



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 21, 2:00 p.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: King, Mason, Pierce, Thurston

Cities: Tacoma, Auburn, Puyallup

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

- SR 18 is closed in both directions from SE 231st St (MP 16) to I-90 (MP 27) due to winter weather and fallen trees.
- SR 121 (Maytown Road) closed in both directions between MP 0 and MP 3 due to downed trees and power lines.
- 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

Avalanche danger considerable until early afternoon.

High surf advisory for the coast tonight and through tomorrow.

Winter weather advisory for the Cascades tonight.

Gale warning today – Coast, Strait, Interior

Sunday night: lowland rain/mountain snow plus high winds for the Coast/NW Interior. Winds coming up Sunday afternoon and will be strongest during the evening hours.

- Coast/Northwest Interior 25-40 mph, gust to 60 mph. Other areas 20-30 mph.

Several storms, beginning Sunday night will contribute to river flows over the next week.

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

Minor urban and small stream flooding still a risk today.

Southwest area rivers:

- Skokomish River – threat for minor flooding today
- Chehalis River - threat for minor flooding tonight and tomorrow

Energy Outage Update

Local utility providers are working to restore power to approximately 208,760 customers who are still without power; 192,500 are Puget Sound Energy customers (as of 12:00 today). The hardest hit counties at this point are Thurston, Pierce, King, and Snohomish. Restoration could continue into the week especially if additional damage is sustained. On Saturday morning, 188 power line crews, along with crew coordinators and damage assessors (nearly 900 people) are in Thurston, Pierce and King counties making repairs and restoring power.

If PSE customers discover damage to their weatherhead, the pole-like structure where the electrical service enters the home, PSE cannot legally restore power until the damage has been repaired by a licensed technician. See link below for weatherhead graphic.

<http://pse.com/accountsandservices/ServiceAlert/Pages/Real-time-Updates.aspx>

For current information on PSE power restoration:

<http://pse.com/accountsandservices/ServiceAlert/Pages/SAM.aspx>

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>

Falling tree limbs: Be cautious of falling tree limbs already weakened by snow and ice, particularly when moving broken limbs or clearing areas of debris.

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 by helping with debris removal, and clearing of driveways and sidewalks. Activate your Map Your Neighborhood (MYN) program. <http://www.emd.wa.gov/myn/index.shtml>
- **Flooding**: do not walk or drive through flooded areas. <http://www.emd.wa.gov/activations/Activation.shtml#resources>
- **Help reduce urban and small stream flooding** by checking street storm drains and keeping them clear of snow, slush and debris. http://www.seattle.gov/util/Services/Drainage_&_Sewer/Keep_Water_Safe_&_Clean/Adopt_A_Drain/index.htm
- **Downed power lines**: Stay at least 30 feet away from. 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
- **Food safety**: 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
- **Carbon monoxide poisoning danger**: don't use generators, barbeques 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
- **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.

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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