crashes. Of the driver fatalities, 2,010 were male and 727 were female.
- In 2008, 14% of all drivers involved in police-reported crashes were young drivers.
- Among 15 to 20 year olds who were involved in fatal crashes in 2008, 30% (291) who did not have valid operator's licenses at the time also had previous license suspensions or revocations.
- In 2008, 31% of young drivers who were killed in fatal car crashes had been drinking.
- During 2008, 346 young motorcycle riders were killed in fatal motorcycle crashes and 8,000 were injured.
- During 2008, 35% of motorcycle riders who were killed in fatal crashes were not wearing helmets.
- Of young motorcycle drivers who were involved in fatal crashes in 2008, 43% were unlicensed or driving with an invalid license.
- The severity of motor vehicle crashes increase with alcohol involvement. In 2008, 2% of young drivers who were involved in property damage-only crashes had been drinking, 4% of those involved in injury crashes had been drinking, and 22% of those involved in fatal crashes had been drinking.
- In 2008, 63% of young drivers who were killed

in fatal crashes and had been drinking were unrestrained.

- In 2008, in Washington State, there were 34 young drivers killed in fatal car crashes, 21 deaths were passengers in the vehicles of young drivers involved in fatal crashes, 17 were occupants of other vehicles, and 5 were non occupants.

What can be done to lessen these statistics even more for young drivers? Here's some tips:

- The intermediate driver's license program has been shown to decrease the number of deaths and injuries in the young driver population if followed. Make these rules a requirement for your young driver.
- Have a zero tolerance drinking and driving policy for your teens. They drink, they drive, they don't drive again until they are an adult.
- If your teen wants to drive a motorcycle, ensure that they are properly trained, properly licensed, and have the proper safety equipment including a helmet.
- Never allow your teen to drive if they are unlicensed, even if they are just running to the store.

Data included in this article can be found online at [www-nrd.nhtsa.dot.gov/pubs/811169.pdf](http://www-nrd.nhtsa.dot.gov/pubs/811169.pdf)



*Three people were killed in this motorcycle vs car fatality crash.*

## Did You Know...?

- The Northwest Region EMS Council will host a two-day Geriatrics Conference on January 23rd and 24th at the Suquamish Clearwater Resort. We have a great line up of speakers planned, interesting skills labs, and a wonderful location for this annual event. On Sunday afternoon following the conference, there will be an SEI Workshop offered. Registration forms will be available soon on the NWREMS website at [www.nwrems.org](http://www.nwrems.org).
- Legacy Emanuel Hospital will host a 'Trauma Nurses Talk Tough' Day on November 19th in Portland, OR. The TNTT program is a multi-faceted injury prevention program which teaches educators who to use the TNTT materials to teach the public (from little kids to the elderly) about injury prevention topics ranging from helmet use and bike safety to teen driving safety and DUI prevention. This mini conference is open to all care providers who currently teach the TNTT program or would like to. Lunch is included and this is a free event so be sure to register soon. Call 503-413-4960 for information.
- Olympic College in Bremerton will be hosting a Community Resource and Health Fair on November 19th from 10am to 2pm in the Bremer Student Center at their Bremerton campus. This is a free event that is open to students and the community at large. Representatives from a host of community health and social service programs will be providing information and resources at the fair. For more information, call 360-475-7610.
- Kitsap DEM is hosting a free 'Severe Weather Shelter Operations' train the trainer course on November 16th at their office in Bremerton. Topics include shelter set up, security, safety, and management of guests. For more information, call 360-307-5871.
- The 11th Annual National Survivors of Suicide Day will take place on September 21st. Simultaneous conferences will be held around the country and around the world to mark this event. In Kitsap County, the Kitsap Suicide Prevention Task Force will be hosting a conference at the Norm Dicks Center in downtown Bremerton. Events will include a panel discussion on suicide by a local panel of experts and the video presentation of the national SOS event. For more information, email [kspft@comcast.net](mailto:kspft@comcast.net).
- Speaking of suicide, the CDC now has an entire webpage devoted to national suicide statistics. On this page you can find links to trends in suicide, suicide rates by demographics, suicide mechanisms, and a link to the National Violent Death Reporting System. Check it out at <http://www.cdc.gov/ViolencePrevention/suicide/statistics/index.html>
- Save the Date! The West Region EMS council will host their 25th Annual Conference on February 26-28 at Ocean Shores. This is always a very popular and informative conference! For more information go to [www.wrems.com/EMSConference.htm](http://www.wrems.com/EMSConference.htm).
- Don't have time to take disaster preparedness courses but still want to learn how to respond to a major disaster? FEMA offers a wide array of courses through their online independent study program. Best of all, these courses are free and you can take them at your own pace. When you are done with the course, simply take the final test online, hit "send", and if you pass, you will be issued a certificate of completion. Cool. Go to <http://training.fema.gov/IS/crslist.asp> for more information on this program.
- Got flu questions? The CDC's website has the answers. Check out their flu page at [www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu](http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu). For local information on the flu, contact your county health district. These agencies can provide county-specific information about flu prevention strategies, vaccine availability, and resources for both providers and the public.
- HAM radio is the go-to means of communications during a disaster. Check out [www.arrl.org](http://www.arrl.org) to find local HAM radio clubs, find out where you can test for your HAM radio license, and find out more about this vital communications service.

**NORTHWEST REGION  
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**We're On The Web!**  
**[www.nwrems.org](http://www.nwrems.org)**

*The Northwest Region Emergency Medical Services and Trauma Care Council is a non-profit umbrella organization which oversees EMS training, prevention activities, and program funding in Clallam, Jefferson, Kitsap and Mason Counties.*

*The mission of the NWREMS & TCC is to promote and support a coordinated system for local Emergency Medical Services/Trauma Care Councils by:*

- *Providing resources/funding*
- *Enhancing education/training*
- *Promoting data collection/analysis*
- *Facilitating communication*
- *Promoting standardization*
- *Promoting public education and prevention*

## **NWREMS Office News**

- Our office will be closed on November 11th in honor of Veteran's Day.
- Our office will be closed on November 26th and 27th in honor of Thanksgiving.
- We need committee members! The newly formed Regional Injury Prevention Committee meets every other month in Sequim prior to the Regional Council meeting. Our next meeting is scheduled for November 12th at 9:30am at the Lodge at Sherwood Village in Sequim. Anyone who is interested in participating on the Injury Prevention Committee is welcome to attend; we are particularly interested in having health district, fire district, hospital, and other provider-based injury prevention specialists participate in order to coordinate prevention efforts region wide. For more information about this committee, contact April at 360-990-3270.
- The NWREMS staff and TED Committee are hard at work putting together a wonderful Geriatric's Conference which will take place in January. If you have questions, comments, or input about this conference, contact our Training Coordinator, René Williams, at 360-479-5631.
- Do you have news, information, or upcoming classes that you would like to publicize? Simply send the info to April Borbon at [aprilborbon@yahoo.com](mailto:aprilborbon@yahoo.com) for inclusion in our monthly newsletter and posting on the NWREMS website.
- Did you know that DUI Victim's Panels can be scheduled any time you want one for community and civic groups? These panels are provided at no charge and we bring the speakers to your location in order to provide vital information about the affects of drinking and driving on individuals and the community at large. Simply call our office at 360-479-5631 to schedule a Panel for your group.