



**Signature Report**

**June 5, 2007**

**Motion 12525**

**Proposed No.** 2007-0270.3

**Sponsors** Constantine, Patterson, Dunn,  
Gossett, Ferguson, Lambert and  
Phillips

1                   A MOTION adopting a five-point plan for improving King  
2                   County's emergency preparedness.

3

4                   WHEREAS, King County experienced the rainiest month on record for the Puget  
5                   Sound area in November 2006, with a total rainfall of over fifteen inches, which created  
6                   widespread flooding, drainage issues and slope instability, and

7                   WHEREAS, King County experienced severe windstorms on December 14 and  
8                   15, 2006, which knocked out power to more than one million customers and caused  
9                   fourteen deaths, including eight persons who died of carbon monoxide poisoning, and

10                  WHEREAS, King County experienced severe snow and ice conditions in  
11                  December 2006 and January 2007 that challenged road maintenance crews and transit  
12                  providers, and

13                  WHEREAS, although local governments, public and private utilities and private  
14                  nonprofit agencies responded quickly and efficiently to the unique and unprecedented  
15                  challenges presented by the recent winter storms, it is prudent to examine those responses  
16                  so that the lessons learned can be used to improve future emergency management  
17                  response, and

18 WHEREAS, particular areas of possible improvement that have been identified  
19 include the availability of emergency shelter, the management and signage of traffic in  
20 accordance with applicable RCW sections at intersections where traffic control devices  
21 have lost power, the coordination of human services and the welfare of King County  
22 residents with special needs or few resources, who are unusually vulnerable to weather,  
23 natural disasters and other emergency conditions, and

24 WHEREAS, in the aftermath of hurricane Katrina, businesses, nonprofit  
25 organizations and other legal entities proved to be effective agents of relief and care for  
26 the population, and

27 WHEREAS, the council is interested in working with other local government and  
28 private agencies, elected officials and emergency management professionals to address  
29 these and other issues;

30 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT MOVED by the Council of King County:

31 A.1. The council requests the King County emergency management advisory  
32 committee ("EMAC") to review existing emergency management plans and activities  
33 and, where appropriate, to make recommendations to the council and executive  
34 regarding:

35 a. existing and needed day and night shelter facilities for persons who have  
36 been displaced by weather, natural disaster or other emergency conditions;

37 b. infrastructure improvements needed for those facilities to better serve their  
38 intended purposes;

39 c. the extent to which local government and private agencies in the Puget  
40 Sound area are cooperating with King County to develop a regional sheltering plan to

41 ensure every community has the resources to meet the needs of those who are displaced  
42 as a result of a storm, natural disaster or other emergency conditions; and

43 d. expanding the role of businesses, nonprofit organizations and other legal  
44 entities in planning for and responding to disasters and emergencies.

45 2. The council recognizes that the Regional Disaster Plan assigns city  
46 governments the responsibility for providing emergency shelters for residents of  
47 incorporated areas, while counties are responsible to provide shelters for residents of  
48 unincorporated areas.

49 B. The council requests the EMAC to review the King County Emergency  
50 Management Plan and the Regional Disaster Plan to evaluate what updates and  
51 implementation actions are needed in response to lessons learned from the winter storms  
52 of 2006 and 2007, with particular, but not exclusive, emphasis on:

53 1. Improving communication between government agencies and the public  
54 regarding the current and future status of utility and other essential services;

55 2. Improving communication with diverse communities including potential  
56 language barriers;

57 3. Meeting the needs of vulnerable and special needs populations including  
58 those with pets;

59 4. Meeting the needs of individuals served by state-licensed facilities, including  
60 identifying the role of state agencies, local governments, private parties and other key  
61 actors;

62 5. Meeting the needs of families and individuals with few resources for dealing  
63 with emergencies;

64           6. Providing communication about emergency responses in alternative  
65 languages and accessible formats;

66           7. Making recommendations as to how best to communicate to the public when  
67 electric power is out;

68           8. Requiring helipads for evacuations from buildings six stories and taller; and

69           9. Ensuring critical King County facilities are supplied with enough emergency  
70 materials and staffing to continue operations independently for at least three days.

71           C. The council requests the executive and the sheriff to provide the council with  
72 an analysis of traffic management measures that can be taken to minimize impacts from  
73 weather, natural disaster and other emergency conditions. The analysis should:

74           1. Identify the busiest intersections in unincorporated King County;

75           2. Include a plan with cost estimates for assisting the safe movement of traffic at  
76 those intersections to minimize impacts from widespread power outages; and

77           3. Identify potential liability and staffing issues.

78           D. Based on a review of relevant plans, the council requests the executive to:

79           1. Prepare an analysis of ways to better integrate the efforts of human services  
80 providers, including not only government agencies, but also private entities, such as adult  
81 family homes, to meet the needs of King County residents during storms, natural  
82 disasters and other emergency conditions;

83           2. Explore the feasibility of expanding the role of businesses, nonprofit  
84 organizations and other legal entities in planning for and responding to disasters and  
85 emergencies; and

86           3. Identify the feasibility and potential cost and of providing for free disposal of  
87 debris caused by a disaster involving an executive-declared emergency.

88           E. Based on the executive's review of the plans and EMAC recommendations, the  
89 council requests the executive to work with utilities to develop a system for identifying  
90 King County residents with special needs, so that first responders can be directed to the  
91 residences of special needs individuals with an understanding of their requirements.

92           F. The executive, the sheriff and the EMAC are requested to transmit their  
93 findings and recommendations to the council by October 1, 2007, filed in the form of  
94 twelve copies with the clerk of the council, who will retain the original and will forward

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95 copies to each councilmember, the policy staff director and to the lead staff for the  
96 general government and labor relations committee, or its successor.  
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Motion 12525 was introduced on 4/23/2007 and passed as amended by the Metropolitan King County Council on 6/4/2007, by the following vote:

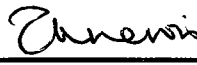
Yes: 9 - Mr. Gossett, Ms. Patterson, Ms. Lambert, Mr. von Reichbauer, Mr. Dunn, Mr. Ferguson, Mr. Phillips, Ms. Hague and Mr. Constantine  
No: 0  
Excused: 0

KING COUNTY COUNCIL  
KING COUNTY, WASHINGTON



Larry Gossett, Chair

ATTEST:



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Anne Noris, Clerk of the Council

**Attachments**      None