

Skagit County Emergency Management

March, 2015



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March —Do 1 Thing

Do 1 Thing is a non-profit agency that encourages each person to take one step each month to prepare for an emergency. Preparedness is the platform for building safe, resilient communities. If you are prepared, you not only protect yourself and your family, but you will also be better equipped to assist your neighbors and/or co-workers. We invite you to visit the [Do 1 Thing](#) website for monthly tips and fact sheets that are available in multiple languages, audio formats and braille.

March - Emergency Sheltering

Emergency shelters may be opened when people are displaced from their homes. In Skagit County emergency shelters are operated by the American Red Cross. Pack a "Go Bag" now. Keep it in an easy to access area so you can grab it and "go" in a hurry. Be sure to include special need items such as a spare pair of reading glasses, medications or other items that you rely on.

Pack a "Go Bag" for your pets as well. Have a plan of where your furry or feathered friends can stay, with an out of area friend or family member or identified animal shelter. **Do not** leave your pets at home unattended.

RED CROSS WILL PROVIDE

- A cot to sleep on
- Meals and bottled water
- A nurse for basic medical care
- Information about the disaster from public officials

YOU MAY NEED TO BRING

- Pillow and blanket
- Identification
- Change of clothes
- Cards or magazines
- Comfort items
- Your medication and medical supplies (or a list of what you are taking, dosage, and Dr.'s names)

NOT ALLOWED AT THE SHELTER

- Weapons or Alcohol
- Pets (except for service animals)

March is American Red Cross Month

- In the US alone, the American Red Cross provides disaster relief in over 70,000 disaster situations annually, ranging from single family house fires to hurricane ravaged towns.
- The American Red Cross is part of the world's largest volunteer network with 13 million volunteers in 187 countries.
- They provide health & safety classes and certifications Including CPR, First Aid and Lifeguard training to more than 9 million Americans.
- Each year the Red Cross provides assistance to 150,000 military families.
- Blood donations gathered by the American Red Cross contribute to 40% of the nation's blood supply.

If you know a Red Cross volunteer be sure to thank them. If you would like to become an American Red Cross Volunteer visit the Mt. Baker Red Cross chapter at <http://www.redcross.org/wa/bellingham> or call 360-733-3290.

YOU are the only one who can ensure your own safety and the safety of your family in a disaster.

Mobile Integrated Health Care



The City of Mount Vernon launched a pilot program “Mobile Integrated Health Care” this January. The program has been over 20 months in the making and is intended to operate as a collaborative effort between the Fire Department and regional health care providers.

Mobile Integrated Health Care was developed to address the specific health care needs of a community. The program will utilize paramedics or EMTs specially trained to provide medical services and skills that can meet these identified needs.

The benefits of a community Mobile Integrated Health Care program include:

Increased access to primary care for medically underserved populations including home follow-up visits after a hospital discharge. This short term follow-up care can greatly reduce return trips and readmissions to the hospital.

Mobile Integrated Health Care also allows Emergency Services to be utilized more appropriately. By reducing trips to the ER for non-emergency conditions, it provides a financial savings and in many cases can allow for a greater continuity in health care.

By intervening in the frequency of 911 calls to the same client for non-

emergent conditions, the MIHC program keeps emergency crews available for actual, life-threatening emergency calls and reduces overtime costs to the city.

Pre-Hospital Services

- Transport patients with specified conditions not needing emergency care to alternate, non-emergency department locations.
- After assessing and treating as needed, determine whether it is appropriate to refer or release an individual at the scene of an emergency response rather than transporting them to a hospital emergency department.
- Address the needs of frequent 911 callers or frequent visitors to emergency departments by providing alternate, less costly access to treatment.

Post-Hospital

- Provide follow-up care for persons recently discharged from the hospital and at increased risk of a return visit to the emergency department or re-admission to the hospital.
- Provide support for persons with diabetes, asthma, congestive heart failure, or multiple chronic conditions.
- Partner with community health workers and primary care providers in underserved areas to provide preventive care.



Severe Winds

The pessimist complains about the wind; the optimist expects it to change; the realist adjusts the sails.
~ William Arthur Ward

Strong winds and saturated soils can cause broken branches, limbs and entire trees to fall and wreak havoc on power lines and property.

