

City of Seattle

Office of Emergency Management



2011



Seattle Office of Emergency Management
105 5th Ave South
Seattle, WA 98104
206-233-5076
www.seattle.gov/emergency



Director's Message

Barb Graff

I am pleased to share with you the highlights of a very active year for the Seattle Office of Emergency Management. You've probably heard the phrase, "when a butterfly flaps its wings in one part of the world, it can set off a storm in another part." Well, 2011 ushered in one of the world's largest disasters in Northern Japan - earthquake, tsunami, and nuclear plant accident that took an enormous and tragic human and physical toll. Here, across the Pacific Ocean, Seattleites reacted with much heightened interest in updating their emergency plans, forming neighborhood teams, learning about radiation, and talking more seriously about worst case scenarios.

We taught more Emergency Operations Center skills-based classes than any previous year and exceeded our annual public education class goals by July. The Emergency Operations Center was activated four times and in between hosted dozens of special events, major exercises and training opportunities all geared toward building community-wide proficiency in disaster preparedness and response.

2011 was the year we inaugurated a new volunteer program in Emergency Management creating opportunities for community members to join us in our effort to become truly resilient. And community members helped to extend the identification of "community hubs" - in other words, logical places in any neighborhood district where you could go if you needed help from your neighbors and if you could offer help to your neighbors.

The Seattle Office of Emergency Management was the coordinating entity for an eight-county Puget Sound-wide catastrophic planning project. Regional plans have been designed to offer short term solutions to the problems commonly associated with mega disasters: crippled transportation systems, overloaded health care network, logistics management, etc.

We turn our attention in 2012 to a series of regional earthquake exercises and drills meant to test the effectiveness of those plans. And with funding granted by City Council we look forward to beginning the first phase of long-term post-disaster recovery planning.

I would like to thank the many people and agencies who work closely with our office to further our efforts and I would like to commend the "can-do" attitude of the staff of the Office of Emergency Management.

Office of Emergency Management Vision

Disaster ready . . . Prepared people, resilient community

Office of Emergency Management Mission

We partner with the community to prepare for, respond to, mitigate the impacts of, and recover from disasters.

Values

Service Oriented, Collaborative, Continuous Improvement

Accomplishments

2011

Mayor McGinn hosted the City's first Department Director Emergency Preparedness Seminar. Each Department Director was responsible for outlining their department's responsibilities and priorities for responding to major events. Feedback from the participants was very positive. In a follow-up survey 23 out of 23 attendees indicated that what they learned at the seminar improved their understanding of emergency management and the role their organization played in the Citywide Response.

March 11, 2011 Japan experienced a mega earthquake and tsunami that had devastating and far-reaching impacts. Following the catastrophic events, the Office of Emergency Management received media requests for interviews on Seattle's readiness, a high volume of requests for personal preparedness presentations at neighborhood meetings and an uptick in the registration for home retrofit how-to workshops. OEM also stayed in contact with health officials about the scope of risk associated with radiation from the Fukushima Daichi nuclear plant, which included a briefing from the Washington State Department of Health's Environmental Health Section.

OEM staff coordinated a series of presentations for City Council regarding lessons from international earthquakes and improving the City's level of preparedness. The presentations set the stage for high level review of earthquake planning elements, mitigation and recovery. As a result the Council awarded OEM funds to complete the initial phase of a "Post-Disaster Long Term Recovery Plan." As part of Phase I, a consultant will be hired to review the plan and identify key recovery issues that need to be addressed. This will be done, in part, through a series of stakeholder workshops and is expected to be complete by the end of December 2012.

OEM worked with the City Personnel Department to develop language for the authorization of eligible City of Seattle employees to convert accumulated and unused vacation to cash to benefit relief efforts on behalf of victims of natural disaster. The legislation was adopted and the Seattle Municipal Code has been amended.

Mayor McGinn signed a Memorandum Of Understanding with the County Executive to initiate or participate in phone conversations during emergencies for the resolution of regional policies or decisions.

