



Jefferson County - City of Port Townsend
COMPREHENSIVE EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT PLAN



Part 3: Emergency Operations Guide

EOG 3.3.06 NEIGHBORHOOD EMERGENCY PLANNING GUIDE

October 8, 2014 (Version 2.0)

3.3.06.01 OBJECTIVE. *Emergency Management is committed to support self-sufficient neighborhoods that are prepared for the challenges of a major emergency, to continue active partnership in the development of a culture of community resilience, and aid in creation of local emergency plans and procedures that will help neighborhoods cope.*

3.3.06.02 BACKGROUND. Many neighborhoods are organized for disaster "self-help" under the Jefferson County Neighborhood Preparedness project (NPREP).¹ These local groups are developing plans and procedures to collectively cope with a major emergency or disaster. NPREP preparedness education and outreach programs assist neighborhoods with organization skills. Preparedness activities are defined differently depending on the size and complexity of the served neighborhood. Initial response to the emergency, surviving the early stages, and adapting to the "seven to ten day gap" are the chief focuses of these efforts.

3.3.06.03 PURPOSE. This Planning Guide provides neighborhoods with an outline of what to expect from the emergency response agencies during the initial recovery period following a major incident, and what they can do to fast-track outside assistance and hasten restoration of critical services.

3.3.06.04 NEIGHBORHOOD EMERGENCY PLANS (NEP). The response strategy recommends that each locality develop a basic emergency plan. Plans should contain at least some fundamental elements to expedite assistance and foster sharing and collaboration under difficult conditions. To aid in visualizing situations under which plans will be used, assumptions, expectations and realities listed below will help define the setting.

3.3.06.05 ASSUMPTIONS. These likely scenarios are the root conditions that might require implementation of a neighborhood emergency plan. Although they may not all occur, or may occur in varying degrees, plans should be based on these fundamental assumptions:

- Normal emergency response resources will be initially overwhelmed or rendered inoperable.
- Communications methods will be disturbed, destroyed, or overloaded. This includes conventional telephones, cellular phones, mobile devices, internet service, etc.

¹ In partnership with the Local 20/20 Emergency Preparedness Action Group.

- Expected lifeline services (electric power, water, or sewer/septic systems) may be damaged or destroyed.
- Transportation routes impassable due to roadway or bridge damage, downed trees or powerlines, vehicle accidents, or smoke.
- Homes may be uninhabitable due to damage. This may be exacerbated by severe weather.
- Individuals may be injured or killed.
- Medically fragile persons may experience loss of the systems or care necessary for their survival.
- Conditions may result in loss or inaccessibility of essential goods and services, including food, bottled water, fuel, pharmaceuticals.
- Evacuation or all or a portion of a neighborhood may be required to escape an impending hazard.

3.3.06.06 EXPECTATIONS. This chain of events is generally how the emergency response agencies will deal with a sudden-onset disaster. Remember that in ANY plan there are conditions that prevent, delay or impair operations.

- Emergency services personnel will take immediate protective actions
- Rapid assessment of operational status (what is damaged and what is available for duty)
- Automatic implementation of "windshield survey" (fire department personnel will drive a pre-determined route to assess nature and scope of damage). Their initial assignment is to determine the "big picture" and they may not be able to deal initially with individual problems.
- Activation of the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) for overall coordination of response
- Activation of the City Command Center for coordination of city resources
- Segmentation (division) of the county into command and coordination areas (activation of Area Command protocols)²
- Internal prioritization and self-dispatch to highest priority calls in each operational area
- Activation of emergency public information networks to keep the public informed
- Implementation of inter-agency mutual aid to balance available resources with emergency needs
- Development of a common operating picture by the EOC (general estimation of the scope and depth of the emergency as a basis for further response)
- Declaration of emergency by city and county officials (initiating major emergency response and recovery plans)
- Initial assessment of community impact and critical needs (communication with neighborhoods)
- Establishment of points of refuge or shelters as needed to cope with displace persons

²Jefferson County is divided into seven operational areas (generally following fire district boundaries).

- Production of a county-wide strategic Incident Action Plan (IAP) for coordination of response and near-term recovery. An IAP is developed for each twenty-four hour period.
- Continuation of response and recovery according to the IAP process
- Implementation of the FEMA disaster relief process (request for a presidential disaster declaration to release national resources)
- Identification of community points of distribution (CPOD's) of food, water and other critical supplies (not likely during the first five to seven days)

3.3.06.07 EXPECTATIONS (NEIGHBORHOOD PLANS). Neighborhoods should plan for this:

- Automatically trigger initial response to life-threatening emergencies
- Activate neighborhood communications networks
- Open the designated gathering point(s)
- Establish information sharing procedures
- Set up decision-making organization and deploy teams
- Identify immediate critical needs and report to emergency officials using emergency communications network
- Survey shortfalls and organize neighborhood resource sharing
- Assist vulnerable citizens who may need additional help
- Expand the neighborhood organization to meet additional short term issues
- Collect and report information needed to trigger relief

3.3.06.08 LIMITATIONS AND REALITIES. A disaster is defined as an exigent condition where demand exceeds resources. The worst case situation might delay outside aid for many hours up to several days. Response will be prioritized using triage (greatest good) processes. It is likely that some emergency needs cannot be met or will be significantly delayed. Jefferson County may also have to "compete" for scarce resources with the larger Puget Sound communities that may have also been impacted.

