

PCEMA

Pacific County Emergency Management Agency

Preparedness Post

Volume 4, Issue 1 November-December 2014

Watch Out for Winter Hazards!

Tornado Warning for Pacific County?!

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PCEMA Events Recap



Storm tides and surges rapidly erode Washaway Beach.

Photo Credit: <http://www.panoramio.com/photo/48524984>

Enjoy the great outdoors this winter in the Pacific Northwest, but keep an eye on the changeable weather. The National Weather Service (NWS) issues a variety of winter weather watches, advisories and warnings. Always check the latest weather forecast before heading out. As winter weather threatens the coast this season, you should prepare a winter safety kit for your home and vehicle. Pre-assembled safety kits are available at many retail and auto supply stores. Another valuable companion for this cold and stormy season is a battery-powered NOAA Weather Radio, which provides the latest weather conditions and forecasts. You can purchase such radios at many local electronics or department stores, and over the internet.

Prepare for Winter Weather Hazards!



The Pacific County Courthouse, South Bend

Freezing Temperatures

Some winter storms strike the coast accompanied by dangerously low temperatures. These types of storms can be a deadly combination of strong winds, ice, sleet, snow, or freezing rain. One primary concern with this type of winter storm is its ability to knock out power, heat, and communications services to homes, sometimes for days at a time. Heavy snowfall or extreme cold can immobilize an entire region.

Deaths and injuries are often indirectly related to frozen conditions. Vehicle collisions on icy roads are a common cause of many injuries and fatalities. Hypothermia after prolonged exposure to cold is another risk associated with freezing temperatures. During storms and power outages, people succumb to carbon monoxide poisoning after running generators or propane grills indoors to stay warm.

Valley communities such as Naselle, Menlo, and Lebam experience these types of conditions more frequently than the immediate coastal areas of Pacific County, (Though the coast is sometimes impacted by this type of weather as well.)

Storm Surges & Tides



Bay Center Photo Credit: Chris Sibotham

may increase damage to buildings, vehicles, and people directly along the coast. Drivers have experienced waves hitting their vehicles on Highway 101 along the Columbia River just east of Chinook. Additionally, currents created by tides combine with the waves to severely erode shorelines and coastal highways. Washaway Beach near Tokeland exhibits extreme erosion which is only worsened during winter storms.



Long Beach, 2007 Photo Credit: climate.wa.edu

Gale Force Winds

The Pacific Northwest is no stranger to strong, damaging winds. Each fall and winter season, storm systems reach the Pacific Coast, producing strong winds, sometimes up to 100 mph or more. These gale force winds can cause power outages, property damage, injury, and even death.

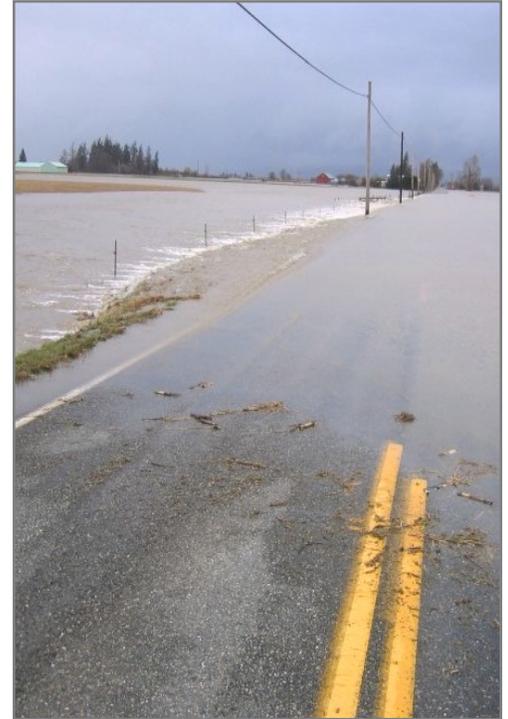
Falling trees and windblown debris are responsible for most fatalities and cause severe damage to buildings and vehicles. Power pole and line damage can result in widespread power outages. Failure of roof coverings and other structural components can lead to additional damage, as well as entry of wind and rain into the building.

Beaches and headlands are exceptionally vulnerable to windstorms. Coastal communities like Tokeland, North Cove and the Long Beach Peninsula frequently experience power outages and fallen trees throughout the winter months.

A storm surge is an abnormal rise of water over and above the predicted astronomical tides. A storm tide is a water level rise due to the combination of storm surge and a high astronomical tide. In either case, both can cause extreme flooding in coastal areas and dangerous conditions on or near the surf.

Clam diggers on area beaches should always be sure to always “keep an eye” on the ocean. Waves can race up the beach further than normal and surprise diggers. These waves frequently carry dangerous debris.

