

Washington State EMERGENCY NEWS/Response



Washington
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Department

Washington
Emergency
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State EOC activated for winter storm

CAMP MURRAY, WASH. — The State Emergency Operations Center (EOC) activated to a Phase III Saturday in preparation for supporting local jurisdictions as they respond to winter winds, snow and cold currently sweeping across the state. Predictions are for snowfall and wind speeds to increase tonight, and for the storm system to last through Sunday.

Gov. Christine Gregoire's office was notified when the State EOC activated Friday and is receiving periodic updates on the winter storm situation.

Washingtonians should consider the following preparedness actions:

- Stay home tonight and, as conditions permit, tomorrow.
- Listen to radio and television stations for local information and weather reports.

The State EOC was activated to a Phase II level at 7 p.m., Friday. Moving to a Phase III level tonight means additional supervisory staff and key personnel have been brought in from the Washington Emergency Management Division (WEMD) and other key state agencies, including the departments of Transportation; and Military; and the Washington State Patrol. Staff from the American Red Cross have also reported, and the EOC will be in touch with other agencies—local and state—as the situation requires.

Heavy snowfall is being reported over much of Washington state. Several cities and counties have activated their emergency operations centers (EOCs) in anticipation of adverse impacts from the winter weather.

- Pierce County activated its EOC Friday and declared an emergency earlier today.
- Other EOCs are activated in King, Jefferson, Kitsap, and Thurston County and the cities of Bellevue, Covington, Kent, Puyallup and Seattle.
- In addition, Puget Sound Energy has activated its EOC.

The State Enhanced 911 Office, in cooperation with local telephone carriers, reminds people across the state:

- 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.
- If you experience other types of problems not related to these emergency services, call the appropriate telephone number for those services.
- DO NOT call 9-1-1 unnecessarily. 9-1-1 lines must be kept open for people who have a true emergency.
- 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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