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**In Case of Emergency, Mercer Island Is Ready  
*New First-of-Its-Kind Emergency Well Now Operational  
City Offering Free Emergency Water Containers to Residents***

(Mercer Island, WA)—September is National Emergency Preparedness month, and the City of Mercer Island is now better prepared than ever to handle a disaster.

Mercer Island's new emergency well is now fully operational. Located at Rotary Park (88<sup>th</sup> Avenue SE and SE 44<sup>th</sup> Street), the well is designed to provide Island residents with drinking water if an earthquake or other disaster disrupts the City's normal water supply from Seattle Public Utilities (SPU).

In the event of a disaster, water will be available to residents either on a walk-up basis at the well or via large 250 to 325-gallon totes, transported by trucks dispatched to Island neighborhoods. To leave City crews available for other emergency response, a volunteer Well Operations Team will help operate the well; these volunteers will also assist with neighborhood water deliveries.

To aid distribution, the City has purchased several thousand six-quart water containers. While a portion of this supply will be stored at the well, Mercer Island residents are invited to pick up these collapsible containers at the Finance Department at City Hall – one container for every household member. In addition, Island residents should store their own three-day supply of water at home, setting aside one gallon of water per person per day. Change this stored tap water twice a year.

“While we strongly encourage residents to do their part by preparing themselves for earthquakes or other emergencies at home and at work, we are excited to be the pioneers in this method of securing a longer-term water supply for our citizens,” explained Mercer Island Mayor Jim Pearman. “The emergency well represents a big step in emergency preparedness for our city.”

City Maintenance Director Glenn Boettcher added that the emergency well represents an important investment by the City of Mercer Island. “It allows us to better withstand a water service disruption caused by a major disaster. The well was a wise investment, and our community is fortunate to have this resource.”

Jennifer Franklin, City Emergency Preparedness Office, agreed and urged residents to continue to make their own preparations at home. “While the well is a valuable asset to Mercer Island residents, it is just one element of our overall emergency planning efforts. We still urge people to store several days' worth of water for every person in their home.”

The City of Mercer Island is the first jurisdiction in Washington State to receive a source permit for an emergency well. The permit was authorized by the Washington State Department of Ecology.

City staff began the process to secure an emergency water source permit in 2005 after a seismic vulnerability analysis of its key infrastructure. Since then, new studies have found that Mercer Island sits directly above the Seattle Fault line, reconfirming the need for an emergency water supply, and the importance of having taken the initiative to develop an emergency source policy.

The emergency well itself was drilled in 2007, and construction of the permanent structure around the well was completed in April, 2010.

Learn more about the City of Mercer Island's emergency well at [www.mercergov.org/emergencywell](http://www.mercergov.org/emergencywell).

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