3.3.06.09 FEDERAL DISASTER RELIEF. There are certain relief and recovery benefits available under federal law. These benefits are only triggered if certain conditions are met. In any event, available benefits are seldom sufficient to completely restore private damage. Collaboration among neighborhood/community members is often the best method of meeting near-term unmet needs. Federal aid may be delayed by conditions, and gaps in access to critical goods may require street-level cooperation.

3.3.06.10 IMPORTANCE OF THE PLANNING PROCESS. The act of writing a plan can be as important as the plan itself. The process is enhanced by inclusion of the neighbors that would be impacted by the plan, consideration of all the variables based on unique circumstances of that individual neighborhood, and organizational structures that can be customized to community needs. The suggested contents represents only a sample of the kinds of things should be discussed.

3.3.06.11 SUGGESTED CONTENTS OF A NEIGHBORHOOD EMERGENCY PLAN (NEP). At a minimum these elements should be included in the plan. The plan should be written to adapt to all possible hazards and consider the worst case scenario.



PLAN FORMAT HINTS:

Develop the plan in TWO parts: The **BASIC PLAN** and supporting **ANNEXES**. The Basic Plan should contain the overall strategy (things that are not likely to change often). The Annexes describe the tactics to be used to make the plan work. Annexes include information that may change frequently such as contact lists, team assignments, etc. The Annexes can be "functional" - how specific tasks are performed, or "hazard specific" - describe responses to specific hazards.

3.3.06 12 BASIC PLAN³

1	Give the neighborhood a unique name to identify it from others. NPREP has a neighborhood numbering system that can also be used.
2	A table of contents will help readers find information quickly.
3	Date the plan and assign a "version" number so residents can be sure they have the most current plan. Date and version should be on each page.
4	Identify who is responsible for maintaining and updating the plan, and identify the desired review and revision interval.
5	Show how the plan will be distributed (print version to all residents, posted on a website, etc.)
6	Define the geographic area covered by the plan. Provide descriptive information about the neighborhood (such as number of homes, number of residents, unique conditions, and other general demographic information that defines the emergency "working environment").
7	List the unique threats and risks in the neighborhood and their likelihood of occurrence.
8	Make a strategic map. Show the neighborhood gathering place(s), triage areas, community shelters, etc.
9	List key assets and special skills in the neighborhood that would help respond to and recover from a disaster.
10	Identify a leader (and alternate) to direct the overall effort.
11	Define the team structure for implementing the plan. Teams might include: First Aid/Search and Rescue, Communications, Damage Assessment, Shelter, Child Care, Pet Care, Security.
12	Specify the response priorities (the initial actions that every resident should take without prompting): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Take immediate action to prevent injury (drop-cover-hold, evacuate, shelter-in-place, etc.

³There is a Map-Your-Neighborhood (MYN) model that can help with plan development. A Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) approach can also be used. Contact the Department of Emergency Management for more information on these planning models.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Check for unsafe conditions (power lines, gas leaks, water leaks). Know how to shut off gas valves and water lines. ✓ Tune into the designated radio emergency frequencies to obtain information and instructions. ✓ Put on protective clothing (gloves, safety glasses, rain gear, sturdy shoes, etc.) to prevent further injury. ✓ Place the OK/HELP sign where it can easily be seen from the sidewalk or street. ✓ If able, go to the gathering place for help or assignment to a team.
13	List communications methods and a general communications strategy (a Communications Annex with details on frequencies, channels, email addresses, phone numbers, etc., should be attached).
14	Identify initial notification procedures (how will residents be notified that the emergency plan is activated). Include a detailed Notification Annex.
15	Show how damage assessment and needs assessment information will be collected and reported to Emergency Management authorities.
16	Show the need for periodic drills and exercises, and establish a training scheme to assure the plan is well known to all residents.

