



King County

Emergency Management



2017 Annual Report

Our Vision

A county with disaster ready communities where everyone is prepared for and can recover from emergencies.

Our Mission

We provide regional leadership to strengthen community resilience and access to emergency services.



Letter from the Director



Valued stakeholders,

The field of emergency management is continuously changing due to emerging technologies and increasingly severe natural and human-caused disasters. Adapting to these challenges is key to a successful program aimed at building disaster-resilient communities.

Achieving national Emergency Management Accreditation affirms our office is positioned to provide enhanced services to all stakeholders. Our ability to help cities respond to and recover from flood and fire incidents is proof we are well prepared to meet the challenges of the 21st century.

In 2016, we demonstrated organizational maturity in a number of ways. From winning national awards and recognitions, to exercising and addressing gaps in regional capabilities, to adopting visual management tools to track projects and priorities, we've learned to "up our game" in meeting the needs of internal and external stakeholders and the diverse communities we serve. This report summarizes our key accomplishments and the contributions you, our partners, have provided to make King County more disaster ready.

Thank you for your support and dedicated service to our region!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Walt Hubbard". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Walt Hubbard

Our Priorities

Office of Emergency Management culture

- We are innovative, open-minded and adaptable to new and creative ideas.
- We create a safe, collaborative place that invites all voices and perspectives.
- We have clear roles and responsibilities that capitalize on unique skills, strengths, and passions.
- We have strong leadership that starts at the top and is cultivated throughout the organization.

We are committed to specific outcomes

Regional Emergency Services

To provide region-wide planning and emergency response coordination for jurisdictional and private sector partners.

Standards Based Programs

To achieve a state of continuous improvement by measuring quality, cost, delivery, safety, and morale.

Resilient and Inclusive Systems

To have the ability to prepare and plan for, absorb, respond to, recover from, and adapt more successfully to adverse events.

Quality Workforce

To develop a strong workforce made up of internal and external partners, ready to coordinate emergency response and recovery.

The following pages provide specific examples of how we've achieved these outcomes.

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

Action 1: Public information and notification

ALERT King County

ALERT King County is our growing public alert and notification system serving residents of King County. Launched in early 2016, ALERT King County is designed to reach people where they are (which is often not at home), enhancing their ability to make good decisions and stay safe. More than 11,000 residents have signed up to receive emergency messages by email, voice, and text on any mobile device. These short messages can be geo-coded to notify everyone in an impacted area. More than 15 jurisdictions in King County have joined the ALERT King County program including Bellevue, Renton, Kirkland, Kent, and Vashon Island – at no charge.



Emergency News blog

When a significant event impacts our region, we "activate" our Emergency News blog (kcemergency.com) to provide timely, accurate, and centralized public information. This cloud-based website allows for a more agency-neutral format that regional partners can link to from their own digital communication systems. The Emergency News blog has been successfully employed during a number of incidents including winter storms, extreme heat, and VIP visits.

Action 2: Emergency Coordination Center operations readiness

Operations is the core of emergency management, bringing together agencies from every level of government and the private sector to respond in time of need. By design, our programs are in a continuous process of improvement, using the lessons learned from previous incidents to inform and improve response and recovery efforts in the future.

Information Management

One of the greatest challenges for emergency managers is the ability to quickly organize and share information during a crisis. Over the past year, we have been working with stakeholders to identify an information management solution that supports operations in our Emergency Coordination Center (ECC) in Renton. The system we adopt must reliably provide situational awareness, resource management, call log and tasking, plus real-time mapping.

In consultation with our many partnering jurisdictions, we selected WebEOC, a web-based crisis information management software that will provide us with data management, dashboards, and tracking systems that will support all of the work we do at the ECC. Our staff are developing processes to support the configuration of WebEOC with federal, state, and local stakeholders, with a goal of implementation by the end of 2017.

Standard Operating Guidelines

This year, we implemented a new system of Standard Operating Guidelines (SOGs) to assist our team of 24/7 Duty Officers in the critical decisions and processes that are often required during an incident. SOGs cover a broad spectrum of events such as chemical spills, missing persons, severe weather, and earthquakes. SOGs have greatly improved our ability to quickly and efficiently address calls for assistance from multiple agencies.

