



**CITY OF KIRKLAND**  
**Fire & Building Department**  
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## **MEMORANDUM**

**To:** Dave Ramsay, City Manager  
**From:** Helen Ahrens-Byington, Deputy Chief  
**Date:** February 28<sup>th</sup>, 2007  
**Subject:** Emergency Preparedness After Action Report

### **RECOMMENDATION:**

City Council reviews the After Action Report from the activation of the Emergency Operation Center (EOC) on December 14<sup>th</sup>, 2006 due to the Windstorm and offer feedback to the Joint Improvement Plan priorities.

### **BACKGROUND DISCUSSION:**

After an EOC (Emergency Operation Center) is activated or a drill is performed an after action report (AAR) and improvement plan (IP) is written. The AAR is written to document and tie together everything that happens during an activation or Drill and the IP is developed to identify areas needing improvements. This report is put together by many people that are involved in all areas of the drill or activation to bring together the entire event. This report is also sent to the State Office of Emergency Management for documentation and is required for some grants that the City of Kirkland has received.

### **AFTER ACTION REPORT (AAR)**

After the Emergency Operation Center (EOC) activation for the Windstorm on December 14<sup>th</sup> an AAR and an Implementation Plan (IP) have been completed. The following is the summary from the AAR that highlights some things that went well and some areas where we need to improve.

## **SUMMARY**

This emergency was a good test for both the City of Kirkland and its citizens. Many things were learned by both and now we need to evaluate what we did as a city and move towards becoming more prepared for the next disaster. We had some things go very well, the staff that worked the EOC was very resourceful and solved issues as they came up and the operational emergency response crews in the field worked very hard responding to a variety of emergency calls to assist the people of Kirkland. Here are some of the highlights of the AAR for the windstorm, more specifics will be found in the IP, following this section.

Points that were learned from this disaster:

1. We need to have contact information for our City employees in one location that is accessible by the EOC staff. Our employees need to have a phone at home that does not take power in their homes.

Current Status: We have already started the first part of this as it will be the first step in educating our employees to the need of being prepared.

2. This event really showed the need for more equipment in the EOC. For example, we needed printers, laptops with EOC email, and UPS (un-interrupted power supply boxes) for the phone system.

Current Status: We had ordered laptops and printers prior to this event but had not received them as of that time. We now currently have laptops and printers in the EOC.

Items that need further development:

1. Improved Communications – Communications at levels, both internal and external need improvement. Internally, we need to establish more clear lines of communication with employees. Externally, we need to establish better linkages with key agencies such as PSE and the American Red Cross. Communications with the community also could be improved with an emphasis on development of multiple venues for communicating with the public with and without the aid of power, telecommunications, media and internet.
2. Sheltering – We need to do education for employees and citizens on sheltering including training on organizing and running a shelter, developing the infrastructure needed to support a shelter and communication about shelter needs and uses. Understanding the sheltering process and establishing realistic expectations of local and regional sheltering resources is needed. We also need to clarify roles with regard to sheltering as it related to Red Cross, the City, faith-based organizations and volunteers. More understanding is needed regarding the levels of sheltering that could be provided by each and the amount of commitment and coordination involved in each.
3. Emergency Response Training – We need to develop continuing training and education for City Staff on responding and recovering from emergencies.
4. Emergency Preparedness Training – We need to increase education for employees, citizens and businesses of Kirkland about being prepared for disasters. We need to stress the importance of self-sufficiency and help everyone be better prepared to meet their own short-term needs.
5. CERT Role – The City needs to continue to support the formation of the Citizen Corps and CERT and clarify each group's role in an emergency.

## **CITIZEN FEEDBACK**

The City received and responded to a variety of emails, letters and phones calls about our storm response from the public. At the February 15<sup>th</sup> City Council Public Safety Committee we were requested to gather feedback from the public on the City's response to the December windstorm. A feedback form was developed and posted on the City's home page. It was mentioned in an article in the Kirkland Courier and was send to several groups of City contacts in hope to get the word spread and get feedback. The Feedback form was on the City's home page for the month of February. We received no response to the website form.

Having citizen response would have been beneficial to improving the City's response to disasters and should become part of the plan after the next disaster. Multiple methods will need to be used to get the feedback that is needed.

## **RED CROSS and SHELTERING**

Attached is a PowerPoint presentation that was developed and distributed from the regional Red Cross office explaining their role and response to disasters and their response during the December windstorm. A few highlights:

- King County Emergency Plan States:
  - Para I – B: "Incorporated Cities in King County have responsibility to coordinate their own mass care shelters using city assets, or to coordinate with King County Emergency Operations Center (EOC) in the placement of mutually supported shelters."
  - Para II – C: "The American Red Cross will provide staff, supplies, and shelters as disaster conditions dictate and resources allow."
  
- Coordinated Regional Response:
  - There will be a coordinated initial regional response to shelter placements
  - Power outages limit areas and facilities available for regional shelters
  - ARC does not normally open shelters for power outages unless the temperatures create an imminent health risk to the general population.

Staff met with the Public Safety Committee to discuss sheltering and plans to have another meeting with Red Cross staff to discuss roles and possible sheltering sites in Kirkland.

## **PUGET SOUND ENERGY (PSE)**

General overview from PSE:

- It was the worst damage the company has experienced in its 133 year history.
- PSE lost 85 of the 160 high-voltage transmission lines and lost 159 of their 358 neighborhood sub-stations. 700,000 customers were without power, representing almost 75% of their customer base.

Even with PSE having representatives at the King County EOC, communication was difficult about what was happening. PSE has also recognized this and is working across the County to improve communication.

We have invited representatives from Red Cross and Puget Sound Energy to attend the study session to assist in answering some of the questions related to sheltering and power outage issues. Our hope is to be able to balance the discussion so we are able to gain Council's feedback on the After Action Report and Improvement Plan, yet still address any specific questions to Red Cross and PSE. The Improvement Plan is especially important as this will guide the City's efforts in being able to respond to disaster situations in the future.

## **IMPROVEMENT PLAN**

The Improvement Plan provided on the following pages has been merged with the Improvement Plan from the EOC Functional exercise that was performed in November of 2006. The Joint Improvement Plan was then sent to the City Manager and the Directors to prioritize the items. Many of the items appeared in both the drill and the windstorm event as needing to be addressed.

Attachments: Final 12-14-06 EOC AAR and Red Cross windstorm presentation

# JOINT IMPROVEMENT PLAN

2/22/07

## Facility Needs

	NEED	PRIORITY High Medium Low	STATUS	ASSIGNED
1	Need a dedicated EOC facility	H		
2	Need a generator at a facility in Kirkland that could be used as a shelter	H		
3	Each City facility needs to have an emergency plan	H		
4	Need to have larger room for EOC	H		
5	Need to have an alerting system in City facilities	M		
6	Evaluate what is tied into generators	M		
7	Evaluate lift station generator operational needs	M		
8	Need to determined who makes the decisions regarding the status of the Municipal Court and other City facilities	L		

## Staffing Related

	NEED	PRIORITY High Medium Low	STATUS	ASSIGNED
9	Need to identify more support staff for the EOC	H		EMAT
10	Need to have a liaison position filled in the EOC	H		EMAT
11	Need to address City worker – family shelter	H		
12	Need a runner assigned to ARES	M		
13	Need to have a way to identify EOC staff by positions	L		
14	Identify all the uses of ARES	L		

## Training and Education

	NEED	PRIORITY High Medium Low	Status	Assigned
15	Educate employees on need for employees to respond when requested during emergency situations and to have up to date contact information at work	H		
16	Need to train employees and volunteers to help with shelters	H		
17	Need continued EOC training	H		
18	Training to improve communication between all operations workers, PD, PW, Fire	H		
19	Every City employee needs to have an out of area contact, home/car emergency kits and phone that doesn't need power.	H		
20	Message taker training	M		
21	Need to train on following through from event to reporting	M		
22	Develop how to effectively use GIS to map incidents and status	M		
23	Improve the flow of information in the EOC	M		
24	Need to educate employees and public about shelters	M		
25	Need to familiarize EOC staff to CEMP	M		
26	Make sure City staff knows their long distance code to call out of area contact	M		
27	Need a training schedule	L		

## Manuals/Plans/Forms

	NEED	PRIORITY High Medium Low	Status	Assigned
28	Need a plan on notification of Council and CMO when EOC is activated	H		
29	Need to identify Risk assessment triggers to protect field operations staff	H		
30	List of vendors for supply acquisition	H		
31	Need to make contact and equipment resource information more accessible in the CEMP	H		
32	Need a plan to support BC at initial onset of disaster	H		
33	Determine who fills generators at remote facilities, i.e. fire stations, lift stations etc	H		
34	Need to develop plan for coordinating emergency calls during a resource emergency	H		
35	Need a current media contact list and news release forms in EOC	H		
36	Need a Communications plan for contacting other agencies (liaison)	H		
37	Need access to employee's contact information	H	DONE	
38	Inventory of City equipment	H		
39	Need to update the EOC manual and coordinate it with the CEMP	H		
40	Need EOC forms clearly identified; have in electronic and paper form	H		
41	Improve message taking form	H		
42	Need to update the fire crews windshield survey	H		
43	Need to identify protocol for when front line personnel reports in for duty	H		
44	Need criteria for forwarding 911 calls to the EOC	M		
45	Need to establish after EOC activation guidelines	M		
46	MOU with businesses that have lumber	M		
47	MOU with companies that could supply more first aid supplies	M		
48	Need a plan to activate CERT	M		
49	Need to identify and define terms used to report incidents	M		
50	Need clear plan for message takers and	M		

	resources			
51	Need a plan for refueling emergency worker's vehicles	L		
52	Provide a glossary of terms in the EOC manual	L		