3.3.06.13 FUNCTIONAL ANNEXES

1	Coordination Annex	Team assignments, identification of a "command post", etc.
2	Notification Annex	Primary method and alternate for contact with residents via phone, radio, door-to-door, bulletin boards, etc.
3	Communications Annex	Channels, frequencies, contact numbers, communications procedures (make sure to refer to the Communications Priorities discussed below)
4	First aid/Search and Rescue Annex	How identification of problems, triage, and treatment of injuries will be conducted and what equipment is needed
5	Damage Assessment Annex	Needs assessment and damage assessment and reporting procedures
6	Others	As needed depending on team structure and response strategies

3.3.06.14 HAZARD SPECIFIC ANNEXES. Procedures for dealing with specific hazards likely in the community such as severe winter storm flooding, wildland fire, earthquake, etc. An Evacuation Annex describing how an emergency evacuation of the neighborhood may take place is also recommended.

3.3.06.15 SPECIAL NOTE ABOUT 9-1-1 CALLS. Depending on conditions, Jeffcom (the police/fire/EMS dispatch center serving our area) will likely be overwhelmed. Callers may get a busy signal or an unanswered ring. They should then go to their emergency plan and find out how to get the help they need. Two fundamental things should be included in a communications annex regarding calling for help:

1. Only call 9-1-1 after a major emergency if there is a threat to life (injury, entrapment, fire, or other immediate hazard)

2. The alternative contact methods (emergency communications networks, amateur radio, OK/HELP signs, etc.) should only be used if 9-1-1 is NOT working. 9-1-1 should be the primary method of calling for help if there is a life threat.

3.3.06.16 INFORMATION "ROLL UP" PROTOCOLS. Communications roll up methods will be activated to support coordination between the neighborhoods and the Emergency Operations Center. This roll up scheme is designed to go from the sub-neighborhood (blocks) to the neighborhood gathering place (neighborhood leaders) to the operational area coordination point (fire district headquarters and other similar sites near the neighborhood) to the EOC. The backbone of the roll up network are the facilities and services of the Amateur Radio (Ham) networks. Guidance on roll up and communication protocols is available in another document.

3.3.06.17 COMMUNICATIONS PRIORITIES. An NEP Communications Annex should show how the neighborhood organization communicates internally, how to report on conditions up the chain to emergency authorities, and how it receives emergency information. Because of the likelihood of overload of networks, ranking messages by category will help manage congestion. The exchange of information in a major emergency will be prioritized by net managers as shown in **Table 3.3.06-1**. All communications roll-up to the EOC will be filtered by these categories.

TABLE 3.3.06-1: COMMUNICATIONS PRIORITIES	
CATEGORY (PRIORITY)	TYPICAL MESSAGE CONTENT
RED (CRITICAL)	RED traffic only . . . Immediate life threat Entrapment Fire with life threat or exposures Other critical circumstances Warnings and alerts (incoming)
YELLOW (MODERATE)	All RED traffic and . . . Non life-threatening injuries Major damage reports (roads, bridges, systems) Major wide spread outages and closures Critical shortages Advisories and updates (incoming)
GREEN (DELAYED)	All RED or YELLOW traffic and . . . General needs assessment Individual damage reports (private residences) Periodic status reports Check-in's and roll calls Assignments Administrative and other Scheduled status reports (incoming)

3.3.06.18 INITIAL NEEDS ASSESSMENT. An initial needs assessment is necessary to determine the nature and scope of the impact of the emergency on each neighborhood. The EOC will use this information to prioritize response and assistance. A needs assessment is forwarded to the EOC by each neighborhood when all of the "red" and "yellow" conditions are reported. It includes the following information:

- Number of persons killed or injured (aid already requested as "red" traffic by the most expeditious means)
- Number of displaced persons needing shelter
- Number of fragile persons with special unmet needs (and what their needs are)
- Number of residences or businesses severely damaged (cannot be occupied)
- Number of residences or businesses damaged (needing repairs) but can be occupied
- Working status of community lifelines (public water, sewer, power)
- Working status of communications systems (telephones, mobile service, internet access)
- Road closures or damage to roads and bridges and other impediments to travel
- Damage to important community resources (grocery stores, fuel outlets, medical clinics, pharmacies, etc.)
- Other conditions that substantially impact health and safety, or if not addressed soon will likely result in health and safety consequences in the near future

3.6.06.19 HOW TO REPORT A NEEDS ASSESSMENT. A needs assessment is a "green" priority unless serious needs are not yet met. Neighborhoods will report the information by the most expeditious means. Telephone (preferred), email, amateur radio net, hand-carry. Only one initial report is needed from each neighborhood. Additional information can be passed up the chain as conditions change.

3.6.06.20 PRELIMINARY DAMAGE ASSESSMENT. If there is uninsured personal or business damage a preliminary damage assessment (PDA) process will be conducted by Emergency Management as a requirement for requesting federal disaster assistance.⁴ To initiate the PDA, county Emergency Management will collect detailed damage information. This is done in the first ten days following the incident if possible. This is not the same as the Needs Assessment. It is more detailed and usually delayed until all the other emergency problems are dealt with.

