

(Local News) October 8, 2020: Great Shake Out, election details.

This is KPTZ 91.9 FM in Port Townsend, Washington. I'm Charlie Bermant, with local news and commentary for Thursday, October 8, 2020.

In recent weeks our attention has focused on potential disasters, the COVID-19 epidemic and the threat of fires along with a sense of political unrest that has caused, among other trends, a severe humor shortage. But we can't forget what keeps some of us awake in normal times, the threat of an earthquake or tsunami. With that in mind, the annual great shake out earthquake drill is scheduled for 10:15 a.m. on Thursday, October 15, one week from today.

At that time KPTZ will broadcast the drill, outlining the needed steps for dealing with these events when—not if—they occur. preparing us for the eventual emergency. This consists of learning the drop-cover-hold on drill, which you want to follow when the ground starts to shake.

According to the shake out web site most earthquake-related injuries and deaths are caused by collapsing walls and roofs, flying glass and falling objects. It is extremely important for a person to move as little as possible to reach the place of safety he or she has identified because most injuries occur when people try to move more than a short distance during the shaking.

For more information go to www.shakeout.org/washington to get the details and to register your participation. As of this morning nearly 2,000 Jefferson County residents have signed up.

November 3 is now just 26 days away, as the county, the country and the world gears up for what could be the most consequential election in the nation's history. While several states are already voting, Washingtonians will get that privilege beginning this Wednesday, when ballots are mailed. Here in Jefferson County, nearly 30,000 people are scheduled to receive a ballot. If you don't receive your ballot within a week, contact the county auditor.

Jefferson County has added two new drop box locations. There is now a walk up box in front of the county courthouse and a new box in front of the Olympic Peninsula Gateway Visitor's Center at the corner of Beaver Valley Road and Route 104. These new locations add to options previously available in Port Hadlock, Brinnon, Quilcene, Nordland and the courthouse.

All boxes will be open for ballots at all times from October 14 to 8 pm on November 3, when the polls close.

Political signs are all over the place, but are not as pervasive as in Seattle or other more populated locales.

Port Townsend's sign guidelines allow the posting of such signs on private property with the owners knowledge and permission. Signs are not permitted within rights of way or on public property, such as city parks, the golf course, or Kah Tai Lagoon. Signs are only allowed on the private property side of utility poles, fire hydrants or sidewalks.

There are also restrictions on size and height. Signs must be no larger than 4.5 square feet or taller than 5 feet.

Outside of the city limits signs are allowed in the public right of way as long as the signs are temporary and don't create a public safety issue by interfering with pedestrians or traffic. It is forbidden to tack signs onto utility poles or use a sign that resembles a traffic control sign.

It's not in the statute, but wise voters will restrain themselves from drawing little pictures on signs supporting candidates that they do not.

Also important is to remove the sign after the election is over, although if the sign is on private property you can leave it up until the next election, or the one after that.

After an uptick in reported COVID 19 cases earlier this week, the Jefferson County total is still 75. Currently 58 people are awaiting test results. And while there is not yet a COVID vaccine, this is a good time to seek inoculation against the flu. According to the county, most Jefferson County primary care providers and pharmacies offer adult flu vaccine. Those locations include Safeway in Port Townsend QFC in Port Hadlock. Jefferson County Public Health and all Jefferson County clinics that offer children's vaccines. Be sure to call ahead to make sure the needed vaccine is available.

KPTZ 91.9 FM brings you local news at noon Monday through Saturday and at 5pm PM Monday through Thursday. You can contact us through news at kptz.org.

This is Charlie Bermant. Thank you for listening.