## Communication

	NEED	PRIORITY High Medium Low	Status	Assigned
53	Need to improve and update the PIO communications plan - to employees and the public. PIO needs to be involved in EOC	H		
54	Need to publish EOC line, public emergency info number, staff information number	H		
55	Need to be able to communicate to non-English speaking populations	H		
56	Need a general EOC email so we can communicate to other EOC/agencies	H	Done	
57	Need to improve communications between field crews and the EOC, situation status	H		
58	Need to identify/test alternate forms of communication if phones out, power out	H		
59	Improve emergency management website	H		
60	Need to connect the City's lifeline road routes with surrounding cities and King County	M		
61	Need to work with open businesses to help disseminate information during a disaster	M		

## Equipment Needs

	NEED	PRIORITY High Medium Low	Status	Assigned
62	Need computers in the EOC	H	Received	
63	Need printers, copiers, fax	H	Received	
64	Portable stop signs for power out intersections	H		
65	Need extra door access cards	H		
66	Large wall EOC organizational chart	H		

67	Need more power strips	H	Ordered	
68	Need 2 UPS	H	Received	
69	Need EOC closet door key in Police dispatch	H	Done	
70	Stockpile of cones/road closure signs/barricades	M		
71	Headphones for portable radios/phones in EOC	M		
72	Need a way to connect to TV when cable is out	M		
73	Need projector	M		
74	Need hand crank flashlights & radios in outside containers	L		
75	Thermo-imaging cameras in each fire rig	L		

City of Kirkland  
Emergency Operations Center  
Activation

Windstorm  
December 14, 2006

After Action Report

2/22/07

# **TABLE OF CONTENTS**

**SUMMARY.....PAGE 1-2**

**OVERVIEW.....PAGE 3-5**  
**Operational Plan.....PAGE 4**  
**Initial Activations.....PAGE 5**

**CITY OF KIRKLAND ACTIONS.....PAGE 6-20**  
**EOC Operations.....PAGE 6**  
**Fire Department Operations.....PAGE 9**  
**Public Works Operations.....PAGE 10**  
**Police Operations.....PAGE 12**  
**Public Information (PIO).....PAGE 13**  
**CERT .....PAGE 16**

# SUMMARY

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the amount of commitment and coordination involved in each.

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# OVERVIEW

On the evening of Wednesday December 13, 2006 an email was sent to Kirkland's emergency manager from the Zone One emergency manager forwarding information from a conference call between NOAA and KCOEM discussing the high winds (40 mph sustained, 60 mph gust) that were predicted to come into our area on Thursday December 14<sup>th</sup> at approximately 1900.

On December 14<sup>th</sup> at approximately 1200 the Fire Chief and both Deputy Chiefs discussed the possibility of having to open the EOC with the current forecast of the winds. A preplanning meeting was scheduled for 1330 with the City Managers Office, Public Works, Police, Fire and emergency management staff.

## **Situation update of expected wind storm; as of 1330 the following is the forecast:**

**Area Forecast For:** Seattle/Bremerton Area

**Issued:** December 14, 2006 14:31:18 PST

**Tonight:** Rain turning to showers overnight. Becoming very windy. Lows in the upper 30s and 40s. Southerly wind rising to 40 mph with gusts to 65 mph around midnight.

**Friday:** Showers becoming scattered. Windy. Highs in the 40s. Southwest wind 20 to 30 mph.

**Friday night and Saturday:** Partly to mostly cloudy with a chance of showers. Lows in the lower to mid 30s. Highs in the upper 30s to mid 40s. South wind 5 to 15 mph.

## **The High Wind Warning is as follows:**

URGENT - WEATHER MESSAGE  
NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE SEATTLE WA  
950 AM PST THU DEC 14 2006

WAZ504-505-507>509-511-512-150600-  
/O.CON.KSEW.HW.W.0019.061214T2200Z-061215T1800Z/  
SOUTHWEST INTERIOR-EAST PUGET SOUND LOWLANDS-EVERETT AND  
VICINITY-  
SEATTLE/BREMERTON AREA-TACOMA AREA-HOOD CANAL AREA-  
LOWER CHEHALIS VALLEY AREA-  
950 AM PST THU DEC 14 2006

A HIGH WIND WARNING REMAINS IN EFFECT FROM 2 PM THIS AFTERNOON TO 10 AM PST FRIDAY.

A DEEP LOW PRESSURE SYSTEM AND ITS FRONT WILL BE PRODUCING DAMAGING WINDS AS IT MOVES ACROSS THE AREA TONIGHT.

SOUTHEAST WINDS WILL INCREASE AHEAD OF THE SYSTEM TODAY AND IT WILL BE GENERALLY WINDY ACROSS THE AREA LATER THIS AFTERNOON AND EVENING...WITH LOCAL SOUTHEAST WINDS OF 40 MPH WITH GUSTS TO 65 MPH.

THE STRONGEST AND MOST DAMAGING WINDS WILL BECOME MORE WIDESPREAD TONIGHT. THE LOW PRESSURE SYSTEM WILL MOVE ACROSS VANCOUVER ISLAND AND INTO SOUTHERN BRITISH COLUMBIA OVERNIGHT. STRONG PRESSURE RISING BEHIND THIS DEEP LOW PRESSURE SYSTEM WILL CAUSE A SURGE OF SOUTHWESTERLY WINDS TO DEVELOP. THESE WINDS WILL SURGE THROUGH THE SOUTHWEST PART OF WESTERN WASHINGTON AND ESPECIALLY THROUGH THE CHEHALIS GAP LATER THIS EVENING. THE WINDS ARE EXPECTED TO SURGE THROUGH THE PUGET SOUND AREA AROUND MIDNIGHT.

THESE HIGH WINDS WILL CAUSE FALLING TREES AND POWER OUTAGES ARE LIKELY. THERE MAY BE DAMAGE TO SOME STRUCTURES. THERE IS A HAZARD FROM FLYING DEBRIS TONIGHT. PEOPLE SHOULD RUSH TO COMPLETION PREPARATION FOR HIGH WINDS...LOOSE OBJECTS AROUND THE YARD SHOULD BE SECURED...BOAT MOORINGS SHOULD BE CHECKED. THE STRONGEST WINDS SO FAR THIS SEASON ARE LIKELY TO OCCUR TONIGHT.

### **Operational Plan:**

**The Emergency Operations Center (EOC)** is set up for operation; however it has not been activated (opened) at this time. The set up was done to reduce the time needed to open operations; this will save approximately 45 minutes.

**Public Works** will hold 2 crews, 6 personnel, over their normal work shift while we assess the wind storm effects on Kirkland. Additional personnel will be on call in case of significant impacts. The primary objective is to clear right of ways. If power lines are involved, roads will be closed to protect citizens from the danger. Daryl Grigsby and John Hopfauf will be available for EOC activation

**Police** will add 2 additional officers, 1 corrections officer, and 1 dispatcher in preparation of the storm. Total police on duty will be 1 sergeant, 7 officers, 4 dispatchers, and 1 corrections officer. Lieutenant Rex Caldwell will be available for EOC activation and will check into other command staff availability.

**Fire & Building** is adding 3 additional firefighters and holding over the daytime staffing at North Finn Hill. The Houghton Aid unit will be staffed, and an engine company is being added at North Finn Hill. Our Building Inspection Supervisor is on call and could

assemble an inspection crew if needed. Deputy Chiefs Jack Henderson and Helen Ahrens-Byington, building Official Tom Phillips, and Fire Chief Jeff Blake are available for EOC activation.

Additional departments will be included in an activation of the Emergency Operations Center EOC.

**Initial objectives for the storm are:**

- Response to emergencies i.e. police, fire, medical, and public works
- Situation/Damage assessment
- EOC Activation if needed

These objectives will change as the situations changes; situation updates will be provided on a regular basis if the EOC is activated. Otherwise information will be through normal channels.

**Initial EOC Activations:**

**December 14, 2006: 1400 hours:**

**STATE AND FEDERAL ACTIONS**

- The State of Washington Emergency Operations Center (EOC) is currently at phase two, enhanced operations, with personnel on standby for the windstorm.

**COUNTY AND LOCAL ACTIONS**

- King County Emergency Coordination Center (ECC) has activated to level one (monitoring) as of 1400 today in anticipation of the storm system moving into the region this afternoon through Friday morning. The ECC will be activated through the night and will remain open as the situation warrants. Communications with probable initial responders (DOT and KCSO) is occurring.
- A number of jurisdictions in King County are also actively monitoring this approaching storm system and its potential impacts.

**December 14, 2006: 1800 hours:**

**CITY ACTIONS**

- The City of Kirkland Emergency Operations Center (EOC) was activated with staffing at level two (enhanced operation) as of 1800.

# **CITY OF KIRKLAND ACTIONS**

## **EOC Operations:**

The City of Kirkland Emergency Operations Center (EOC) was activated with staffing at level two (enhanced operation) as of 1800. The EOC was activated through the night and remained open until 1600, December 15<sup>th</sup>, 2006.

