VICTORIA, BC – On Saturday, Victoria Emergency Management Agency (VEMA) volunteers will team up with the Salvation Army, St. John Ambulance and the Canadian Search and Disaster Dogs Association to participate in an all-day emergency exercise at two Victoria locations.

Victoria has a one in three probability of a damaging earthquake in the next 50 years. Saturday’s exercise is timed with this week’s Great British Columbia ShakeOut province-wide earthquake drill, providing community volunteers an opportunity to work together in a simulation where people are trapped in a damaged building after an earthquake.

MEDIA OPPORTUNITY:
What: Post-Earthquake Emergency Exercise
When: Saturday, October 20, 2012, 10:30 a.m. – 2 p.m.
Where: Location #1: Urban Search and Rescue Site, 203 Harbour Road *
Location #2: Reception Centre, Victoria West Community Centre, 521 Craigflower Road

* Media are asked to notify VEMA Emergency Coordinator Rob Johns (rjohns@victoria.ca or 250.888.3594) in advance if they wish to access the rescue site on Saturday. The exercise will take place rain or shine.

A vacant building will serve as the rescue site. VEMA’s Urban Search and Rescue (USAR) team will cut through concrete, brace and shore walls and ceilings, and search through the building to rescue trapped individuals. A four-dog search and rescue team will assist in the search activities. Some of the trapped “victims” will appear to be injured, courtesy of a local make-up artist.

Rescues will be performed and people will be moved outside the building, where the “injured” will be triaged by St. John Ambulance volunteers. Many of the evacuees will be transported to a Reception Centre off site where VEMA’s Evacuee Assistance volunteers will assess and care for their immediate and short-term needs.

VEMA’s four volunteer teams will participate in the emergency exercise, including Auxiliary Communications, Emergency Operations Centre (EOC) Support, Evacuee Assistance, and Urban Search and Rescue.

The Victoria Emergency Management Agency is the City of Victoria’s resource for helping the community to be “emergency prepared”. To learn more about volunteering with VEMA, visit: www.PrepareVictoria.ca

For More Information:
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