OEM Director briefed the Governor's Emergency Management Council on Intrastate Mutual Aid and testified at House and Senate Committees on mutual aid. As a result of a coordinated city effort, the State legislature adopted a bill establishing Intrastate Mutual Aid, paving the way to loan and borrow resources during state level disaster and training events.

OEM embarked on the development of a comprehensive Volunteer Program in 2011. Successes in the first year included the graduation of a Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) class, the recruitment of 10 community volunteers, and the training of 15 City employees who are now able to assist in the EOC during activations.

The Seattle Police Foundation provided almost \$13,000 in funding for 30 hand-held radios to be used to support the Communication Hubs, which are natural or pre-designated gathering places in the community where people will meet after a disaster and start exchanging information and resources to address local needs. These funds are also being used to purchase one UHF repeater package. A repeater is a two-way radio system that receives one frequency, then retransmits what is heard on another at exactly the same time. Using a repeater lets radio users greatly extend their range and talk over hills and around buildings.

Operational Readiness

Be operationally ready at all times for all events

2011 Emergency Operating Center Activations and Exercises

DATE	NAME	TYPE
10/14/11	Winter Snow	Exercise
9/26/11	Natural Gas Explosion/Fire	Activation
9/11/11	10th Anniversary of 9/11 Terrorist Attack	Activation
2/23/11	Weather (Snow)	Activation
1/21/11	Weather (Snow)	Activation

- OEM staffed the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) on the morning of September 11 to monitor activities on the 10 year anniversary of the terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center. Representatives from key City departments were joined by other agencies such as King County, Target, Port of Seattle and the US Coast Guard. The activation also provided agencies the opportunity to exercise and practice EOC related scenarios in small groups while keeping an eye on nationwide events.
- OEM conducted a winter storm preparedness drill in the EOC.
- OEM entered into a partnership with Pacific Northwest National Labs (PNNL) to pilot a Homeland Security funded data exchange program called the Unified Incident Command and Decision Support (UICDS) system. The pilot will build a series of data switches that will move data on damage assessments from the City's Unifier facilities database into WebEOC, the City's general purpose emergency management application. The pilot's purpose is to demonstrate that data exchange is technically feasible and to make information more accessible to users (damage information in this case). If successful, the City could build data switches that would allow the emergency management community to exchange data through a common mechanism, UICDS.

Training and Drills

Training and drills are a vital component of the ongoing readiness for those who are tasked with responding to the Emergency Operating Center (EOC) in an actual activation. 2011 was a busy year, both in hosting training for City responders and in support of regional efforts. OEM Provided training to 179 people who respond to the EOC when it is activated. Highlights include:

City Training & Drills

- Joint Information Center "Information Sharing" Drill
- Logistics and resource request process Drills
- EOC Logistics Section Training
- EOC Operations Section Training
- EOC Planning Section Training
- Spring and Fall offering of EOC training series, Basic, Intermediate and Advanced
- Spring and Fall offering of WebEOC training.

Regional Training & Drills

- Participated in two regional activation exercises, including a two-day Oil Spill Response exercise with Shell Oil. The functional exercise centered on the response to a major oil spill in Puget Sound.
- On November 9, OEM staff and stakeholders participated in the first ever simultaneous test of the national Emergency Alert System.
- Washington State Annual CERT Expo: A statewide event that brought together CERT teams to practice their skills around disaster first aid, search & rescue and fire suppression & utility control.

Partnerships

Support and expand our ability to prepare for, respond to, mitigate the impacts of and recover from disasters.

