

Neighbors learn disaster preparation; Progress continues on Red Electric Trail

HILLSDALE NOTEBOOK

By Jillian Daley
The Southwest Portland Post

Hillsdale Neighborhood Emergency Team member John Morris told neighbors there's one thing about disasters that everyone should know.

"I think at this point, most people know that if there is a disaster, you're not going to call 911 – they're not going to come, at least not for a week," Morris said at a presentation before the Hillsdale Neighborhood Association last month.

He recommended to the gathering of more than 20 people that they keep an emergency stock of food and water. He added that freeze-dried food is a good option, but some brands may need more water than others, so it's best to read labels carefully.

One neighbor at the meeting piped up to say that it's best to keep a vehicle's gas tank full because fuel may not be

available after a major disaster.

Oregon is on a fault line, and experts have for years said there could be a major earthquake in the near future. Morris said such a disaster has the potential to kill thousands of people and level tens of thousands of buildings statewide.

Most Oregon buildings, however, will stand strong, and so will many of the people in them if they know what measures to take before, during and after the quake, says the Oregon Emergency Management booklet that Morris brought to the meeting.

For more information, visit the OEM website at www.oregon.gov/omd/oem.

Neighborhood Greenways budget could pay for Cheltenham improvements

Also at the Hillsdale meeting, Don Baack, chairman of the SW Trails PDX community group, said neighbors will send a letter to the city requesting an extended shoulder on Southwest Cheltenham Court to make it safer for pedestrians and bicycles heading uphill.

The extended shoulder would be four feet wide and on the east side of Cheltenham. The letter will also request that the city fill in the sidewalk gaps along SW Vermont Street, from Bertha Boulevard to 10th Avenue, Baack said.

Baack said improvements could be paid for with the construction budget for Neighborhood Greenways. Greenways are streets with low traffic volume that give priority to pedestrian and bicycle traffic.

"Federal studies have shown that extended shoulders cost a fraction of the cost of full sidewalks but provide about 80 percent of the safety benefits," Baack said.



Neighborhood Emergency Teams member John Morris gave a presentation on disaster preparedness during last month's Hillsdale Neighborhood Association meeting. (Post photo by Jillian Daley)

He distributed freshly made copies of a brochure detailing Portland's Red Electric Trail, which follows part of the route of Southern Pacific's "Red Electric" interurban passenger train, which ran early in the 20th Century.

Once complete, the in-progress project will connect Washington County, Southwest Portland and the Willamette River with a series of bridges and trails for bicyclists and pedestrians.

Baack also told Hillsdale neighbors that he is looking for people to volunteer at regular work parties alongside representatives from the Burlingame Fred Meyer. The volunteers would remove ivy, blackberries and other invasive species from George Himes Park. For more information, email Baack at baack@q.com.

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