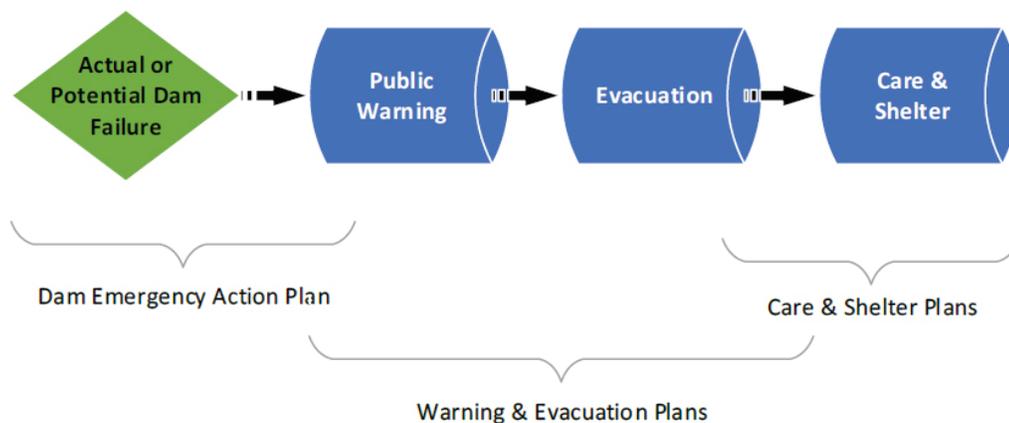
Action 3: Expanded state and local planning efforts

State Catastrophic Incident Planning Team

Our staff have been working closely with the State Catastrophic Incident Planning Team (SCIPT) for the last two years, developing a comprehensive planning tool to help local jurisdictions enhance their Comprehensive Emergency Management Plans. These plans strengthen a jurisdiction's ability to respond with a unified, regional effort during a catastrophic incident. Once the framework is complete, we will begin a yearlong project to develop a Regional Catastrophic Annex.

Dam safety gap analysis

At the direction of the King County Council, we have partnered with the King County Flood Control District to complete a study of dam safety plans and procedures in watersheds affecting King County. Prompted by the unexpected spillway failure of the Oroville Dam in northern California, the King County Dam Emergency Planning Gap Analysis Report looks at Emergency Action Plans, evacuation procedures, regional sheltering plans, and public outreach efforts connected to 125 dams. While the risk of catastrophic dam failure in King County is considered low, we will lead the effort to implement the report's recommendations by working with public and private dam operators, state regulators, and residents so that all are prepared to respond.



Action 4: Enhanced policies and procedures

Responder badging system

Badging helps ensure security and allows efficient tracking of volunteer hours and costs related to an incident. This year, we worked with regional partners on the Emergency Management Advisory Committee (EMAC) to adopt a badging policy for both paid and volunteer first responders. To date jurisdictions including Shoreline, Redmond, Mercer Island, Kent, Auburn, and Tukwila have adopted the new system. A roll-out to King County departments is in progress.

REGIONAL EMERGENCY SERVICES

New financial and asset management procedures

We developed new financial procedures to strengthen our ability to manage multiple funding sources and the programs supported by them. Examples include establishment of an OEM Finance and Administrative Policy and Procedure Manual, which received a "Best Practice" nomination by the EMAP accreditation team. We also enhanced our asset management procedures and revised our tracking mechanism to support regional accountability of assets. During this year's Single Audit review, no findings or exceptions were noted. Lastly, we created new procedures to facilitate increased disaster damage assessment input from impacted jurisdictions, qualifying the county for participation in the Public Assistance Grant Program.

Legislation on notifications for non-English speaking residents

Our staff worked with other emergency managers and state Sen. Bob Hasegawa on SB 5046, a law requiring local emergency managers to have "baked-in" procedures to ensure emergency notifications get to non-English speaking communities as quickly as our skills and the best technologies will allow. Gov. Jay Inslee signed the bill into law in May.