Adding to the destructive power of storm surges and tides, battering waves



Near Raymond Photo Credit: WS DOE

Flooding

Floods are one of the most common hazards in the United States, however not all floods are alike. Some floods develop slowly, while others such as flash floods, can develop in just a few minutes.

Overland flooding, the most common type of flooding, typically occurs when waterways such as rivers or streams overflow their banks as a result of rainwater. Flooding can also occur when rainfall or snowmelt exceeds the capacity of underground pipes, or the capacity of streets and drains designed to carry flood water away from developed areas.

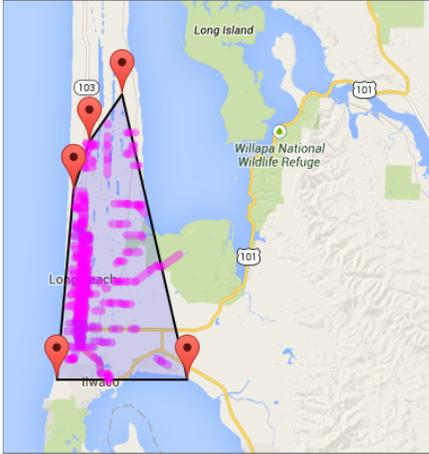
Even if you appear to live in a community with a low risk of flooding, remember that anywhere it rains, it can flood. Just because you haven't experienced a flood in the past, it doesn't mean you won't in the future.

Flood prone areas in Pacific County are often along rivers or situated near the Willapa Bay estuary. During heavy rain events, watch for water over roadways, which can occur nearly anywhere in the county.

Some of the information on this page comes directly from the National Weather Service (NWS), Washington State Emergency Management Division (WA EMD), and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).

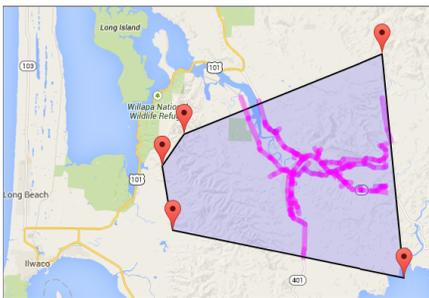
Severe Thunderstorm Prompts Tornado Warnings for South Long Beach Peninsula and Naselle

On Sunday November 23rd at 8:52 a.m. the National Weather Service issued a Special Weather Statement warning of a strong thunderstorm over the Long Beach Peninsula and the Northern Oregon Coast. This statement was followed by a Tornado Warning from the National Weather Service at 9:01 a.m. for Long Beach, Seaview, and Ilwaco.



Peninsula residents within the boundaries above received emergency telephone notification during the first tornado warning at 9:05 a.m..

The warning for the Long Beach Peninsula area was allowed to expire at 9:30 a.m. as the storm moved east.



Naselle area residents within the boundaries above received emergency telephone notification during the second tornado warning at 9:35 a.m.

McDougall responded to the Pacific County Emergency Operations Center (EOC) at 9:24 a.m. in case the situation worsened and the EOC needed to be activated. By 9:40 a.m., PACCOM was informed that the thunderstorm had weakened and moved east, so the tornado warning for Naselle would also be allowed to expire at 9:45 a.m.. This information was immediately broadcast by PACCOM to all

of law enforcement, fire and EMS agencies.

The severe thunderstorm that passed through Pacific County, did not generate a tornado. There were reports of very large hail in the Naselle area, but at this time there has been no reported damage as a result of this event.



Remnants of the thunderstorm: Sheriff's Johnson's patrol car in standing water and hail outside Naselle High School.



Large hail collected in the Naselle area by Sheriff Johnson. Johnson also noted that being struck by this hail was physically painful.

For further details, including a chronological timeline, notification maps, and an After Action Report, please visit The PCEMA Blog at www.pcema.blogspot.com.

If you have any questions about this event, please contact PCEMA Director Stephanie Fritts, at (360) 875-9340 or via email at sfritts@co.pacific.wa.us.

For more information about tornadoes and preparedness, see Pages 4 & 6.

Tsunami Inundation Community Forums *December 4th and 11th*

PCEMA will be hosting a series of Community Forums regarding Tsunami Inundation for the Long Beach Peninsula. The Washington State Department of Natural Resources recently completed updated research and mapping that more accurately reflects potential inundation associated with a Cascadia Subduction Zone Earthquake and Tsunami. Tim Walsh from the Washington Department of Natural Resources, and Dr. John Schelling, from the Washington State Emergency Management Division will be present on Thursday December 4th, and Thursday December 11th to discuss the new data and answer questions about how this new information affects the Long Beach Peninsula.