3.6.06.21 INFORMATION NEEDED TO PROMPT THE PDA. The information needed for the PDA is different than for the Needs Assistance. Worksheets (EOC forms 140 and 145) are attached as Exhibit A. If there is uninsured damage to a primary residence in the neighborhood, an estimate of the loss will be included with others in the state to determine the need for relief. The preliminary damage report is not an application for aid from FEMA, it is the first step necessary to determine if homeowners will be eligible for aid. It is important, however, for homeowners with residential damage to report it as soon as possible to expedite generation of relief.

3.6.06.22 CONTENT OF THE HOMEOWNERS PRELIMINARY DAMAGE REPORT. See a copy of the forms in Exhibit A to learn what information will be needed when making a report of damage to a primary private residence.⁵

⁴ Activation of federal assistance according to the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Assistance Act (Public Law 93-288 as amended).

⁵ FEMA does not cover secondary/vacation residences.

3.6.06.23 HOW TO MAKE A PRELIMINARY DAMAGE REPORT TO EMERGENCY

MANAGEMENT. Deliver EOC Form 140 (damage to primary residence) or EOC Form 145 (damage to business) by:

- (Preferred method) Conventional mail to the Department of Emergency Management, 81 Elkins Road, Port Hadlock, WA 98339
- Hand deliver to the Department of Emergency Management (same address)
- Report by telephone (360.385.9368)
- Report by email (jcdem@co.jefferson.wa.us)
- Report to a mobile information and reporting station (if established by the Department of Emergency Management)
- If none of these are available, report via the neighborhood emergency communications network (typically the amateur radio net) to the EOC (Form 140/145 reports are prioritized as **"green"** traffic)

3.3.06.24 SUMMARY OF INITIAL ACTIVATION PRIORITIES FOR EACH

NEIGHBORHOOD. These are the top four priorities for implementation of a neighborhood emergency plan:

1. Identify and care for immediate life threat injuries
2. Prevent further injury (move away from hazards)
3. Gather, organize, exchange information, and implement the plan
4. Assess and report conditions and unmet needs

3.3.06.25 NIXLE TEXT MESSAGING SYSTEM. Neighborhood groups should encourage subscription to the NIXLE text messaging system used in Jefferson County for dissemination of warnings and alerts. NIXLE is the primary notification method for severe storms, tsunami warnings, evacuations, hazardous materials spills, major road closures, and other significant hazards. NIXLE text messages are sent to any text-enabled mobile device.

3.3.06.26 DEFINITIONS AND ACRONYMS USED IN THIS GUIDE.

- Alert - Notice of a developing condition that may impact health and safety
- Amateur radio - Licensed personal radio systems; "Ham" radio emergency communications networks
- CCC - City Command Center; the location for coordination of City of Port Townsend resources
- CERT - Community Emergency Response Team
- CPOD - Community Point of Distribution for the distribution of water, food, and other essential supplies in the event of a major disaster
- DEM - Department of Emergency Management
- Disaster assistance - A system of emergency services, financial aid, and provision of essential resources, coordinated by the Federal Emergency Management Agency
- EOC - Emergency Operations Center; the central coordination and control point for the Department of Emergency Management

- EOC Form 140 - Damage to Primary Residence worksheet; used to report individual damage to the Department of Emergency Management (Form 145 is used to report damage to businesses)
- FEMA - Federal Emergency Management Agency
- Gathering place - Identified location for neighbors to meet for assistance, information, and assignment following an emergency
- Immediate life threat - Conditions that pose an imminent risk of death
- MYN - Map-Your-Neighborhood; a neighborhood-level organization and planning model
- Needs Assessment - An assessment of the unmet needs of a neighborhood reported to the Department of Emergency Management as a basis for prioritization of response and relief activities
- NEP - Neighborhood Emergency Plan
- NIXLE - A subscription based text messaging system used to disseminate warnings and alerts in Jefferson County. Go to www.jeffcoeoc.org to subscribe. There is no cost for this service.
- NPREP - Neighborhood Emergency Preparedness action group; a partnership between the Department of Emergency Management and Local 20/20 for promoting community resilience and emergency preparedness
- PDA - Preliminary Damage Assessment; a joint local-state-and-federal activity intended to estimate the amount of public and private damage as a requirement for a federal disaster declaration
- Trigger - A general threshold event that requires implementation of an emergency plan or procedure
- Warning - Information neighbors need to know in order to take protective action
- Windshield survey - A rapid assessment of the general nature and scope of an emergency usually conducted automatically by fire departments immediately following an earthquake
- Ham radio - Amateur Radio