Action 5: Emergency activations

Over the past 12 months we activated the Emergency Coordination Center more than two dozen times in support of search and rescue operations, distressed animals, public health alerts, severe weather, protests, and more. Notable activations include:

Wildfire response (August-September)

From the onset of the Norse Peak and Sawmill Creek wildfires, our staff monitored the developing situation, and provided operational and public communications support to City of Enumclaw responders as conditions threatened structures and triggered nearby mandatory evacuations.

Severe storms (January-February)

Using our expertise and data gathered from government partners, we were able to validate \$7.7 million in emergency response costs and damages to critical structures and facilities, releasing federal funds that will help compensate recovery work and repair damaged buildings, bridges, and roads.

Missing children reunited

Duty officers worked with search and rescue teams to activate "Reverse 9-1-1" calls to several targeted geographic areas. Using voice, text, and email messaging to more than 35,000 listed numbers, we helped locate and safely return three youngsters to their families in Federal Way and Sammamish. The system was also triggered to help find two missing senior adults with Alzheimer's in the areas of Federal Way and Woodinville.

Tolt River Road emergency bridge closure

In coordination with the King County Department of Transportation, we used ALERT King County to quickly notify 20,000 residents in the Carnation-Duvall area of an emergency closure of the Tolt River Road Bridge. The system was also used to keep neighborhoods posted on reroute options, informational meetings, and the bridge's reopening in August.



KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

Action 1: EMAP Accreditation

Our office has earned full accreditation by the Emergency Management Accreditation Program (EMAP). Accreditation from this internationally-recognized program represents a significant achievement and compliance with 64 industry-recognized standards. Only 30 county-level emergency management agencies in the U.S. have achieved this mark of professional excellence. The rigorous EMAP process required a year-long self-assessment of our organization's programs, plans, and procedures. It was capped by an on-site peer-review by a team of EMAP assessors drawn from emergency management programs across the U.S. EMAP is the capstone of a five-year effort to grow OEM's organizational maturity that included a top to bottom review and realignment of our region-wide mission, values, goals, and objectives. EMAP is also a validation of our region's entire emergency management community.

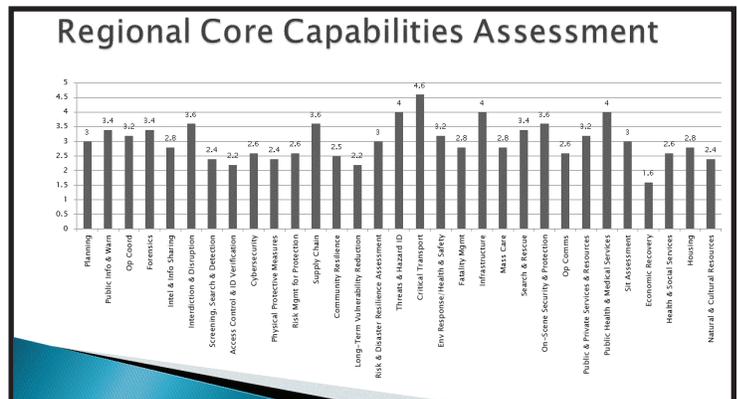


Action 2: Visual Management/Strategic Plan/Business Plan

Over the past 12 months, our team has completed several major initiatives designed to strengthen our internal management and focus on our mission to the public. As evidenced with our achievement of accreditation under the Emergency Management Accreditation Program (EMAP), these initiatives have made significant impact on the quality of our workforce and the services we provide our many emergency management partners and the general public. Fundamental to this strategy is the thorough review and revision of our Strategic Plan (mission, vision, outcomes, and objectives), a new business plan, and adoption of the Visual Management concept. As a result, we employ a highly integrated team approach to managing numerous interdependent projects.

Action 3: Core Capabilities

FEMA lists 32 Core Capabilities that all emergency management agencies must demonstrate - from planning and vulnerability reduction, to cybersecurity and community resilience. In Washington's Homeland Security Region 6 (including King County government, partnering cities, and other agencies), we have taken the opportunity to collectively define what success means for each capability. Each year we conduct a comprehensive assessment of our capabilities to see what's working and identify gaps. This data and analysis is used to inform our efforts and those around the region, including funding priorities, to increase our overall resilience.