The first forum will be in the Ilwaco Community Room, located at 158 1st Avenue N (US 101) in Ilwaco, from 3-5:00 p.m. on December 4, 2014. The forum will be repeated on December 11th at the Chautauqua Lodge, 304 14th Street NW in Long Beach from 2-4:00 p.m., and at Pacific County Fire District 1, 26110 Ridge Avenue, in Ocean Park from 7-9:00 p.m.

Residents will have an opportunity to ask questions and speak with presenters. Representatives from PCEMA will also be on hand to provide information and answer questions. For more information please contact Scott McDougall, PCEMA Deputy Director, at (360) 642-9338 or by email at smcdougall@co.pacific.wa.us.

Thursday, December 4th

3:00 p.m.—5:00 p.m.
Ilwaco Community Room
158 1st Avenue N (US 101)

Thursday, December 11th

2:00 p.m.—4:00 p.m.
Chautauqua Lodge
304 14th Street NW, Long Beach

Thursday, December 11th

7:00 p.m.—9:00 p.m.
Pacific County Fire District No. 1
26110 Ridge Avenue, Ocean Park



To view the updated tsunami inundation maps, visit:
<http://www.dnr.wa.gov/ResearchScience/Topics/GeologyPublicationsLibrary/Pages/tsuevac.aspx>

Tornado Response Tips

If a Tornado Warning is issued in your area:

- Seek shelter in a basement or cellar. For homes without a basement or cellar, go to the lowest floor and take shelter in an interior room or under a stairwell in the center of the building, away from windows.
- Use a helmet, pillows, blankets, or whatever you can to protect your head and body.
- If you are caught outdoors, seek shelter in a sturdy building, preferably with a basement or cellar.
- If you are driving, stay in your vehicle, buckle your seat belt and drive to a shelter. Do not seek shelter under bridges or overpasses, because these offer little protection. If you cannot find shelter, put your head down below the windows and cover yourself with a blanket or pillows.
- If you are in a mobile home, leave immediately and seek shelter in a sturdy building. Mobile homes offer no protection from a tornado.

New Film Explores “Killer Landslides”

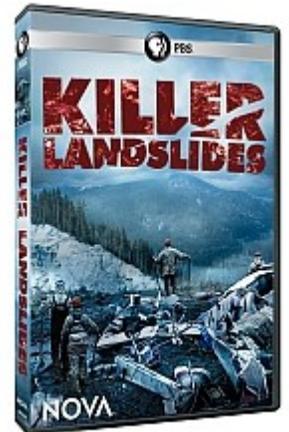
Produced by PBS for the network’s science series NOVA, the new documentary *Killer Landslides* recently aired on television and is now available to stream or purchase on the PBS website.

According to PBS, “the film “surveys landslide danger zones to discover how and why landslides happen, and how radar monitoring technologies could help predict landslides and issue life-saving warnings.”

Centering on the March 22, 2014 Oso, Washington mudslide, *Killer Landslides* incorporates footage from Oso as well as interviews with survivors, rescue workers, and family members of the victims.

Additional information about the Himalayas, where “the threat of a devastating landslide is always lurking” is interspersed with information about other major landslides worldwide. These real-world examples are used to explain how landslides happen, different types of landslides, and what to expect in a landslide.

If you are interested in learning about landslides, or would like know more about the Oso mudslide in particular, *Killer Landslides* is worth a watch.



To order a copy or stream online for free, visit:
<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/nova/earth/killer-landslide.html>

Emergency Information Comes From Many Sources

In the event of an emergency, PCEMA utilizes several notification methods to communicate with residents. PCEMA will do everything within its power to keep you informed in the event of an emergency as time allows, and will continue to provide information following an event. Nevertheless, it is important to remember that situational and hazard awareness are an absolute key to survival. If you feel the earth move, or you see a tornado approaching, do not wait for notification, take action to protect yourself. PCEMA will provide as much information as possible as soon as possible, but it is up to individual citizens to ensure that they are prepared to evacuate or shelter in place. To better stay informed, sign up for the notification options below. Please remember, signing up for one notification option does not serve to sign you up for all! They are not the same, but are redundant systems, as one can fail at any time.

The Weather Warning List

The PCEMA Weather Warning List is used to provide Weather Warnings from the National Weather Service. Residents who have signed up for the list receive hazardous weather notices, PCEMA press releases, and the Preparedness Post newsletter via email. The email alerts are typically sent during business hours, though PCEMA does send Extreme Warnings from the National Weather Service after hours if there is sufficient time to do so. To sign up for the Weather Warning List, provide your name and email to sfritts@co.pacific.wa.us or smcdougall@co.pacific.wa.us and include the word "Subscribe" in the subject line.

