



CREAN  
Capital Region Emergency  
Awareness Network



**February 4, 2010  
Press Release**

### **Tour of Victoria, B.C. community health centre retrofitted against earthquake**

TORONTO, Feb 4 /CNW/ - The Institute for Catastrophic Loss Reduction (ICLR) has conducted a non-structural retrofit of a community health centre in Victoria, British Columbia to reduce the impact of a potential earthquake. ICLR and James Bay Community Project staff will be onsite to provide a tour of the facility and answer questions:

Tour date: Thursday, February 4  
Time: 9:00 a.m. PST  
Location: James Bay Community Project Board Room  
547 Michigan Street, Victoria BC, V8V 1S5

Glenn McGillivray, Managing Director of ICLR, will conduct a media tour of the centre. According to McGillivray: "History and science tell us that major earthquakes have struck Canada's west coast, some in recent memory, and they will strike again. This is a certainty, so we must be prepared."

Canada's West coast represents the country's most densely populated seismic zone. According to the Geological Survey of Canada, Western Canada experiences an average of 1,000 earthquakes each year and in the off-coast region west of Vancouver Island, more than 100 earthquakes of magnitude 5 or greater have occurred in the last 70 years. Southwest B.C. and northern Washington state has experienced four Richter 7+ events in the last 130 years. The 6.8 Seattle earthquake of February 28, 2001 caused some damage in southern British Columbia.

At this event, the media will receive practical tips to share on how homeowners, owners of small businesses and administrators of health and social service agencies and others can reduce the impact of an earthquake in order to reduce deaths, injuries and property damage.

Says McGillivray. "We can prevent natural hazards from becoming disasters by taking appropriate preventative measures now. The actions showcased in this facility are affordable and easy to implement. Indeed, staff and volunteers of the James Bay Community Project did the bulk of the work themselves."

Says Penny Coates, Manager of Family and Community Services, James Bay Community Project: "Through ICLR, we have learned simple, practical, low cost strategies to increase the overall safety of our facility in the event of an earthquake, without compromising our program priorities and activities. This project has also heightened staff awareness about the importance of preparedness and motivated us to review and update our emergency policies and procedures."

In recent years ICLR has retrofitted existing homes as part of Emergency Preparedness Week, held in May each year. In 2009 a home in Toronto was retrofitted against winter storm and blackout. In 2008 a home in Montreal was retrofitted to protect against winter storm and earthquake, and in 2007 a home in Edmonton was retrofitted to protect against tornado and

winter storms. In 2006, a home in Ottawa was made more resilient to earthquakes and winter storms. In 2005, a home in Vancouver was made more resilient to earthquakes, and in 2004, a Halifax home was protected against hurricanes. In 2003, a home in London was made more resilient to tornadoes. The Institute has also retrofitted child care centres across Canada as part of its "Protecting our Kids from Disasters" program. The James Bay Community Project is the first health and social service facility to be retrofitted by ICLR.

Established in 1998 by Canada's property and casualty insurers, ICLR is an independent, not-for-profit research institute based in Toronto and at the University of Western Ontario in London, Canada. ICLR is a centre of excellence for disaster loss prevention research and education. ICLR's research staff is internationally recognized for pioneering work in a number of fields including wind and seismic engineering, atmospheric sciences, water resources engineering and economics. Multi-disciplined research is a foundation for ICLR's work to build communities more resilient to disasters.

James Bay Community Project is a uniquely integrated community health and social service center which includes five core components: a primary health care centre, seniors outreach programming, the Victoria youth drop-in clinic, early childhood/family resource programs and a range of community services such as a library, information and referral services, food security programs, a thrift store, and community volunteer placements. The programs are based on a broad definition of health, and seek to improve community, family and individual health and wellbeing. JBCP works in partnership with many other agencies and organizations in the Greater Victoria area. JBCP is a non-profit society (James Bay Health and Community Services Society), with a community elected board of directors.

Media contacts: Penny Coates, Manager of Family and Community Services, James Bay Community Project, phone (250) 388-7856 ext 311 [pcoates@jbc.bc.ca](mailto:pcoates@jbc.bc.ca); Sonja Ruthe, Capital Region Emergency Awareness Network (CREAN), cell (250) 514-5249 (event day) or (250) 592-9121 (Fire Hall), [sruthe@oakbayemergency.com](mailto:sruthe@oakbayemergency.com); Glenn McGillivray, Managing Director, ICLR, use cell (416) 277-5827 (event day), tel. (416) 364-8677, ext. 3216, [gmcgillivray@iclr.org](mailto:gmcgillivray@iclr.org)