

Gov. Gregoire Asks for Continued Patience and Compassion

*Governor thanks emergency workers, reminds citizens not to use
generators and grills indoors*

OLYMPIA - Governor Chris Gregoire today asked Washingtonians to continue to be patient and compassionate as the state recovers from the recent wind storm that left over one million people without power for a number of days.

"Washingtonians have strong spirits and we know that we can get through this together. I urge you to check on your neighbors, family and friends," said Governor Gregoire. "This situation is made even more frustrating because we are so close to the holidays and we all want to be able to spend time with our families and loved ones."

Governor Gregoire continues to urge Washingtonians to be aware of the dangers of bringing generators and grills inside for heating, and cooking and asks all citizens to get the word out to anyone they know without power. Carbon monoxide poisoning is to blame for three deaths since last week's windstorm and at least four other deaths are attributed to improper indoor use of a generator. Public health officials believe as many as a thousand others have been affected by carbon monoxide poisoning over the past five days.

She also expressed appreciation for the hundreds of state and local emergency workers, members of the National Guard, utility employees and volunteers who have spent the last five days helping people get their lives back to normal.

"Some of these people have not had a day of rest since the floods in November, yet they are as devoted as ever to helping their neighbors recover and get back to preparing for the holidays," said Governor Gregoire. "That is the Washington way."

Governor Gregoire's statewide emergency proclamation on Saturday authorized utility company vehicles to use HOV lanes when responding to power outage areas and allowed onto Washington roads overweight vehicles with emergency response equipment.

In the aftermath of the December 14 and 15 windstorm, the State Emergency Operations Center (EOC) remains staffed in support of the recovery efforts of local jurisdictions.

Energy Outage Update

The Washington Department of Community Trade and Economic Development (CTED) reports that as of 10 a.m. today, 181,189 customers are still without power statewide:

- Clark County PUD reports 150 customers, fewer than 1%, of their customers without power.
- Grays Harbor PUD reports 50, or less than 1%, of their customers without power.
- Lewis County PUD reports 500, or 2%, of their customers without power.
- Mason County PUD #3 reports 1,200, or 4% of their customers without power.

- Peninsula Light reports 6,500, or 22%, of their customers without power.
- Puget Sound Energy reports 155,989, or 14%, of their customers are still without power.
- Seattle City Light reports 10,000, or 3%, of their customers without power.
- Snohomish County PUD reports 5,000, or 2%, of their customers without power.
- Tacoma City Light reports 1,800 or 1%, of their customers without power.

The following report all power restored for all of their customers:

- Clallam County PUD
- Cowlitz County PUD
- Pacific PUD
- Wahkiakum PUD

Shelters

The American Red Cross (ARC) reports as of 2 p.m. 16 shelters open in Chelan (2), Kitsap (2, one of which is a warming center), King (3), Kittitas (2), Pierce (4), Thurston (3). Nineteen (19) non-ARC shelters are open: King (14, one of which is a warming center), two in Pierce, three in Mason counties. Monday evening, 262 people were sheltered in 15 centers with shelters having a capacity of 2,797. Yesterday, King and Kitsap counties reported 655 meals and 1,263 snacks served.

Pet Shelter Open

The Seattle Humane Society reports that it has converted its auditorium into an emergency shelter to house stray, lost and orphaned animals. The shelter is located at 13212 S.E. Eastgate Way, Seattle.

Special Needs Sheltering

King County Public Health is operating a Special Needs shelter at the Bellevue Community College, Bellevue. A Special Needs Hotline has been set up at 206-296-4606.

State Agency Support to Counties

The State EOC is currently processing requests for a Nextel cell phone amplifier and a portable shower for shelter support and traffic control equipment for City of Gig Harbor.

The Washington National Guard, the Military Department and the American Red Cross reported to the State EOC in support of recovery efforts.

State actions are coordinated through the State EOC at Camp Murray. The State EOC is operated by the Washington Emergency Management Division (WEMD) of the Washington Military Department 24 hours a day and will be fully activated until further notice.

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