

# Swarm of Earthquakes Should Awaken BC Govt



A swarm of earthquakes, one with a magnitude up to 6.4, recently struck off the coast of Vancouver Island.

Thirteen earthquakes of magnitude 4 or more have occurred so far in July. Natural Resources Canada reports there are plates sliding past each other due to three major, intersecting faults.

There are also concerns in our own backyard. Scientists discovered a fault running under Elk Lake, across the Pat Bay Highway into Cordova Bay.

A 6.1 to 7.6 magnitude earthquake occurred several thousand years ago, which is recent in geological terms and considered to be an active fault.

So far, the BC government's response has been a public awareness campaign called, "Drop, Cover and Hold on."

However, these constant seismic rumblings should awaken the BC government to the need for a renovation rebate or tax credit to improve safety.

Experts say there is a 30% chance of a damaging earthquake, and 10% to 15% chance of a massive earthquake in the next 50 years.

Thousands of older homes in our community require anchor bolts, tie-downs and other measures for protection against these inevitable earthquakes.

A renovation rebate could also help cover the costs of asbestos abatement, a toxic product approved years ago by the government and now costing homeowners thousands of dollars to remove.

The federal government helped install asbestos in homes through their Canadian Home Insulation Program (CHIP) offering grants for insulation such as Zonolite.

Asbestos can be also found in stucco, drywall, roof shingles, window putty, vinyl floor tiles, wiring, cement, and more.

A renovation rebate is both an ethical obligation by a government that approved and subsidized the materials as well as a responsible investment in seismic safety.

Other provinces, with far less exposure to earthquakes, have launched renovation tax credits. They create tax revenue by requiring receipts, battling the underground economy, and create skilled jobs in every community.

BC should follow their example, especially considering the west coast's exposure to earthquakes.

Seismic safety in BC should be more than just drop, cover and hold on.



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