According to Puget Sound Energy, about 2,000 power outages a year are attributed to tree fall.

You can reduce the risk of tree fall damage by evaluating trees on your property that are within 12 feet of power lines. If you see a tree that is within the 12 foot safety zone, or if you spot a high risk tree outside of that perimeter, you can call PSE and they can send a representative to address the risk.

PSE may trim or remove a high risk tree. This is so critical to maintaining power lines, PSE offers this service for free.

Contact PSE for information at:

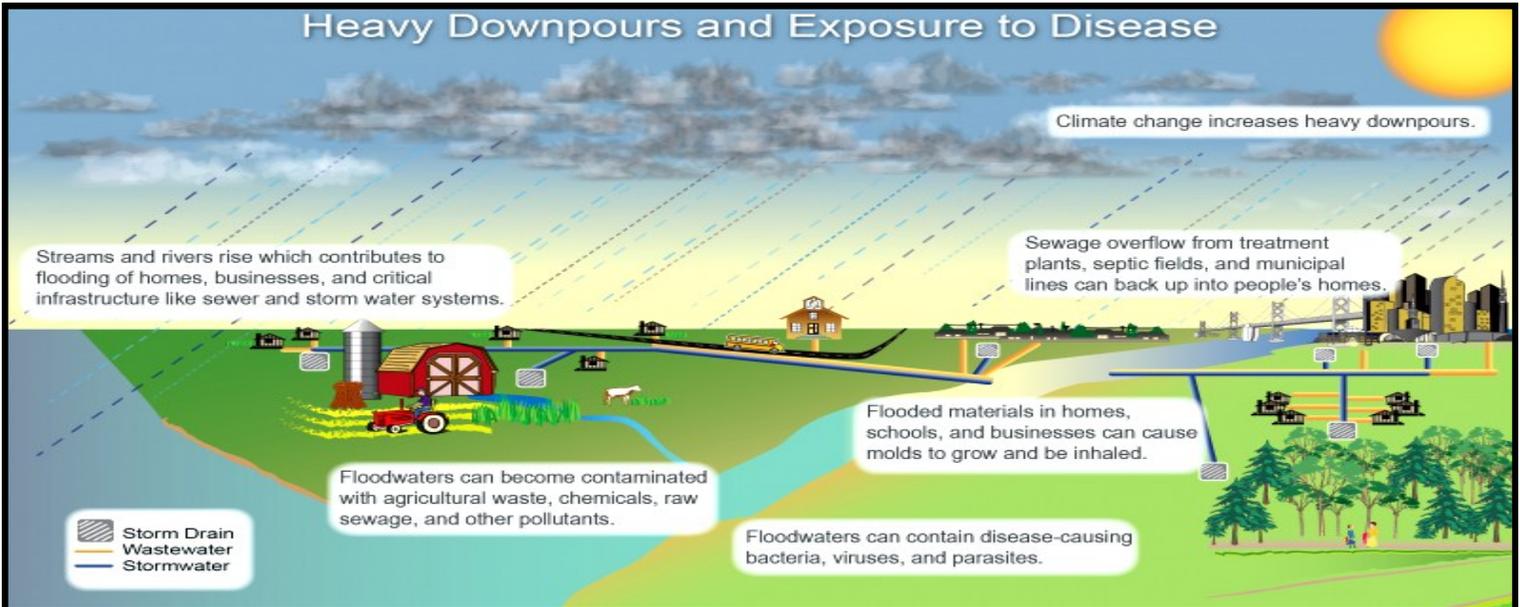
PSE's Regional Utility Forester
360-766-5445 or
vegetationmanagement@pse.com



El Nino

The National Weather Service predicted a weak El Nino season as we headed into our winter months and they were indeed correct. The El Nino weather pattern derives from above-average sea temps in the western and central Pacific Ocean which contributes to warmer air temperatures. The weak El Nino outlook calls for precipitation to fall in the form of rain rather than snow. Besides a below average snowpack, how does this affect Skagit County? We will likely continue to see precipitation fall as rain for the next few months. This rain can cause streams and rivers to rise and exceed their banks. Also we can anticipate that heavy rains will increase the amount of surface water on our fields and our streets.