- ➔ OEM Public Education staff hosted the second annual Seattle Housing Authority (SHA) Resident Preparedness Workshop. Nearly 60 residents from 14 SHA communities attended. The focus of the workshop was self sufficiency and it encouraged residents to plan for being on their own for the first 24-36 hours after a major fire or disaster in their building.
- ➔ OEM hosted a Train-the-Trainer personal and community preparedness program for immigrant and refugee elders from seven communities: Somali, Ethiopian, Asian Pacific Island, Southeast Asian (Hmong, Mien and Laotian) Russian, Ukrainian and Burmese. Built into the training was the added support of OEM staff co-presenting with the trainers to help build their confidence. This partnership resulted in 21 additional programs with a total of 450 community members reached.
- ➔ OEM Public Education staff partnered with Seattle Fire Department and Public Health—Seattle & King County to co-host a Fire Safety and Fall Prevention event. The day also included an earthquake preparedness drill as well as a tour of the Fire Alarm Call Center to help attendees better understand how 911 calls to the fire department are handled.
- ➔ OEM staff, along with Human Services Department, and Seattle Public Utilities hosted a Key Customer Forum event for faith based communities. The goal of the event was to build relationships with faith based organizations to support planning for, responding to and recovering from any disaster that may occur in this area. Participants had the opportunity to network, share their common community goals, assumptions and expectations of the City as it relates to disaster preparedness and response.
- ➔ OEM staff participated in the “What If Expo” at Northgate Mall. The event was sponsored by KOMO-TV, KOMO News radio, KVI, KUNS and Star 101.5 and drew over 1,500 people. It was a great way to learn how to get emergency plans established, build emergency kits and many other important components of preparedness. There were seminars, booths, an earthquake simulator and emergency supplies were available at a discount. 20 experts and groups were on hand to answer questions and give tips.
- ➔ OEM assisted Target Corporation with an event for Emergency Preparedness Awareness Campaign in September. Staff members from OEM, along with Seattle Police Officers, were on-site at the Westwood Village Target Store to assist 100 families with tips on how to build their emergency kits, both for themselves and their families. Target donated supplies to 100 families for their emergency supply kits.
- ➔ OEM collaborated with the Department of Neighborhoods on their Small and Simple grant awards with a special emphasis on proposals for emergency preparedness projects. In total, 32 Small and Simple grant proposals were submitted; one quarter of the awards were for projects that focused on improving communities overall preparedness, both on an individual and neighborhood level.



Public Education Specialist Debbie Goetz instructs participants on what to do during an earthquake

Public Education Programs

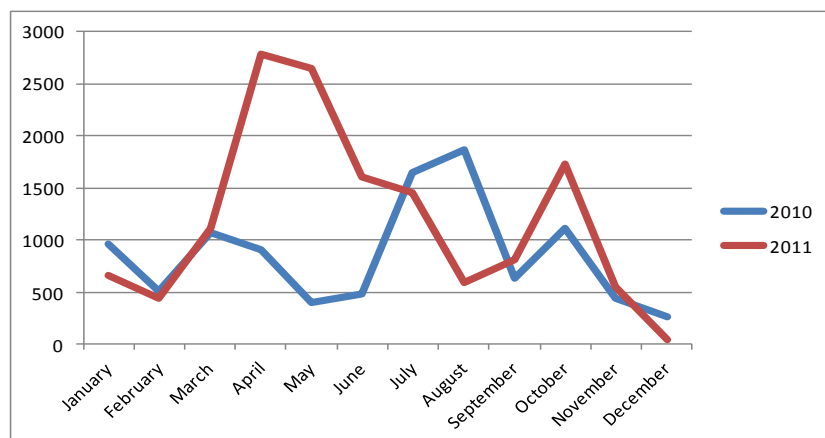
- 2011 saw a record breaking increase in requests for preparedness education services. The mega earthquake and tsunami experienced in Japan put the public education team in the community nightly, delivering information about how to prepare for, and respond to a similar disaster. The tables below highlight the number of public education programs provided by the staff.
- OEM hosted the first Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) training. Fifteen individuals graduated from the 36 hour course and are actively working with OEM to organize their neighborhoods to respond in the aftermath of a major event.