Prior to the call to activate the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) we had some staff pre-designated and had exchanged contact information so the initial staffing went well. The initial staffing of the EOC was Incident Commander (IC), Operations (Ops) – Fire, Police (PD) and Public Works (PW), Logistics, GIS, Situation Status (Sit-Stat), EOC coordinator, and one support staff. The IC (Incident Commander) set priorities and had each of the operational staff do the same. The Emergency Operations Center's (EOC) initial priorities were to:

1. Coordinate response to emergency calls with Police, Fire and Public Works.
2. Track incoming reports to assess the situation and damage in the City of Kirkland.

When additional staffing was needed, we became aware that we had no home / cell contact list for City employees. Some departments had their staff home information but we did not have a general city contact list. Logistics began to try to contact someone that could get us that information.

The first operational period was to end at 0100 and Logistics began calling in the next shift of Emergency Operations Center (EOC) staff to work 0100 - 0600. This proved to be difficult for several reasons. As power started going out, we could not contact many City employees because they did not have a phone at home that would work without power. This will need to be added to emergency preparation education that everyone should have a phone that will work without power (old fashioned corded phone). We also did not have a listing with cell phone numbers. The other issue that came up was that there were people that could not make it in due to family situation, inability to drive in or they were unclear of their role or the expectation that they have a role in emergency management for the City.

Overall, the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) staff came in and worked at given tasks and communication between the whole EOC was good. As the night went on, the process of information continued to improve. This was the first use of the electronic sit-stat system and GIS in the EOC. These systems were improvements from what we had before but can continue to be used more efficiently. The phone, computer system, internet and generators all worked through out the night. The TV cable went out early in the night but news was accessible via internet.

Between 0115 and 0315, the worst of the wind hit the City of Kirkland. The pre-designated change of EOC staff was set for 0100. We knew earlier in the night the approximate time NOAA expected the worst of the winds and should have looked at adjusting the shift change time. We had staff arriving and departing during the worst of the storm. Even if we needed to change the staff we should have looked at setting up a place for staff to stay and rest or wait until the worst was over before heading for home.

This did not present itself as an issue at the time but has become something identified after the fact. That is important to note because I believe that had the concern come up during the event the EOC staff would have dealt with the issue just as they did with the issues that did come up and find a solution.

The runner from dispatch was released and a runner from the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) was activated to get the call data to the EOC. The dispatchers printed hard copies of the call details and the runner took it directly to the Incident Commander. The difficulty was the EOC does not have a door key that would get the runner back in to dispatch. This was solved at the time by borrowing a key card from another EOC staff member to gain access. In the future, it would be beneficial to have a dedicated "all access" key card available to EOC staff. Around 0430, the Logistics section started looking at the need to start staffing the next operational period. (The next operational period was undefined at this time). Most of the staff from the 0100-0600 operational period agreed to stay until 0800, therefore an immediate replacement was not necessary. It was determined that the EOC would be staffed with regular City Hall staff as they arrived for their normal shifts (approximately 0800). Around 0700 there was a change in the IC and during the briefing, it was tentatively decided that the EOC would close at 1000, depending on the call volume and Logistics/Planning was released from duties around 0800. The IC determined the position did not need to be replaced. Shortly after 0700, the message center was set up in the Juanita Bay room, in anticipation of heavy call volume. As soon as regular City hall staff started arriving, the EOC Coordinator began recruiting workers to staff the message center. At around 0800, various staff members, many who were totally unfamiliar with the EOC, were asked to help as Message Takers. They didn't hesitate for a second and were promptly trained to receive and take messages. Having such helpful and willing staff was key to the success of the Message Taker section. At 1000, another briefing took place, this time with all of the EOC staff, the City Manager, Assistant City Manager and some Council members. Through discussion, it was determined that the calls were steady, but not overwhelming, and the EOC would be able to close at 1600. Due to the potential for another storm the following day (Saturday), the group decided to leave the EOC set up in an inactive state. The final incident objectives were written for the operational period of 12-15-06 1600 to 12-16-06 1600:

1. Life hazards: respond to and triage all downed trees into power lines and structures.
2. Traffic: clear all roads within the City; sand major roads if snow and ice are present.
3. Transfer EOC authority to Battalion 22 at 1600
4. Maintain all sewer lift stations
5. Alternatives: Back up shelter plan

Documentation/contacts with Battalion 22

Reestablish EOC

Once the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) was closed, the Emergency Manager from the City started receiving calls from the King County Emergency Coordination Center (KCECC) and the Zone One Emergency Coordinator. A request was made for drivers and vehicles that could help transfer equipment for people who were possibly going to the special-needs shelter. The shelter was planned to open at 1900 on 12-15-06. The 24

hour contact person for the Kirkland Parks Department (designated pre-storm) was contacted by the emergency manager and assigned to contact the KCECC for detailed information about what was needed. After the event was over, the City of Kirkland received a great thank you for the Parks Department's outstanding effort in setting up and being prepared to supply several vehicles and trips to assist in the County wide special needs shelter even though they ended up not being activated.

Questions about shelters started to come up on Friday and through the weekend. The emergency manager was in contact with King County Emergency Coordination Center (KCECC) and the Red Cross. The Red Cross and KCECC were coordinating shelters for the county and they issued a hot line number for shelter information. Kirkland's emergency manager then called the Battalion Chief (BC) on duty and made sure they had the number and would disseminate it to the fire crews. The Kirkland Police dispatch was also called so they had the number and Evergreen Hospital was called so they could let people know that might come to them for information. Red Cross ended up having issues with the number they released and it only worked part of the time which added some confusion to the situation. They did state that they had plenty of room for occupants the whole time they were open

On Monday, December 18<sup>th</sup>, a meeting was held to gather an update on the status of City operations and the need for further Emergency Operations Center (EOC) operations. All departments have returned to normal operations, with normal staffing levels; however, departments are continuing to deal with the affects of the windstorm. City facilities did not sustain any damage, however the North Finn Hill fire station did have flooding occur and there is damage. Fire personnel will be following up to see that repairs are made.

Building inspectors have made a few inspections of homes with damage and are working on an expedited permit process. These inspections are done free of charge and assist the City in identifying damage requiring a permit to make repairs; this helps us plan for workload changes as a result of the storm.

The water and sewer pump & lift stations had generator issues early on; those issue have been resolved and are working normally. Some sites have power, others remain on generator power. No environmental damage from Kirkland's systems has been identified from sewer or water systems. King County has issued warnings for Lake Washington, due to other areas having sewage released into the lake. This may be affecting the beaches in Kirkland and they have been posted with warning signs.

During the initial heavy rain, our storm water system was overwhelmed and large volumes of water were in several areas of the city; Downtown, Juanita, North Rose Hill and Totem Lake all experienced water issues. There were other areas within the city that had minor flooding issues. In Juanita, a creek overflowed by the rain runoff and caused extensive damage to both public and private property. Crews have been working to clean up this situation.

Public Works is working on setting up debris drop off sites for disposal of storm damaged trees. They will be sending out information as it becomes available on the location(s) of the dump sites.

Some streets remain closed due to power lines involved in the downed trees; these will remain this way until PSE has crews available for tree removal. Public Works will report daily on the status of street closures.

Due to the power outages lasting longer than expected and past experience in windstorms, sheltering of people was a concern. Red Cross was contacted; they did not have the staffing to set up a shelter in Kirkland. Shelters in Bellevue, Woodinville, Bothell and Redmond had been opened and had plenty of space available for any Kirkland residents needing a warm place to stay. Very few people have visited the shelters, so only the Bellevue shelter remains open.

A press release is needed to inform the public about what is being done and the status of the City. Tracy Burrows will take the lead gathering information and sending out the press release. Departments will supply Ms. Burrows with information on street closures, sewer and water services, debris collection, building inspections and permitting for damaged buildings, and sheltering. A press release will be sent with updated information as the situation changes.

Based on the damage caused by the windstorm, it was recommended to City Manager, Dave Ramsay, that he sign a Declaration of Emergency. This will be communicated to the County and State EOC. (The declaration of emergency was signed on Tuesday the 19<sup>th</sup> of December and sent to King County and State)

We identified a number of issues to address immediately and others in the future to improve our response to emergencies. Departments are soliciting feedback from the field crews and office staff on how to improve our processes; we will be scheduling a post incident analysis to gather information from those who worked in the Emergency Operations Center (EOC). All feedback will be used to develop an after action report.

## **Fire Department Operations:**

The Fire Department response to the December 14, 2006 windstorm actually started at 0845 on December 13<sup>th</sup> with a response to downed trees on wires which caused a natural gas fire in the street. The drainage system was full of gas and it ignited with a large force that displaced the new manhole cylinder. On arrival, units found natural gas fed the fire at ground level with flames 10-15' in height and 10' in diameter. Evacuation of the surrounding households was initiated. A total of four occupants were evacuated - the other surrounding houses were vacant at the time. The line was clamped and the venting fire subsided. Fire remained in the storm drain system due to burning plastic drain pipe and was extinguished with a hand line.

Senior staff attended a pre-storm meeting on December 14<sup>th</sup> with the City Manager, Police (PD), and Public Works (PW). Fire Operations had called back over-time crews mid afternoon of December 14<sup>th</sup>. This consisted of one Battalion Chief and three firefighters. Fire operations maintained an increased storm staffing until the morning of December 19<sup>th</sup>.

