

## Emergency Preparedness Tip of the Week

By: Ed Mayer Shady Cove Emergency Manager

A major part of becoming prepared in case of an emergency or disaster is getting you and your family ready to be self-sufficient. This may mean living without electricity, refrigeration, heat, water, communications or the availability to obtain food, medication, cash, gasoline or other amenities that all of us are accustomed to having readily available. Many people often believe that through local, state or federal government, their basic needs or safety will be taken care of. This is a misconception. For many years government has been trying to educate the public that they need to be self-sufficient following a disaster for at least 72 hours or 3 days. This “72 hour rule” was developed with the belief that it would take at least that amount of time for emergency service workers, utility companies, disaster response teams and governments to regroup and begin to get basic services back on line. This “72 hour rule” still holds true for most “typical disasters”, depending on the severity and how localized the event is.

Now, consider if “THE BIG ONE” hits. An earthquake of a 9.0 magnitude that experts say could very possibly hit western Oregon. Most geologists say “it isn’t if a large earthquake will hit, rather, when it will hit.” Recent reports have outlined that our infrastructure and the entire state economy would be devastated. Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) recently reported that in this scenario they don’t believe they could get Interstate 5 back in service due to landslides and bridge failures for a considerable length of time. ODOT would focus their efforts on getting HY 97 open as the major north – south transportation route. You can rest assured that if “THE BIG ONE” hits the 72 hour rule goes out the window. Not trying to be an alarmist, but experts say if a 9.0 earthquake hit Oregon, it may be months or even years before all services could be restored.