

# Prepare Your Household For Landslides and Mud Flows

**Landslides and mudflows usually strike without warning. The force of rocks, soil or other debris moving down a slope can devastate anything in its path.**

## BEFORE A LANDSLIDE

- ❖ Your county geologist or county planning department may have specific information on areas vulnerable to landslides. Consult a professional geotechnical expert for advice on corrective measures you can take.

## INSURANCE

- ❖ Mudflow is covered by flood insurance policies from the National Flood Insurance Program. Flood insurance can be purchased through a local insurance agency.

## MINIMIZE HOME HAZARDS

- ❖ Plant ground cover on slopes to stabilize the land, and build retaining walls.
- ❖ Build channels or deflection walls to direct the flow around buildings.
- ❖ Remember: if you build walls to divert debris flow and the flow lands on a neighbor's property, you may be liable for damages.

## MAKE EVACUATION PLANS

- ❖ Plan at least two evacuation routes since roads may become blocked or closed.

## LEARN TO RECOGNIZE THE LANDSLIDE WARNING SIGNS

- ❖ Doors or windows begin to stick or jam for the first time.
- ❖ New cracks appear in plaster, tile, brick or foundations.
- ❖ Outside walls, walks or stairs begin pulling away from the building.
- ❖ Slowly developing, widening cracks appear on the ground or on paved areas.
- ❖ Underground utility lines break.
- ❖ Bulging ground appears at the base of a slope.
- ❖ Water breaks through the ground surface.
- ❖ Fences, retaining walls, utility poles or trees tilt or move.

- ❖ You hear a faint rumbling sound that increases in volume as the landslide nears. The ground slopes downward in one specific direction and may begin shifting in that direction under your feet.

## DURING A LANDSLIDE

### If inside a building:

- ❖ Stay inside.
- ❖ Take cover under a desk, table, or other piece of sturdy furniture.

### If outdoors:

- ❖ Run to the nearest high ground in a direction away from the path.
- ❖ If rocks and other debris are approaching, run for the nearest shelter such as a group of trees or a building.
- ❖ If escape is not possible, curl into a tight ball and protect your head.

## AFTER A LANDSLIDE

- ❖ Remember that flooding may occur after a mudflow or a landslide.
- ❖ Stay away from the slide area, there may be danger of additional slides.
- ❖ Check for injured and trapped persons near the slide area. Give first aid.
- ❖ Remember to help your neighbors who may require special assistance— infants, elderly people, and people with disabilities.
- ❖ Listen to a hand crank or battery-operated radio or television for emergency information.
- ❖ Check for damaged utility lines. Report any damage to the utility company.
- ❖ Check the building foundation, chimney, and surrounding land for damage.
- ❖ Replant damaged ground as soon as possible. Erosion caused by loss of ground cover can lead to flash flooding.

(Prepared by: WA State Emergency Management Division)



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