During the period of December 14<sup>th</sup> to December 18<sup>th</sup>, Fire operations responded to approximately 400 calls for service. The calls consisted of trees down in the street, trees on electrical wires, trees into houses, flooding, power outages, and our normal compliment of CPR, fires and Automatic Fire Alarms (AFA).

Initially each engine and/or Aid Car did a windshield survey of their response areas, reporting damage and road obstructions to the EOC. This worked well in two areas:

1. The EOC received updated information of citizen reported damage.

2. It allowed the crews to familiarize themselves with current road and hazard situation and begin to identify the scope of damage in their response area.

Operations responded to a request for service from Bellevue Dispatch and the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) through the Battalion Chief (BC) at Station 21 (Forbes Creek). The BC prioritized the calls received from the EOC and gave them to the units. We should have prioritized earlier in the incident. It would have worked better to have dispatch send resource emergency incidents to the EOC rather than to the BC at Station 21.

Each fire station utilized emergency power and had power throughout the incident except for Station 25 (Finn Hill). That generator ran out of fuel on Dec. 15<sup>th</sup> and we had a difficult time finding which department could check and fill the station generators. Public Works became the department. That should be a priority for a designated public works section due to the fact that individual crews may be out of the station for extended periods and not able to monitor the emergency generator.

Radio traffic became crowded during the storm and many units “stepped on” each others traffic; simple, concise messages and standard radio procedures should help alleviate this issue.

Discussion should begin on when it is best to keep response personnel in the stations for their safety and only respond to confirmed emergencies, such as CPR and actual structure fires. Crews responded at the height of the storm to non-emergency calls and that could have put the crews in unnecessary danger; as in the case of a Redmond unit hit by a falling tree. We should establish “trigger points” of wind speed, number proximity of lightning strikes, amount of flooding, etc. for crew safety.

The EOC would have continued to be effective staying “open” past 1600 on December 15<sup>th</sup> to the crews and citizens from at least an information point.

The City of Kirkland had only one storm related death, a 26 year old male, possible carbon monoxide poisoning due to running a generator in his house.

Fire operations handled all that was asked of them, there was good communications with PD and PW at both the EOC and crew level and the City’s level of preparation was very good with the pre-storm meeting and having staff and plans “in place”.

### **Public Works Operations:** (as submitted by PW department personnel)

A summary of the City of Kirkland Emergency Operations Center (EOC) and its interface with Public Works emergency response crews during the December 14<sup>th</sup> windstorm; below is the findings relative to the Public works operations:

- In general, operations went well as measured by no injuries, quick response, stable communications, and coordination with the EOC.
- Equipment was available and functioning adequately
- It was very helpful to have the EOC pre-meeting, as that enabled us to conduct some internal field operational planning for the event.
- Communication from the EOC to the Maintenance Center was clear, and most of the time it was clear what the priorities were.

- Crews worked very hard both during overtime and regular time; those who responded worked long hours and did an excellent job.
- In all the field assessment, response and recovery went well as crews knew what their responsibilities were; having noted that, there was a time in the beginning where crews had to shift from ‘doing’ to assessment; once that shift was made, things went smoother.
- It would have been better for our internal ops had we formally activated our Maintenance Center Emergency Operations even before knowing whether the EOC was activated; this would have enabled us to clarify our internal operating procedures during the storm.
- We continued to run our standby shift and standby supervisor, even after the EOC was activated; in our assessment we decided it is more efficient to formally shut down Standby as having both a standby supervisor and emergency management response supervisor lead to internal confusion. In some ways it worked to our advantage since the standby supervisor handled the flooding and sewer pump station outages (their area of expertise), but it still would have been better to have one primary person at the maintenance center
- In retrospect we believe during the height of the wind we should have called in our field crews and waited until the high winds subsided.
- Field crews were not provided food except as they could grab a bite on their own; the Maintenance Center could have been more proactive about informing the EOC of their needs.
- Between the EOC sending calls to the Maintenance Center, and the MC handling calls, there should have been a more proactive triage approach to incoming calls.
- We need to improve our internal department phone tree.
- There are several other smaller details of our operation we have reviewed, which we intend to draft on a checklist to determine first if it is issue, and if so, how to handle it.
- Between the EOC and the Maintenance Center, we could have improved the back and forth communications regarding each site, i.e. once something is handled provide the EOC with info so they can know to formally take it off the list.
- When the EOC closed, we could have done a better job of a) formally letting the maintenance center know of the weekend action plan prepared by the EOC and b) in retrospect kept on an emergency response manager, not the standby supervisor, to coordinate activities with the Fire Department and Police Department.

## **Police Operations:** (as submitted by Police Department personnel)

The police response to the windstorm on December 14, 2004 impacted three separate workgroups within the Police Department; Administration (Chief, Captains, and Lieutenants), Operations (uniformed officers – Police and Corrections), and Communications (Dispatch),

### **Administration:**

Prior to the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) being activated, PD was involved in the pre planning meeting. This proved to be beneficial, because we were able to develop an operation plan for Police and coordinate with the Operations Lieutenants on how to properly staff for the storm.

Once the EOC was activated, the staff that knew they would be responsible for the second operational period starting at 0100 on December 15, 2005 left city hall to rest prior to their shift. Three administrative PD staff helped to staff the EOC for the first operational period. Overall, the ability to have Police command officers in the EOC working in collaboration with other City department managers proved to be very effective and efficient.

### **Operations:**

There was an operation plan established prior to 1700 hours on December 14, 2006 and by doing this they were able to increase staff by holding officers over from day shift and reassigning Detectives to patrol duties in order to meet the anticipated increase in calls. From an Operations perspective, the activation of the EOC went well. By having Command Officers in the EOC, it allowed the Patrol Sergeant to focus on immediate events on the street and the lack of non-police related calls being dispatched to officers went a long way in allowing officers to handle the calls that needed to be handled. These non-police related calls were directly routed to the appropriate city departments and/or public utility companies.

The second major decision that was beneficial to the City and PD was the ability to be proactive during this incident. The additional manpower was crucial in handling the events of Thursday night and the additional manpower on Friday night, when the power was out and played a major role in preventing a lot of crime occurring in the city. In spite of the electricity being out for several days, there were no reports of looting or damage to property caused by vandals. This proactive approach was appreciated by officers and citizens alike.

### **Communications:**

The Police Communications Center was significantly impacted as a result of the wind storm. Using dispatched calls as an indicator (this does not include the hundreds of calls received that did not result in an actual call being dispatched) the following demand was placed on the center.

<i>Average calls on a Thursday</i>	<i>189</i>
<i>Calls for Thursday, Dec. 14</i>	<i>446</i>

*Average calls on a Friday*                      179  
*Calls for Friday, Dec. 15*                      637

Staffing levels in Communications were only increased by one Communications Technician from 1600 hours on December 14 to 0600 on Saturday December 16, 2006.

**Issues:**

Overall, the officers and communication technicians stepped up and performed very well given a difficult task. The following are a few issues that were identified as needing to be addressed.

1. *Food and Water-* With no power and many businesses closed, Officers had difficulty getting food and water in the field. This could be addressed by having adequate supplies on hand at the PD. One option in the past has been to heat jail meals and feed them to the officers.
2. *Emergency staff sheltering* – The PD needs to develop a policy regarding emergency shelter for officers who have a short turn around or are unable to get home and back. This could involve creating “bunk rooms” and/or contracting with a local hotel for rooms at the government rate during an emergency.

In conclusion, the PD response to the wind storm was as expected. The Department anticipated demand for police services and staffed accordingly to meet that demand.

**Public Information (PIO)** (as submitted by Public Information Officers)

Activity:            At approximately 11:00 p.m. the EOC Logistics manager began calling PIO’s at home, to locate one who would travel through the storm to the EOC site at approximately 4:00 a.m. to prepare media information for morning commuters.

Feedback:        When a disaster warning exists and the possibility of opening the EOC has been acknowledged, arrange for minimum staffing to cover PIO duties. Possibly use PIO’s from remote locations to gather and disseminate information, whenever feasible. Create a media phone/email list accessible to all employees from the City or remote sites, so others in the EOC can disseminate information when PIO’s are not available (i.e., during or following disasters that had no warnings.) Add a PIO information sheet to the Word Forms, so others can complete news releases, information bulletins, etc., when PIO’s are not available.

**Division of Labor**

Situation:        Storm conditions posed a challenge to getting PIO’s to the EOC during the storm. The one (of 3 contacted) who lived closest, managed to do so using her personal 4-wheel drive vehicle. Daylight and improved conditions permitted two other PIO’s to arrive by mid-morning and relieve

the first. A 4th PIO was re-assigned to other storm related duties and was replaced in the EOC by someone new to PIO work.

- Action: The 1<sup>st</sup> PIO explained what had been done (web info) to their replacements, when they arrived and then turned PIO duties over to them. The 2<sup>nd</sup> shift met with the Incident Commander for an update and directions, and then met with each other to discuss how to divide the responsibilities. They were then joined for several hours, by the acting PIO from Police.  
The City Manager Office PIO took charge of putting on a news conference, the Police PIO gathered field information and the Fire PIO created news releases and info bulletins for media distribution. When time permitted, either on-going PIO updated the website.
- Feedback: PIO's obtained the information they needed during the morning shift change. The time spent insuring information was passed on was valuable. Duties were divided between the 2<sup>nd</sup> shift PIO's according to their backgrounds and strengths, which worked well. The work was generally completed individually, sometimes together. PIO's maintained communication with each other and communications were smooth.

