

Are you "Ready Navy" - Rear Adm. Ruth Addresses the Importance of Having a Plan

Admiral: Hello, I'm Rear Admiral Ruth, Commander, Navy Region Northwest With me today is our Region Command Master Chief, Master Chief Todd Gruchalla

September's National Preparedness Month - Today, we are going to share some frank thoughts with you about you and your family's readiness to handle a disaster and the after-effects.

Admiral: The Pacific Northwest is a very safe place to live, but as the past year we've seen that a lot of things can happen.

This year alone we experienced a lot of wildfire activity, including one that threatened one of our facilities at Bayview, Idaho;

You may have also seen recent news reports about the potential for earthquakes and tsunami events in an area called the Cascadia Subduction Zone <show graphic/web address> which is located just off the Washington and Oregon coasts. According to the report, if that event happens, it will be on the scale of the earthquake and tsunami that devastated Japan in 2011. We would expect that many of our bridges, ports, and roads west of I-5 to be either broken by the shaking, or washed out by a tsunami. While the report doesn't mean it will happen tomorrow or anytime soon, it could happen, and it is important to me, and to the Navy, that you are ready.

Master Chief: If we have a big event, such as a Cascadia Subduction Zone event, our first responders, hospitals, and utility services will likely be overwhelmed. Transportation will be affected. Your credit cards might not even work. Cell phones and the internet will likely be down.

Admiral: That's right, Master Chief. In the event of a major disaster or emergency here at our installations, we are going to need every Sailor and civilian employee to help ensure that our Fleet, Fighters, and Family can recover and be ready to defend our nation.

What I am asking each and every member of the Northwest Navy team is: Can your family carry on without you in the event of a disaster, for up to 72 hours? What if you are deployed? Are you ready? Is your family ready?

Master Chief: Great point, Admiral! There are three things we are asking you to do to be ready...Be Informed, Make a Plan, and Build a Kit.

The first step is to Be Informed. Understand what hazards we face. Know the actions you will take in the event of different disasters. For instance, know what to do for an Active Shooter event. Understand what

it means to Lockdown, Shelter In Place, or Evacuate. I encourage all of you to follow the hashtag Northwest Ready Navy <show hashtag #nwreadynavy on screen> to learn more about being prepared and how to respond to potential hazards we could face here. We'll provide you links to apps, inform you of resources, and help you understand what you need to do.

Admiral: The second step is to make a plan. Have a home escape plan, make a family communications plan, and establish safe meeting locations in case your family gets separated. During an emergency, mobile phones and internet may not work. The communications we take for granted may not be available. Having a plan, and making sure your entire family knows it ahead of time, can make all the difference.

Master Chief: The third step is Building a Kit. Having an emergency kit is a key part of being Ready Navy. It doesn't have to be expensive. You don't need to spend hundreds of dollars on fancy pre-made kits or MREs. It can be as simple as a plastic tote with enough water, supplies and essential medicines in it to last you for up to 72 hours. As you prepare your family, think about what you're going to do with your pets. Do you have a kit for them? In Hurricane Katrina and the earth quake in Japan, one of the major problems was that pets were left behind to fend for themselves. Please make sure you take care of Fluffy and Fido! I know my German Shepherd "Duke" is ready!

Admiral: Master Chief, let's remember: building a kit isn't just for your house...emergencies can happen while you're at work, or in your car. Also, be sure to take into consideration members of your family with special needs, medical issues, and your elderly family members! You can download an app from FEMA that has great resources to alert you of hazards, help you build a kit, and even direct you to the nearest shelter in the event of an emergency. The app is available for android and iOS systems.

Master Chief: You can also find emergency preparedness resources and more information about National Preparedness Month at www.ready.navy.mil [<show on screen>]. Also watch for more Northwest-specific videos, information, links, and pictures by following us on Facebook and Twitter and by following the hashtag "NORTHWEST READY NAVY" < show hashtag #nwreadynavy, with FB/Twitter on screen>.

Admiral: Here in the Northwest Region we enjoy great scenery, weather and lifestyle, but it is important that we are prepared and ready for some hazards that come with the territory. If something happens, we will need every one of our Sailors and employees to be ready to respond, so please... Be Informed, Make a Plan, and Build A Kit. Be "Ready Navy".

Admiral & Master Chief: We're Ready...Are You?