



EMERGENCY NEWS FROM THE STATE OF WASHINGTON

State Emergency Operations Center, Camp Murray, Washington
Emergency Management Division, Washington Military Department

For immediate release

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Winter storm update – January 20, 11:30 a.m.

Camp Murray, Wash.—The State Emergency Operations Center (EOC) activated to Phase III on Jan. 18, 12:00 a.m. in response to winter storm conditions throughout the state.. The EOC will be fully activated until further notice.

Governor Emergency Proclamation: has been signed and is available at
<http://www.governor.wa.gov/news/news-view.asp?pressRelease=1838&newsType=1>

Counties, Cities, and Tribes activated

Counties: Grays Harbor, King, Lewis, Mason, Pierce, Thurston

Cities: Auburn, Issaquah, Kent, Olympia, Pacific, Puyallup, Seattle

Tribes: Muckleshoot Tribe

State agencies actively involved in response/support

Washington State Department of Transportation, Washington State Department of Social and Health Services, Washington State National Guard, Washington State Patrol, and Washington Department of Commerce/Energy.

Road Closures

- Drivers should check their route at: <http://wsdot.com/traffic/trafficalerts/default.aspx>. WSDOT will update this website as conditions change.
- Updated travel information is also available by calling 5-1-1.

Weather

Seattle: <http://www.wrh.noaa.gov/sew/>

Spokane: <http://www.wrh.noaa.gov/otx/>

Portland: <http://www.wrh.noaa.gov/pqr/>

Pendleton: <http://www.wrh.noaa.gov/pdt/>

Flood Status/Landslide and Debris Flow Update

A Flood Watch (potential for flooding) is in effect through Saturday for rivers and creeks in Southwest Washington based on the current forecasts. All around Western Washington generally, warmer and wetter weather into next week will increase the chance of flooding.

The combination of heavy rain and snowmelt will increase the potential for landslides, especially in drainage areas. Structures and roads located below steep slopes may be at serious risk from rapidly moving landslides.

Energy Outage Update

Local utility providers are working to restore power to approximately 277,000 customers who are still without power; 253,000 are Puget Sound Energy customers. The hardest hit counties to this point are Thurston, Pierce, King, and Snohomish. Restoration could last well into the weekend and beyond, especially if additional damage is sustained.

Carbon Monoxide, the dangers of...

Carbon Monoxide can be a real threat during a power outage. Learn what to look for and how to protect yourself. <http://www.emd.wa.gov/preparedness/CarbonMonoxideDanger.shtml>

Insurance Coverage

The Office of the Insurance Commissioner has published a comprehensive question and answer sheet on Winter Weather Insurance Coverage. It can be found on the Commissioner's website at http://www.insurance.wa.gov/consumers/tips/winter_weather.shtml. The office has also set-up a consumer hotline number to report problems with insurance companies. The hotline number is 1-800-562-6900.

Preparedness Actions

Residents should consider the following:

- Provide assistance to your neighbors, especially the elderly or disabled. Activate your Map Your Neighborhood (MYN) program. <http://www.emd.wa.gov/myn/index.shtml>
- Listen to radio or television stations for local information and weather reports.
- Flooding: do not walk or drive through flooded areas. <http://www.emd.wa.gov/activations/Activation.shtml#resources>
- Watch for falling trees and limbs. Branches can be hazardous to pedestrians too.
- Stay at least 30 feet away from downed power lines. Never attempt to move or walk under a downed power line. Avoid trees and branches that are in contact with the power line. If you are in a car when a power line falls on it, stay in the car and call 9-1-1. http://www.emd.wa.gov/preparedness/videos/video_downed_power_line_safety.shtml
- If the power goes out, keep refrigerator/freezer doors closed; keeps food frozen up to two days. http://www.emd.wa.gov/preparedness/prep_foodsafety.shtml
- Don't forget the danger of carbon monoxide poisoning—don't use generators, barbecues or kerosene heaters indoors. http://www.emd.wa.gov/preparedness/videos/video_carbonmonoxide.shtml and
- Use generators safely. http://www.emd.wa.gov/preparedness/videos/video_generatorsafety.shtml

Preparedness Actions - cont.

- Stay home if you can. Less traffic makes clearing roads easier for state and local crews. Less traffic will reduce the number of spin-outs and accidents.
- If you must travel, assemble an emergency auto kit, stay on main roads, and follow traffic instructions. Make sure someone knows where you are going.
- If your car gets stuck—don't leave it. You're more likely to be found if you stay with your vehicle.

Calling 9-1-1

The State Enhanced 911 Office and local telephone carriers remind citizens in the affected area:

- To stay off the telephone unless you have a critical need to make a telephone call. Remember a FAX or a computer also uses a telephone line and its use may affect your ability to get immediate help in a life-threatening emergency.
- **DO NOT** call 9-1-1 unless you need an emergency response from police, fire or emergency medical personnel. **DO NOT** call 9-1-1 unnecessarily. 9-1-1 lines must be kept open for people who have a true emergency.
- If you experience other types of problems not related to these emergency services, call the appropriate telephone number for those services.
- If you pick up your telephone to make a call and do not hear dial tone, **DO NOT HANG UP**. Simply wait a few seconds, and you will get dial tone and be able to make your call.

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