### Communications Technology

- Situation: The storm created major flooding and knocked out power and cell phone service to almost a million people in the region, beginning Dec. 14. Damage was literally everywhere, in the form of downed trees, tree limbs, and hanging electrical wires. Commercial media alerted the public to these conditions and advised people to shelter in place, if possible. Landline phones continued to function.
- Activity: The 1st PIO at the EOC was directed to prepare information for the public. Just after their arrival the City internet access went down and was not available in the early morning; however while waiting for internet access to be established, information was prepared for release. Once the internet was available, the information was transferred into the website. Information for commercial media distribution was not prepared until replacement PIO's arrived. The first news release went out a couple hours later.  
PIO's asked Information Technology (IT) to implement the emergency message line the public could call to gain updates but with out the number being pre-published it would not have been very useful. PIO's tried contacting the ARES president to see about getting out public information via ham radio but the system is not set up to get information out to the general public.
- Feedback: Without power, few citizens could access the internet. Instead, they would gather info from commercial media via battery, hand crank, or vehicle radios and from government, utility and other agencies via phone. By the time the internet was accessible to most people, the information on our website was minimally relevant.

It would be beneficial to have a pre-published emergency phone hot-line to get information out to residents. During power outages, our initial focus should be on commercial radio and telephone communications. We should also develop other methods to disseminating information.

### Public Messages

- Situation:** Local media immediately and steadily informed the public regarding storm conditions, damage, traffic obstructions, and the inability to predict when power would be returned. They also repeated information regarding the dangers of using alternate heating or cooking sources indoors and approaching electrical wires. All messages were in English. Within a few days, over 100 people were taken to hospitals with carbon monoxide poisoning, resulting from trying to improperly cook or heat indoors. Several died. A significant number of CO poisoning victims spoke English as a 2<sup>nd</sup> language. Spanish appeared to be the primary language for most of them. Commercial media eventually broadcast the language issue but reports continued to be aired and published in English only.
- Action:** PIO's regularly disseminated news releases and information bulletins, including cautionary information regarding heating and cooking indoors and getting near downed wires. Once the language issue surfaced, PIO's recruited a Spanish speaking City employee and with her help, disseminated some warnings in Spanish as well as English. PIO's posted the bilingual media bulletins on the website, along with a couple versions of commercially published documents on these issues found on the internet and/or sent to staff. These included translations in several more languages.
- Feedback:** Getting safety information to the public in languages they will easily understand, is vital. This should be done on a preparatory as well as response basis. The addition of non-English versions of out-going and web-posted information was appropriate and should be expected whenever disseminating safety information. Prevention actions might include the following:
- post other language versions of our emergency website
  - discuss with local English and non-English media, how to disseminate critical safety info to their English as a Second Language consumers
  - discuss with other organizations serving low-income, English and ESL clients, how to educate their clients regarding critical safety issues.

## Power [Issues dealt with by PIO's]

- Situation:** The power outage caused almost a million people to wonder when they could expect power to be restored. Utility company phone recordings explained the breadth of the situation, efforts underway to restore power, and an inability to predict the timeline for accomplishing this. Many citizens wanted more information, prompting calls to the City. An EOC staffer believed PSE planned a news conference for late morning.
- Activity:** One PIO made repeated attempts to reach PSE personnel, including the staff person assigned to the City. All calls reached busy signals and the City contact did not phone back. Another PIO reached an off-site PSE emergency manager via cell phone, who provided information regarding the news conference (which later changed) and a new estimate for power resumption.
- Feedback:** The PIO's needed to have more contact with the King County EOC to talk to the liaison for PSE this would have the best way to get information. More comprehensive information on the PSE website and/or phone message line would have helped.

## **CERT - Community Emergency Response Team**

### Background

Kirkland CERTs were polled in early January to find out how they fared with the recent windstorm; to learn if their CERT training made a difference; and if so, how. More than a dozen people responded verbally or in writing to the following questions:

- How did your CERT training help?
- Which, if any, of our emergency supplies did you use?
- Which, if any, of your emergency skills did you use?
- How do you think your experience compared to those without CERT training?
- What do you think would help you be more prepared in the future?
- What, if anything, have you done since the storm to increase your preparedness?

### Summary of Responses

CERTs, without question, felt better prepared as a result of their training. They were grateful for the emergency supplies they had stocked, but more importantly to them, they felt prepared mentally and emotionally to deal with the situation. Nobody expected power to be out as long as it was - the average length of time, per household, was four days - however, CERTs were confident they could adjust on their own, without relying on the government, Red Cross, utility companies, etc. They were not the ones neither calling agencies and media for updates nor writing the papers to complain.

Some typical comments regarding the value of training:

- “Having gone through the training I felt much more at ease with the situation.”
- “I think I was less anxious because I knew I was trained, so I was ready if needed.”
- “I felt more confident that I could cope with whatever might happen.”
- “Having more than one plan to deal with a problem.”
- “Self confidence to know I had prepared for sheltering in place.”
- “Knew I was prepared and had supplies – no rushing to the store for batteries & candles.
- “Knowing we had to shelter in place for the duration helped us have the right mindset and  
to deal with the issue rather than to second guess what was being done to correct it.
- “We were confident of our abilities and made sure our neighbors were okay too.”
- “It helped me to be helping others.”

CERTs put their skills to use immediately. After assessing their own homes, most toured their neighborhood, checking for structural damage and other problems that needed addressing and made sure their neighbors were okay. They were careful around trees and downed power lines. They listened to the radio for information and any requests for further CERT deployment. They kept their freezers shut unless they planned to clean them out. And through it all, they stayed calm. They were of assistance to the community, helping to remove debris from homes and vehicles, loaning supplies & equipment, feeding neighbors, and in one case, saving a life:

- “Had to advise neighbor not to try and saw an electric pole to which wire was still attached, later learned it was indeed a live wire.”

Although CERT assistance was occasionally reciprocated (either being loaned a land line phone or being invited to a hot meal, cooked over wood burning stove or outside grill), CERTs felt better prepared than their non-CERT trained neighbors. Here’s how some describe it:

- “I was *expecting* to have to be self reliant.”
- “I was certainly more confident and prepared.”
- “I did have my ¼ tank [gas] but others were not so fortunate.”
- “I witnessed worse prepared neighbors become quite agitated if not potentially rebellious.”
- We were much better prepared mentally and emotionally. We knew what to do and how  
to do it.”

The emergency supplies most frequently used by CERTs, were battery operated and hand-crank radios, LED lanterns, candles, glow sticks, fire logs, flashlights and D batteries. Some also used their generators. Extra comforters and blankets were used, but these came from their regular supplies. Likewise, food from refrigerators and freezers sufficed, so emergency food was not required. CERTs were supplied well enough to loan some things, including generators, to neighbors. Most have since replaced the supplies they used (in greater quantity.)

Though generally better prepared to weather the storm than their neighbors, CERTs learned from this experience. Like others, they identified some things they believe the

City can do to help the community during disasters, but they also identified what they can and will do additionally, for themselves. Their own plans include the following:

- “Have more food stored for times when there is no power.”
- “Plan for longer duration shelter-in-place. Three days wasn’t sufficient.”
- “EIGHT days, three ways.”
- “Work through some more full scenarios, every situation is different.”
- “Fill tank with gas next time there are storm warnings and keep it over half full always.”
- “Get an LED battery lantern so it provides brighter light than candles.”
- “Have more D batteries on hand... and in the house.”
- “Get a plug-in wall jack telephone”
- “Get a new can opener.”

Their most frequently repeated suggestion for the City revolves around official CERT deployment. Specifically, they would like to know how they will learn about deployment requests - if it will be announced over the radio, if they’ll be called, or if they should phone someone to find out. One person wondered if they should gather and forward information on their neighborhoods to anyone. Some more individual concerns include the following:

- “With all of Kirkland out of power, I was surprised to discover that there was no provision in place for emergency city operated shelters – especially considering that we have a large enough elderly population to justify a Senior Center.”
- “Redmond Public Works erected portable stop signs at many intersections. I found that to be a great help in reducing the hazard level... almost taken out twice... in Kirkland.”
- “Given some of the Letters to Editors I’ve read, I believe the community can get quite volatile. Now is a good opportunity to really ramp-up the advertising to encourage folks to be prepared... and that includes *mental* preparation, but physical preparation can help alleviate some potential stress.”

### Conclusions

CERT training significantly helps mental and physical preparation for disasters and it helped our CERTs better deal with the aftermath of the windstorm. They took care of themselves and assisted their neighbors. They were prepared to shelter in place and they sidestepped the hazards of trying to obtain supplies, find other housing, etc., with trees and power lines down everywhere. And their safety eliminated a potentially greater demand on first responder services. CERTs varied in their degree of discomfort (one was without power eight days) but they managed on their own and recognized the conditions could be much worse. They have, since, increased their level of preparedness. CERTs demonstrated their readiness to self-deploy, by assessing their neighborhood needs shortly after assessing their own conditions. Many of them stood-by, listening to the radio, for a possible call-out to assist the City further. Their gear was at the ready and they were prepared. At least one CERT had a downed tree to deal with, but as it wasn’t on the house, she left to help others. And CERTs followed the safety guidelines they were taught, avoiding personal risks.