Public Education by the numbers

	2011 Classes	2011 Attendance	2010 Classes	2010 Attendance
January	13	656	23	955
February	18	438	17	511
March	29	1,118	21	1,067
April	49	2,787	26	908
May	56	2,646	16	396
June	45	1,612	16	483
July	25	1,454	24	1,651
August	16	586	15	1,870
September	28	814	14	639
October	39	1,725	19	1,118
November	24	548	15	441
December	9	40	10	260
Total	351	14,424	216	10,299

This chart represents both the number of classes and the total number of people who attended public education programs. OEM staff saw a four-fold increase in the number of programs they presented in 2011.

This chart reflects the number of people attending public education programs for 2010 and 2011. OEM saw a sharp increase in the number of requests following the mega quake & tsunami that hit Japan in March of 2011.



Community Resiliency

The impact of disasters are reduced by a resilient community

- The Community Hub program, (which are designated gathering locations throughout the City that neighbors respond to in the aftermath of a major event to begin assessing damage and coordinating services) grew during 2011. Northeast Seattle established their first Community Hub in Wedgewood as part of the ‘neighborhoods gathering’ project at the Hunter Farms location. Southwest Seattle



Carl Leon participates in the “field communication exercise” as part of the Communications Hub

expanded the number of Hubs sites from nine to 11. Additionally, Community Hub development began in Ballard (where they have identified five possible Hub locations), Broadview and the Rainer Beach area of Southeast Seattle. As part of its ongoing training commitment, the Community Hub program held two “Summits” that were designed to continue the education of community members on the importance of preparedness. Communities and organizations are encouraged to contact the Office of Emergency Management for help setting up Hubs in their neighborhoods.

successful “field communications exercises.” These exercises tested radio communication networks that have been established and would be used if the City lost telephone and internet capabilities because of a disaster. Additionally, ACS participated in the annual Field Day event, to test amateur radio operations which support the City’s communications during a disaster. The event successfully demonstrated the ability of radio teams to operate around the clock using emergency power systems simulating a response to a disaster. Over 60 ham radio volunteers participated and the site was visited by several members of the community.

- The Auxiliary Communications Services (ACS [Ham radio operators]) and the Community Hubs participated in two

- OEM taught two workshops as part of the Seattle Public Library’s first Urban Self-Reliance Program. Throughout the month of October, OEM held Do-It-Yourself Home Retrofit and Supply Kit workshops. Distribution of information was promoted throughout the library system.

- OEM staff hosted a “Movie Night” to showcase a real life example of community resiliency. The film, “A Village Called Versailles,” is a documentary about the Vietnamese community coming together after Hurricane Katrina and becoming the catalyst for change and galvanizing the greater community of New Orleans East. Multi-generational community of Vietnamese Americans overcame obstacles to rebuild after Hurricane Katrina, only to have their homes threatened by a new government-imposed toxic landfill. 35 community members attended and led a discussion following the movie that focused on self reliance and what it means to be a community.



Recovery

The City is capable of rebuilding a stronger community following a disaster

Mitigation Grants

OEM closed out of two FEMA-funded Hazard Mitigation Grants:

- The Facilities Gas Shut Off Valves – This project installed gas shut off valves at 35 City facilities to help prevent post-earthquake fires.
- Queen Anne Community Center Seismic Retrofit – This project funded the retrofitting of the community center, identified as a potential public shelter site, to strengthen the building and reduce the chance of collapse during an earthquake.

Seattle was also awarded two new mitigation grants in 2011:

- Jefferson Community Center Seismic Retrofit: This project will upgrade the roof and building component connection in order to protect the Center from serious structural damage due to an earthquake. An emergency generator will also be installed to enhance the building's capacity to serve as an emergency shelter.
- All-Hazards Mitigation Plan Update: This project entails a comprehensive update to the existing mitigation plan, allowing the City to remain eligible for FEMA mitigation grant funds in the future. A seismic risk assessment demonstration project based on selected buildings in the city will strengthen the plan's risk assessment and mitigation strategy section. The plan update will be complete in 2014.