STANDARDS BASED PROGRAMS

Action 4: Legislation supports OEM Director/EMCC

Partly in response to a June 2016 King County Auditor's report, a major focus for the past year has been detailing emergency communications processes, systems, stakeholders, and initiators. As a result, we developed proposed legislation that codifies the OEM Director as the designated official charged with responsibilities over emergency management policies and procedures in King County government. Additional legislation is pending that would formalize and enhance the role and responsibilities of the Emergency Management Coordination Committee, including continuity of operations planning for use during emergencies.

Action 5: Equity & Social Justice Strategic Plan engagement

Our office is developing a plan to help ensure the goals of equity and social justice are present in our everyday work. Too often, disasters strike hardest in communities least able to deal with their harm. We are committed to engaging residents in under-served communities on the most effective ways to plan for and respond to emergencies. We will continue to train staff on equity and social justice topics, ensure the leaders from vulnerable communities are incorporated into our emergency planning and public outreach efforts. The plans will align with the King County Equity and Social Justice Strategic Plan.



King County INVESTS...



Upstream,
where needs
are greatest,



in
**community
partnerships,**



and in
employees,



with **transparent
and accountable
leadership.**

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

Action 1: KCInform

KCInform is a new notification system used for internal communication with King County employees. Notifications are secure and include personal safety and emergency directives (e.g. fire or active shooter), change in business operations, alternative work options, and time-sensitive notifications. More than 15,000 people are now registered to receive notifications from KCInform.



Action 2: Continuity of Operations Plans (COOP)

Continuity of Operations Plans identify and describe how essential government functions will be continued during an emergency or disaster. This year, COOPs for priority departments and divisions have been completed for the Sheriff's Office, Executive Services, Public Health, Information Technology, Natural Resources and Parks, Transportation, and the Executive's Office. All met EMAP standards. Other departments and key divisions continue to develop their continuity plans during the year ahead. Divisional plans will provide greater detail and ensure the resources are identified to sustain essential functions.

Action 3: Ready Business Conference

In August, more than 80 participants from the private sector and government attended the Ready Business Workshop, which we co-hosted with FEMA. The purpose of the workshop was to educate small to medium sized businesses on how to develop plans to become more resilient in the face of a disaster. Developed by FEMA's Ready Business Program, the scenarios the workshop focused on were earthquake and power outage, with specific attention on impacts to the business community. The program combined state-of-the-art information along with presentations, panel discussions, and a scenario-based discussion to move organizational leaders through a step-by-step process to identify their risk, develop a plan, and take action.



RESILIENT AND INCLUSIVE SYSTEMS

Action 4: Public Education

Preparedness is the foundation for building resilient communities. Reaching those we serve at home and in the workplace with the latest information on how to prepare for the unexpected is one of our paramount objectives. Our outreach activities take on many forms and include translated materials.



Make It Through

King County leads this regional campaign focused on preparing for catastrophic disaster, especially earthquakes. This year the campaign focused on revamping the website (makeitthrough.org) to make it more interactive, and expanded its reach into less served communities.

Take Winter by Storm

Take Winter by Storm is an award-winning regional public education campaign focused on preparedness for winter hazards like flooding, snow, ice, and power outages. Our office is one of several agencies leading this effort in coordination with Natural Resources and Parks, Seattle City Light, Seattle Public Utilities, State Farm, the Seattle Times, and other counties. Together we generate a series of earned media events focused on preparedness.

In 2016-17, the emphasis of the King County event was flood safety. We partnered with the Sheriff's Office to demonstrate what happens and what to do if people get stuck in flood waters.



**TAKE WINTER
BY STORM**

King County employee trainings

We continue to offer trainings to King County employees through the Human Resources Division on emergency preparedness. The trainings are two hours and focus on understanding local hazards, learning how to create individual and family emergency plans, and accessing helpful tips and resources for preparing for all types of hazards.