Clearly, the more residents and business people the City can train to become CERTs, the more self-sufficient and helpful a community we will have. CERTs understand the need to prepare and take care of themselves, and they follow through. Citizens begin and end the training with varying degrees of confidence in participating in post-disaster community recovery, and they vary in the areas of recovery they are best suited to assist, however, CERT graduates will always be more confident, prepared and effective during recovery than when they began.

### Recommendations

CERT feedback suggests the City may improve community preparedness and recovery, as follows:

- Continue to train citizens in CERT
- Increase opportunities for CERTs to practice their skills
- Develop and/or communicate CERT call-out and shelter policies
- Consider the development/expansion of portable stop sign usage at intersections, under certain conditions.

Read the story sent in by a Kirkland CERT on the following page. It underscores the value of CERT training; demonstrates the extent of community service possible, as a result of preparedness; and serves as an inspiration to all community members.

### **CERT Windstorm Experience, sent in by Andy Forrest**

Yes, the CERT training definitely helped. First by being better prepared and secondly, by being able to help several neighbors who were not so well prepared.

The wind hit us with a vengeance at 8:04 PM, Dec.14 and by 10:30PM our power was out and stayed out for 138 hours. We were fortunate to have a wood burning stove (on which we can cook) in our family room and a big stack of wood. So we could keep the downstairs pretty warm and it proved to be a refuge for many of the neighbors at various times who didn't have any heat.

Some of the neighbors, who had a tiny baby, spent the night Saturday night and they had trees down in their back yard and onto the deck. Later, I sawed it up for them for disposal. Several others used our family room as a place to come and warm up for a few hours before going back home and cleaning up limbs, trees, etc. We didn't lose any trees at our house, just lots of limbs and debris. I hauled three trailer loads to Juanita Beach Park. That was great of the city to provide that service.

I have a 1600 Watt generator, which I've had for years. I loaned it to the neighbors across the street that operate an adult care home with five elderly folks in residence and they didn't have any heat. After a few days, he was able to buy a generator of his own and mine was then loaned to some other neighbors across the street that has an elderly mother living with them and also they had no heat and their power was out three days longer than ours. Both places ran the generator day and night to keep their furnaces operating, so it got quite a work out.

Another lady down the street about six houses lives in the downstairs and has water problems in her living area. There is a sump pump to keep water out, but the pump is electric. So she ran out of gas to run her generator and all the service stations were

without power. Fortunately, I had extra gasoline and was able to give her some until she was able to get more.

Friday morning I went over to Juanita to check on our disabled daughter and came across a large tree down across her street. Fortunately, I had my chain saw in the back of the truck and was able to cut my way through to her house. She was without power and heat, so I rigged up a propane catalytic heater to heat a small area of her house. Her power came back on several days sooner than ours, so she didn't lose the contents of her refrigerator or freezer. One of her neighbors had a tree in their backyard come down on their fence, so I sawed it up for them to get it off the fence.

Other neighbors across the street (he is in a wheel chair), couldn't find a generator here, so called their son in Portland and he brought one up. I helped them hook it up so their furnace would run. This was on Sunday. By this time they had been over to our house just to warm up.

Friday night we invited the neighbors over for a potluck dinner and discussion about how they were doing and to see what was needed by whom to work on the problems. This was actually a fun evening; of course it was only the first day. After nearly a week it wasn't fun any more.

It was great to see the neighborhood pull together to help each other out. We are planning a neighborhood "survivor's party" on the 20th to talk about what we can do better next time.

CERT definitely helped. Now we are bracing for the one that is supposed to hit tonight!



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Disaster response by the  
American Red Cross  
Serving King & Kitsap Counties  
during the wind-storm that  
devastated the area in  
December 2006



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## Background

- ARC started providing shelter training to government partners in mid-90s
  - King County Parks
  - Seattle Parks
  - Bellevue Parks (now required every 2 years)
- Have trained over 500 employees from the county and 21 municipalities in last 5 years
- Capability to train community based groups in addition to government and ARC volunteers



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# Expansion of Shelter Training

- TOPOFF-2 demonstrated need for significantly more “Community Shelter Capacity” & tested first joint shelter with KC Parks during drill
- Katrina changed the paradigm in our approach:
  - “All hands on deck” response – FEMA, local government, ARC, Salvation Army, faith-based,
  - National/Regional coordination/planning
  - Zone 1 drill originally scheduled Nov 2006
  - Upcoming UASI evacuation plan for 50,000
- Created impetus for more local governments & community partners to have shelter training



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# ARC Logistics to Support Regional Disasters

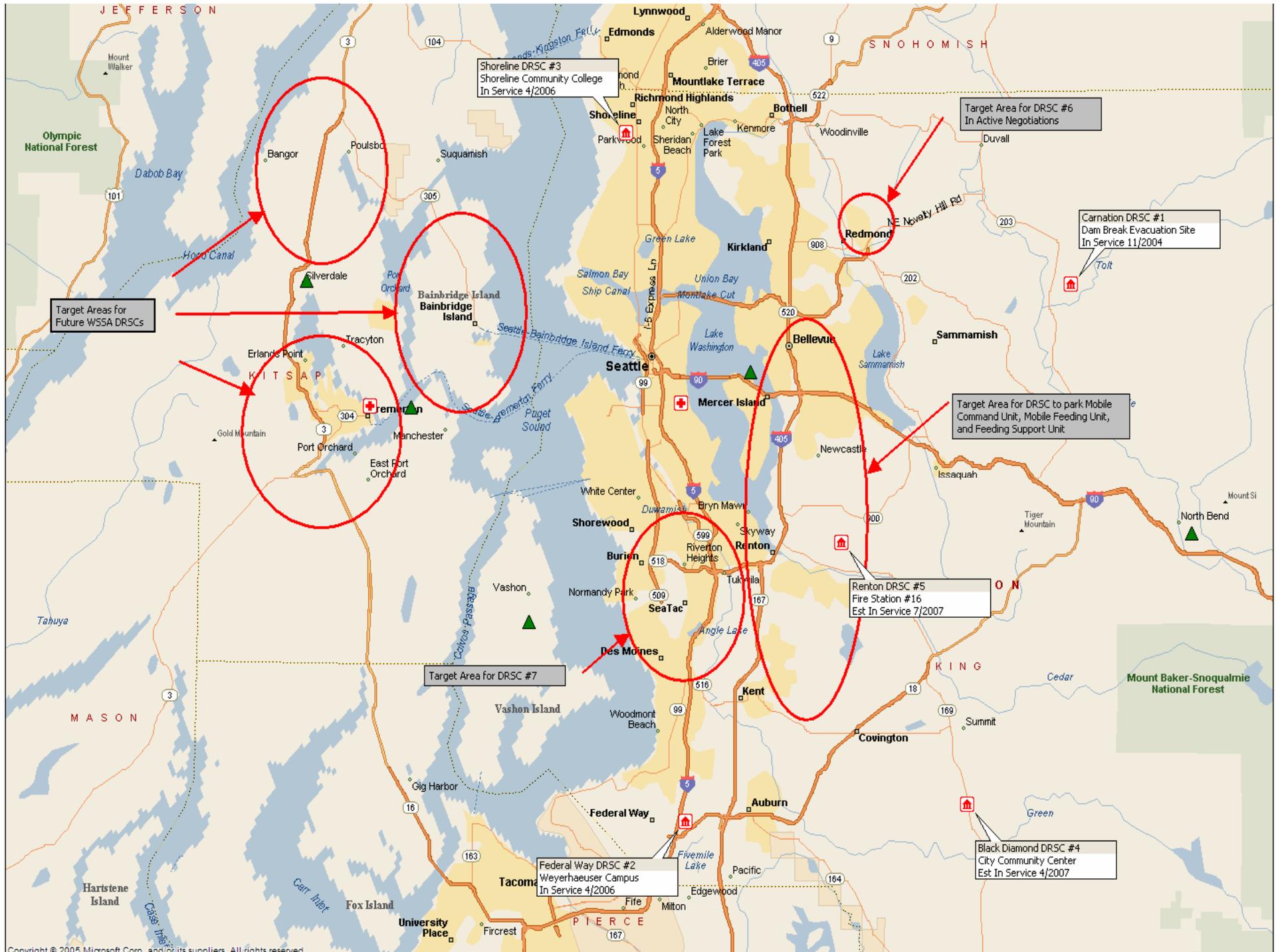


Disaster Relief Supply  
Center (DRSC)



Disaster Emergency  
Response Trailer (DERT)

We have supplies to support approx 5,500 clients in 25 shelters





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## Local Red Cross Chapters

- No government funding except a few grants.
- Each Chapter must raise funds from foundations and individual donors to support local operations, training, vehicles, equipment, supplies, etc.
- Some reimbursement from NHQ for larger disasters over certain thresholds, but no regular operating funds
- Volunteers make up approx 94% of our disaster workforce & they choose when they are available
- ARC does not normally open shelters for power outages unless the temperatures create an imminent health risk to the general population



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## National Response To Our Area

- National support when Chapter response capacity & local mutual aid exceeded
- Scalable response based on **needs** in area
- DR staff has standardized training 20+ activities, which allows diverse groups to quickly integrate
- Staff normally work 12-14 hour days for 3+ weeks
- Disaster Field Supply Centers (DFSC) for supplies
- Outside resources take time to get here, so local plans need to include local capacity to run shelters/feeding operations for at least 2-3 days until help arrives