Photo by Laurel Mercury

Planning & Exercises

- The Earthquake Incident Annex to the Seattle Disaster Readiness and Response Plan was completed in 2011. This annex provides guidance to all responders during an earthquake.
- OEM partnered with the Washington State Department of Health to conduct an aerial radiation survey of Seattle. This survey provided data on the level of background or natural radiation in our city. This information will be used as a baseline, should an incident occur involving the release of radioactive materials. This will be vital in determining the extent and severity of any possible contamination.
- Two OEM staff received training and are now members of the Washington State Emergency Management Assistance Compact (EMAC) A-Team. EMAC supports state to state disaster assistance. EMAC operates alongside FEMA during the response to a disaster. Team membership provides valuable real world experience responding to disasters, which enhances the ability of the City to respond in an emergency.
- OEM participated in a Public Health—Seattle & King County sponsored planning effort for receiving and evacuating injured or ill victims using the National Disaster Medical System.
- OEM participated in the planning for a major earthquake exercise that will involve multiple federal agencies, the State of Washington, eight counties and several cities. This exercise will occur in June of 2012.

Regional Planning Efforts

- For the past three years, a team consisting of representatives from eight regional counties and their associated cities, along with State, Federal and Tribal partners have worked to establish regional disaster response and recovery plans. During 2011 the following plans were completed:
 - ◆ Puget Sound Regional Catastrophic Disaster Coordination Plan which assists the regional partners in coordinating their planning, response and recovery efforts.
 - ◆ Best Practices Plan which consolidates lessons learned and best practices identified during development of the Regional Catastrophic initiatives.
 - ◆ Emergency Authorities Report that identifies existing lines of authority at all levels of government across emergency management related disciplines.
 - ◆ The Mutual Aid Plan for Long Term Care Facilities addresses a critical planning gap related to the evacuation of medically fragile residents residing in these facilities.
 - ◆ Regional Structural Collapse Rescue Annex provides a procedure for regional coordination, decision-making and resource sharing in regard to structural collapse rescue capability.
 - ◆ Transportation Recovery Annex provides information and recommended guidelines for coordination, collaboration, decision-making and priority setting around transportation issues and includes toolboxes for traffic mitigation, waterway alternatives and bridge/roadway reconstruction.
 - ◆ Pre-Hospital Emergency Triage and Treatment Annex provides an all-hazards framework for planning and pre-hospital response to a catastrophic incident.
- The 21 member Regional Catastrophic Preparedness Team (RCPT) met regularly to provide program oversight and discuss solutions to issues brought forth during planning efforts.
- The RCPT approved a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to continue coordinated regional efforts to plan for, respond to and recover from a catastrophic incident. Counties and Tribal Governments within the Puget Sound RCPGP region will be invited to sign the MOU in the first quarter 2012.

Principles of Emergency Management

- **Comprehensive:** We consider and take into account all hazards, all phases, all stakeholders and all impacts relevant to disasters.
- **Progressive:** We anticipate future disasters and take preventive and preparatory measures to build disaster-resistant and disaster-resilient communities.
- **Risk-Driven:** We use sound risk management principles (hazard identification, risk analysis, and impact analysis) in assigning priorities and resources.
- **Integrated:** We ensure unity of effort among all levels of government and all elements of our community.
- **Collaborative:** We create and sustain broad and sincere relationships among individuals and organizations to encourage trust, advocate a team atmosphere, build consensus, and facilitate communication.
- **Flexible:** We use creative and innovative approaches in solving disaster challenges.
- **Professional:** We value a science and knowledge-based approach based on education, training, experience, ethical practice, public stewardship and continuous improvement.



From City of Seattle Photo Archives—Mt. Baker Park totem pole

The Office of Emergency Management offers a wide array of opportunities for individuals to volunteer. If you are interested in working with us, please contact Cathy Wenderoth, Volunteer Coordinator at 206-233-5096 or cathy.wenderoth@seattle.gov. For more information about our office visit our website at www.seattle.gov/emergency