Heavy Downpours and Exposure to Disease



Heavy rains contribute to increased surface water flows. Our storm drain system is designed to prevent flooding by carrying excess rainwater away from streets.

Yard clippings and leaves can wash into storm drains and prevent the drainage of flood waters or contribute nutrients and organic matter to our local channels, eventually polluting our rivers, streams and bays. Since the storm drain system does not treat water, it can transport pollutants directly to our precious waterways.

Keep storm drains clear. Don't sweep yard waste into the street, catch basins or channels. By composting or mulching yard waste, you can recycle the nutrients right back into your lawn, reducing the need to fertilize. By removing drain clogging debris from a storm drain, you are reducing the risk of flooding to you and your neighbors.

Reduce storm water pollution. Leaking and poorly maintained septic systems release pathogens that can be picked up by storm water and carried to our streets and down our storm drains. This runoff can cause health problems and environmental concerns. Inspect your system annually and have your tank pumped every 3-5 years.

What YOU can do:

Keep storm drains clear of debris to reduce flooding

Maintain septic systems to reduce pollution into our streams and rivers

Avoid driving through flooded roadways

Do not use food or water that has come into contact with flood waters

Until declared safe, water for drinking and food prep should be boiled for ten minutes

Upcoming Events

ICS-300: Intermediate ICS for Expanding Incidents

March 18-19, 2015

Skagit County DEM, Dale Kloes (360) 428-3250

ICS-300 & ICS-400 Combined Training

April 20-23, 2015

San Juan County DEM, Brendan Cowan (360) 370-7612

»Target audience for these courses are senior response personnel who are expected to perform in a management capacity during a major emergency. Courses explain the special challenges of major incidents, including resource management and understanding how multi-agency coordination is utilized in a major event. Class size is limited, please call to reserve your space.

Class Pre-Requisites are IS/ICS 100, 200, 700 & 800. Also ICS 300 is a prerequisite for ICS 400.



Community Emergency Response Team (CERT)

April 9, 2015

Anacortes Fire Department, (360) 293-1925 or swans@cityofanacortes.org

»The CERT program educates people about disaster preparedness for hazards that may impact their area and trains them in basic disaster response skills, such as fire safety, light search and rescue, team organization, and disaster medical operations. Using the training learned in the classroom and during exercises, CERT members can assist others in their neighborhood or workplace following an event when professional responders are not immediately available to help. CERT members also are encouraged to support emergency response agencies by taking a more active role in emergency preparedness projects in their community.

Additional Resources:

Do1Thing : A Monthly guide to preparedness.

Washington Natural Hazard Guidebook : Media guide created by WA Emergency Management Division, USGS, WA DNR & the National Tsunami Hazard Mitigation Program.

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration : El Nino forecasting

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Tsunami

In 2004 a powerful Indian Ocean tsunami devastated Sumatra, displacing millions and killing 100's of thousands. Did you know that the earthquake and tsunami potential generated by the Cascadia Subduction Zone closely resembles that of the Sunda Trench off the Indonesian coast of Sumatra?

What can you do to stay safe?

Before:

- » **Have** a Family Communication Plan & Emergency Kit Prepared
- » **Practice** your evacuation route
- » **Know the** community warning system
- » **Familiarize** yourself with your elevation

After the earth shakes:

- » **Immediately** move to higher ground. Depending on where it originated, a tsunami may take minutes or hours to reach our coastlines.
- » **Do not** return to low ground until officials declare it safe to do so. Tsunamis have multiple waves and the first wave is not always the biggest and waves may arrive hours apart.

By the numbers:

- ♦ Pacific Ocean basin averages **6** tsunami generating earthquakes every **100** years.
- ♦ **10-14%** chance of a magnitude **9** earthquake and tsunami in the next **10** years
- ♦ **6 ft.** = the level the coast could drop after a CSZ earthquake
- ♦ **30 ft.** = potential wave height
- ♦ **43,000** = WA coast population at risk
- ♦ Recent tsunamis along the WA coastline: **900-930 era, 1700, the 1890's, 1944-1953 era, 1949, 1960, 1964, and 1980**