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## ARC Role in a Regional Event

*The King County Emergency Plan states:*

**Para I - B:** *“Incorporated Cities in King County have responsibility to coordinate their own mass care shelters using city assets, or to coordinate with King County Emergency Operations Center (EOC) in the placement of mutually supported shelters.”*

**Para II - B:** *“Incorporated jurisdictions will perform emergency management functions within their jurisdictional boundaries as mandated by RCW 38.52.070.”*



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## ARC Role in a Regional Event

**Para II - C:** *“The American Red Cross will provide staff, supplies, and shelters as disaster conditions dictate and resources allow...”*

**Para II - D:** *“The King County Department of Natural Resources Parks & Recreation Division is the primary county agency for mass care activities. The King County EOC will make decisions regarding the activation of shelters that will be managed by the Parks and Recreation Division, Seattle-King County Chapter of the American Red Cross, and selected cities and non-profits”*



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## Shelter Standardization

The Regional Disaster Plan (RDP) for Public and Private Organizations in King County States that:

*“All shelters opened and managed by cities in King County will be in accordance with American Red Cross Standards.”*

This is the key to regional success and easy transition if local ARC assumes management of partner shelters or outside ARC staff arrives to support a large disaster in our area



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# Windstorm – December 2006



- 750,000 customers without power from three power companies in our region
- Temperatures forecast below freezing within days

- Chapter infrastructure issues
- Many volunteers impacted by disaster & unavailable
- Damage assessment & repair time initially underestimated





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## Coordinated Regional Response

- Coordinated initial regional shelter placements with both King & Kitsap OEM
- Power outages limited areas and facilities available for regional shelters
- Quickly maxed out ARC human resources with 6 shelters open & ongoing support for them
- Coordinated logistics support to other shelters
- Supplies for 350 clients at Special Needs Shelter & committed 1,000 blankets to Public Health for distribution to other special needs facilities





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# Our Fearless Leader



Susan Pelaez – Chapter DRO Director



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## Local ARC Shelter Operations



- 6 ARC shelters open at once in our two counties!
- 8 ARC shelters & 1 ARC warming center during DR
- Over 700 shelter nights

- Another 400+ daytime
- Over 2,500 meals & almost 7,000 snacks served at ARC shelters
- 189 ARC volunteers/staff





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# ARC support to Community Shelters

- 18 Community Shelters
- 14 had staff trained by ARC
- 12 logistically supported by the ARC



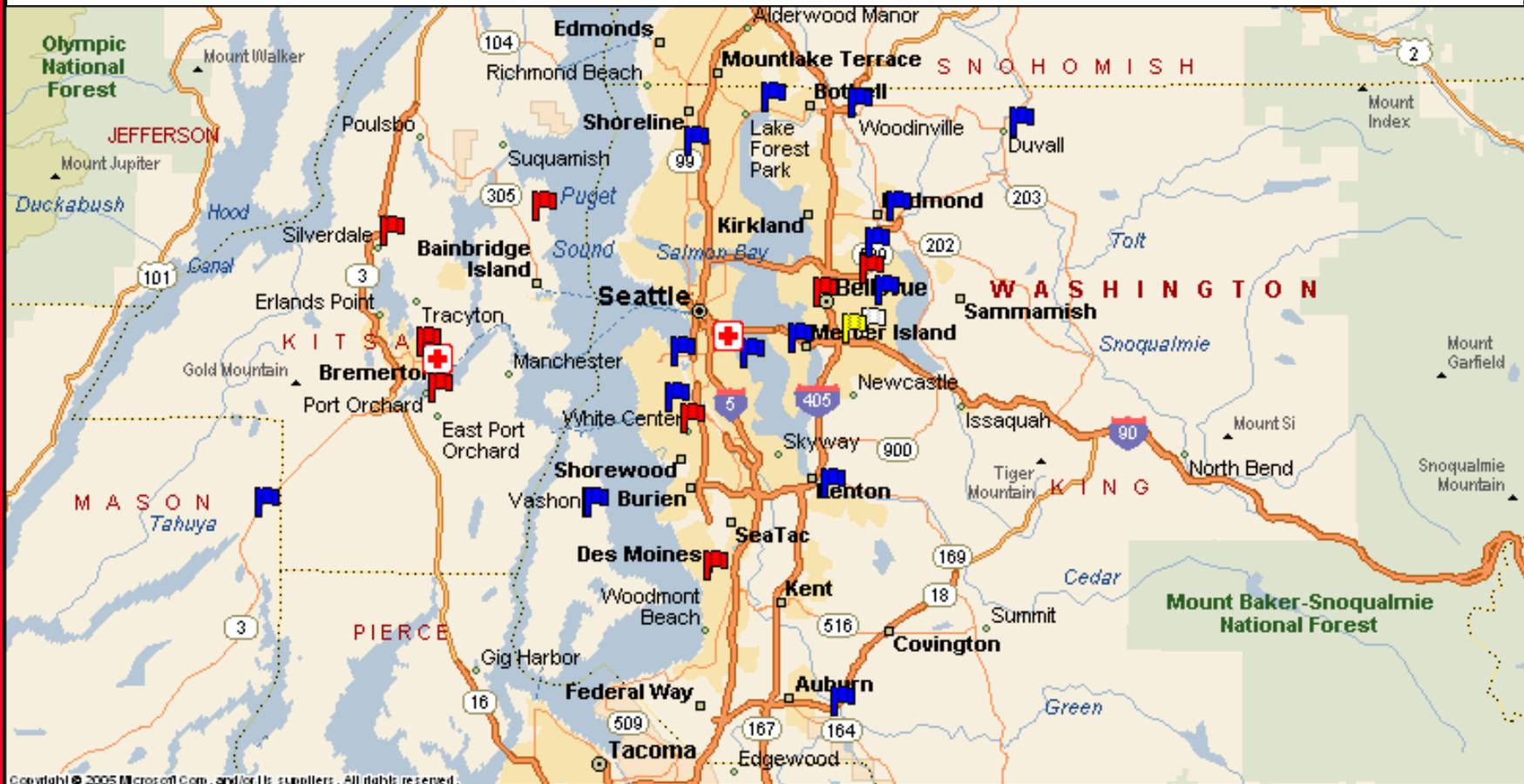
- Special Needs shelter run by Public Health & supported by King County OEM & Parks
- Humane Society set up a Pet Shelter



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# Where were the shelters?



Did we **need** this many shelters?



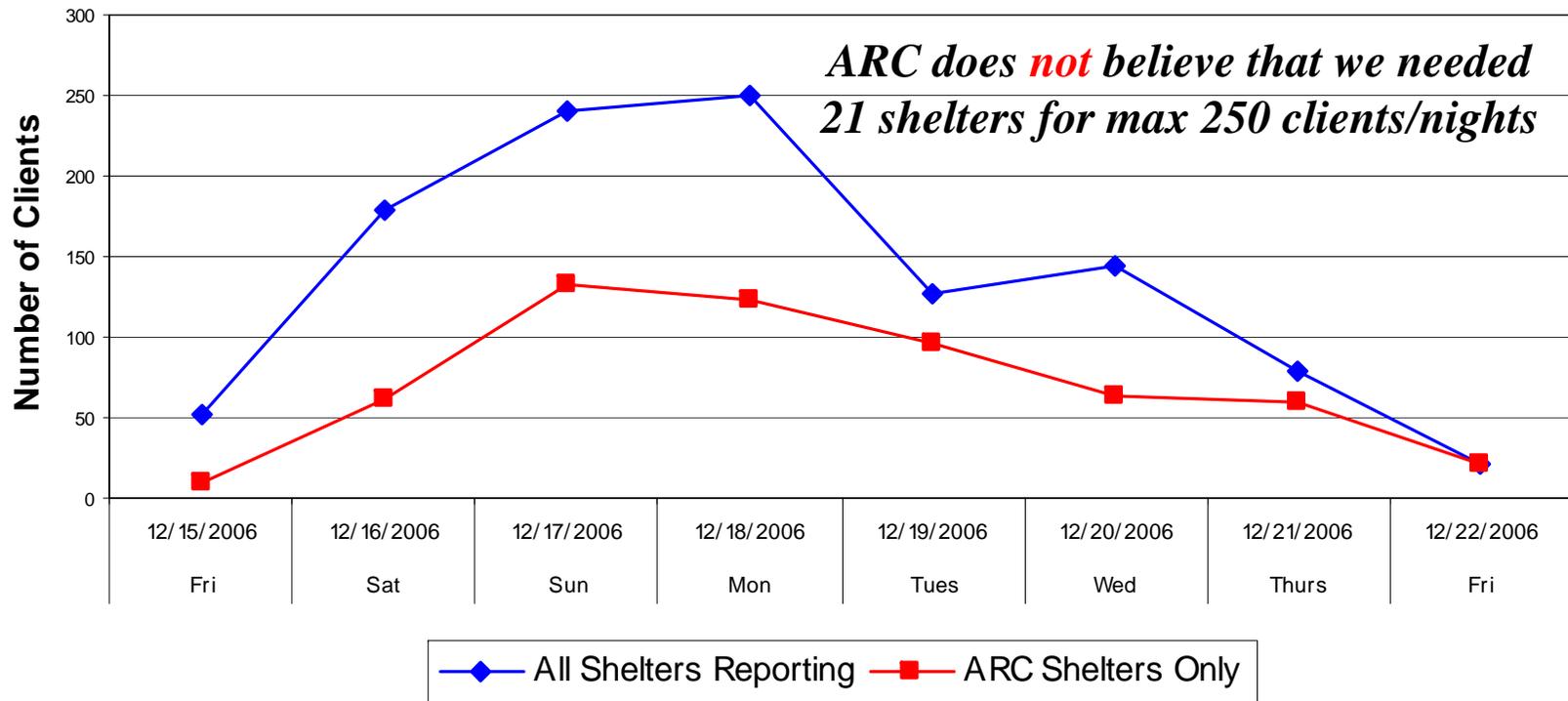
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# King County Shelters