Community fairs and safety trainings

Our staff offer trainings to community and neighborhood groups, businesses, and schools. Each training is tailored for the individual needs of the organization. Curriculum includes information on hazards in King County and ways people can prepare for them.

Community-Based Organization trainings

In partnership with the City of Seattle and Public Health - Seattle & King County, we offer emergency planning workshops and trainings to non-profits and faith-based organizations. The premise is to help organizations create pre-disaster plans and procedures, and remain operational following an emergency so they are better able to help residents in crisis.

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

Action 1: Expanded training opportunities

Throughout 2016 and 2017, we have offered an expanding menu of award-winning emergency management trainings, seminars, and exercises to our stakeholders within King County government, and our many external partners.

Weekly duty officer training

This year we implemented weekly readiness-specific trainings aimed at the roles and responsibilities of our rotating team of duty officers. Training covers everything from ECC activation protocols, the emergency proclamation process, continuity of business, policy calls, and hazard-specific procedures.

ECC Academy

Our office kicked off the new Emergency Coordination Center (ECC) Academy training – a series of five 90-minute trainings that address ECC objectives and functions, and individuals' roles during an activation. Designed for King County department representatives to better understand and practice their roles during emergencies, these skills-building sessions focus on information sharing, resource requests, and complex problem solving. Fourteen participants from multiple county departments attended our initial session. The current ECC Academy will culminate with a fall exercise. We plan to offer the academy twice yearly.

Incident Command System (ICS)

King County has become an innovative leader offering a range of classes to support the development of emergency managers, teachers, volunteers, and elected officials across our region - free of charge. Our office partnered with organizations such as the Puget Sound Educational Service District to offer these trainings to school administrators and staff to enhance their emergency preparedness and response capabilities.

Executive tabletop exercises

In keeping King County leadership abreast of hazards and the multitude of responses necessary during a disaster and its recovery, our team conducts periodic tabletop exercises with the Executive Leadership Team. Scenarios covered in 2016-17 included cyberterrorism and long-term recovery. These exercises allow department directors, executive leadership, and elected officials to work through issues such as relocation of displaced workgroups, unified messaging to staff and stakeholders, and coordination with law enforcement and Information Technology.

Winter Weather Seminar

Climate experts tell us to plan for more frequent and more severe weather events in King County. Our annual Winter Weather Seminar brings experts on climate together with King County departments, emergency management partners, and managers of critical infrastructure to share information on potential hazards and emergency response strategies. This regional seminar - now in its sixth year - is considered a "must-see" event.

Action 2: FTE conversions

Up until 2016, we relied on five term-limited temporary (TLT) employees (out of a total of 19) to complete our mission in areas such as public education, planning, and training. The situation compromised readiness and affected morale. In concurrence with recommendations of the King County Auditor's Report, the King County Council's 2017-18 biennium budget re-classified these five positions to career service status.

Action 3: Emergency Management Assistance Teams (EMAT)

Operational since July 2016, our office continues to lead and develop this group of experienced emergency management professionals, ready to swing into action to assist emergency operations and coordination centers within King County and across the State during an emergency. The team is currently comprised of 24 seasoned professionals from King County departments and partner jurisdictions who can quickly fill Command and General staff positions when a jurisdiction is overwhelmed. It also provides a system, tools, and training to enable the jurisdiction to sustain the capabilities the team brings.



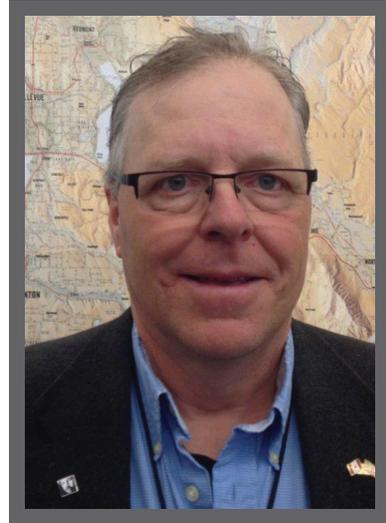
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