## Overnight Shelter Clients





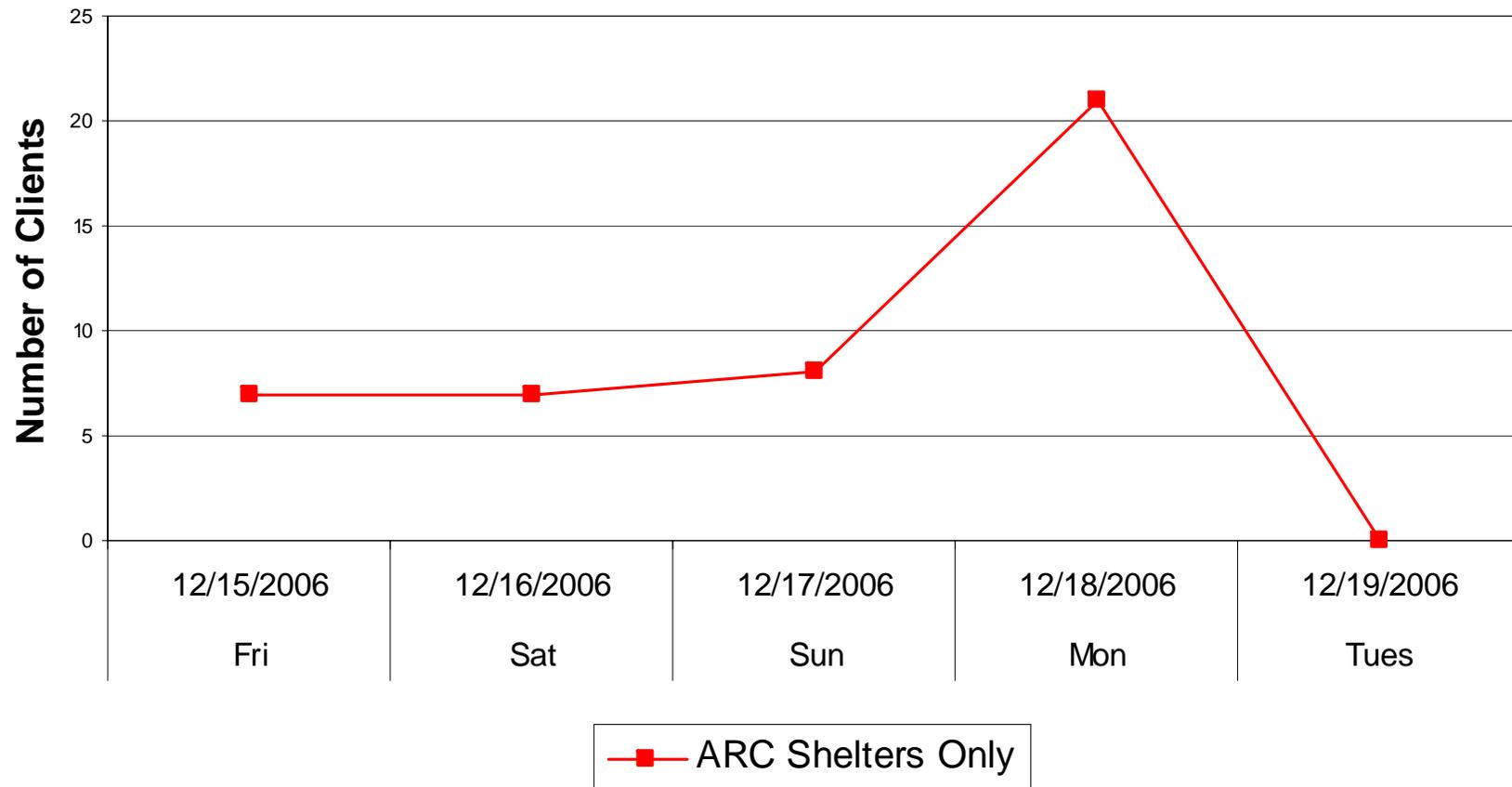
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# Kitsap County Shelters



## Overnight Shelter Clients





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# Individual Client Services

- 19 active cases **before** the storm
- 42 families/114 individuals impacted & assisted
- 6 new non-DR cases during the same period
- Outreach teams made 315 contacts with potential clients based on reported needs & did all damage assessment



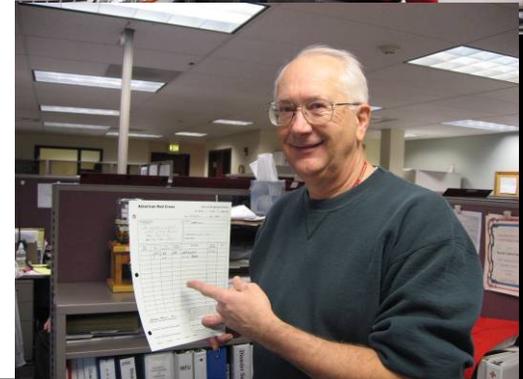


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# ARC Shelter Supplies Used To Support All Shelter Requests

- Rolled 2 DERTs & used supplies from 2 DRSCs & 6 containers
- Ran two warehouses
- Distributed 1,400 cots & 3,000 blankets to support 18 shelters (includes ARC)
- Supported Special Needs Shelter & provided extra blankets
- Coordinated logistics requests & established clear audit trail





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## Lessons Learned - Successes

- Successfully managed Chapter's largest shelter & logistics support operations that anybody can remember.
- “Community Shelter Capacity” concept is working & and significantly increasing overall shelter capacity in the region. We are now being asked to present our concept to other Chapters.
- Partners opened first Special Needs Shelter and Pet Shelter that any of us can remember
- Great logistics support from Puget Sound Energy & government partners



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## Lessons Learned - Successes

- Used ARC non-Emergency Services staff to fill positions for response, including the CEO taking a shelter shift.
- Public Affairs provided updated ARC info from all ARC Chapters in Puget Sound media market. Also coordinated with Public Health on safety info
- The phone bank significantly reduced calls to the DR staff & allowed them to focus on service delivery, which also helped to mitigate an overwhelmed 211 system



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## Lessons Learned - Challenges

- Difficulty getting regional needs assessment & coordinating resource allocations with many cities not reporting to KCECC or city EOCs open
- Lack of depth in Mass Care supervisors/managers
- Critical systems need to be on generator power
  - Phone system inoperative for 1.5 days
  - Email server down periodically due to power issues
- Difficulty recruiting DR staff during holidays with so many volunteers impacted by the storm
- If event two weeks later in the snow & ice, we could not have accomplished as much as we did



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## Moving Forward

- ARC committed to helping local governments & community partners prepare individuals.
  - FREE Community Disaster Education (CDE) info and presentations, with **emphasis on at-risk communities**. Multiple languages available.
  - If you have a community group that would like a free presentation, call Carol Dunn, our CDE Manager, at (206) 323-2345 or email her at: [carol.dunn@seattleredcross.org](mailto:carol.dunn@seattleredcross.org)
  - Visit our web side for disaster preparedness tips & brochures: [www.seattleredcross.org](http://www.seattleredcross.org)



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## Moving Forward

- ARC committed to increasing overall “Community Shelter Capacity” in region:
  - New Mass Care Manager staff position - Jan 2007
  - Realign staff & budget resources to support more Shelter Training for ARC volunteers and partners
  - 2007 Partner Trainings thru March 2007:
    - 9 scheduled training in 6 different jurisdictions
    - 5 more trainings being scheduled
    - several other communities have expressed interest
  - King County Shelter Summit 2/9/07



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## Target Shelter Training Groups

- Government agencies that are responsible for sheltering in their jurisdiction (normally parks departments, but can be other agencies)
- CERT or other citizen groups sponsored by local governments to assist with sheltering
- Faith-based, unions or others partners willing & able to run shelters without restriction to affiliated members
- ARC volunteers, including “shelter team” concept with retiree groups & corporate/community partners
- To schedule shelter training, call Hillman Mitchell, Government Liaison Specialist, at **(206) 720-5282** or email him at **[hillman.mitchell@seattleredcross.org](mailto:hillman.mitchell@seattleredcross.org)**



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## ARC Regional Recommendations

- Coordinate all shelter needs thru KCECC
- Cross-train CERT, Citizen Corps, and other citizen response groups in sheltering operations
- Educate your Elected Officials, PIOs & other staff on responsibilities under RDP & CEMP
- Standardize shelter reporting data up thru city, county, & state and how to publicize info to citizens
- Community Disaster Education (CDE) to all communities, especially ESL & special needs groups
- Local Human Services need to be involved in shelters for mental health needs, referrals for homeless, etc.



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# Any Questions





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