Social Media

The PCEMA Facebook page contains emergency management and preparedness dialog, Weather Warnings from the National Weather Service, photos, and updates during emergencies as time allows. "Like" the PCEMA Facebook page at www.facebook.com/pcema to stay informed.

Twitter is used to provide real-time updates while the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) is activated. "Follow" [@PCEOCNews](https://twitter.com/PCEOCNews) on Twitter to get updates from the Pacific County EOC. If you are not signed up for Twitter, you can receive the same information via text message on your cell phone. Just text "follow PCEOCNews" to 40404.

You can also "follow" [@PacificCountyEM](https://twitter.com/PacificCountyEM) on Twitter to get regular updates from PCEMA Deputy Director Scott McDougall.

Telephone Warning System

PCEMA uses a telephone warning system which sends out warning notifications to residents who could be directly affected by an event. If you have landline phone service (for example CenturyLink) your phone number is automatically included in the telephone warning system. If you have voice over internet protocol (VoIP) phone service (for example Comcast or Charter), or if you only have cell phone service (for example US Cellular or Verizon) you must register your phone number to receive notifications. To register, visit <https://secure.hyper-reach.com/comsignupw.jsp?id=40685>. See the back page of this newsletter for a QRL code to register with your cell phone.

NOAA Weather Radio

NOAA Weather Radio (NWR) is a nationwide network of radio stations broadcasting continuous weather information directly from the nearest National Weather Service office. NWR broadcasts official Weather Service warnings, watches, forecasts and other hazard information 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. NWR is an "All Hazards" radio network, making it your single source for comprehensive weather and emergency information.

In conjunction with Federal, State, and Local Emergency Managers, and other public officials, NWR also broadcasts warning and post-event information for all types of hazards – including natural (such as earthquakes or avalanches), environmental (such as chemical releases or oil spills), and public safety (such as AMBER alerts or 911 Telephone outages).

NOAA Weather Radios equipped with an audio alert tone kept in your bedroom will allow you to be awakened at night when severe weather threatens your area.

All Hazard Alert Broadcast (AHAB) Sirens

Pacific County has eighteen AHAB sirens placed throughout the county. In the best weather conditions, each siren is capable of reaching a 4500' diameter area with both a siren tone and voice message. Actual transmission area coverage will be dependent on humidity, wind, and other weather related conditions. Sirens are not designed to be heard indoors and the sound may also be impacted by adverse weather. In an actual event, the AHAB sirens will sound a wailing tone for three continuous minutes, and may be followed by a verbal message. Residents are encouraged to have alternate methods of warning such as NOAA weather radios, which are tested weekly and can be heard indoors.

Community Emergency Response Team (CERT)

Local Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) members are taught to notify their neighbors in the event of an emergency. There are currently many CERT members across Pacific County. If you are interested in learning more about CERT or would like to sign up for the next training, contact PCEMA AmeriCorps Member Courtney Hagain at chagain@co.pacific.wa.us or 360-642/875-9300 ext. 2584.

Tornado Warning for the Coast an Anomaly?

By Charles Wallace, Grays Harbor Emergency Management Agency

During a long line of severe thunderstorms with hail moving along the coast from Northwest to Southeast [on November 23rd], the National Weather Service in Portland issued a Tornado Warning for the South Washington Coast. Was this an anomaly?

After calling the National Weather Service in Seattle for more information, it was offered they initiated their first Tornado Warning in 17 years this past October 13th in the Anderson Island region of Puget Sound. Also, this past year, water spouts appeared in Westport and other coastal areas of Western Washington. [On October 23rd, a tornado actually touched down in Cowlitz County, ripping roofs from buildings and scattering debris in a section of Kelso.]

April 5, 1972, an F3 tornado caused damage to Portland, Oregon and Vancouver, Washington. In Washington, the tornado continued its nine-mile total damage path across the east side of Vancouver to the Brush Prairie area. Six persons lost their lives while 300 persons were injured. The tornado caused five to six million dollars in property damage in Washington alone. It was the most devastating tornado in Oregon's recorded weather history, dating back to 1871.

According to Tyree Wilde, the Warning Coordination Meteorologist for the National Weather Service in Portland, "I don't recall we've ever issued a Tornado Warning for the coast [prior to November 23rd]. We have issued special marine warnings for waterspouts over the ocean. Most tornadoes in the Northwest are very short lived, difficult to detect and difficult to warn for. Radar signatures are often quite weak compared to the large tornadoes that occur in the Midwest."

Most of our All Hazards Disaster Preparation Plans don't fully address tornadoes because of their infrequency in Western Washington, however with the recent activity of this past year, time has come for all communities to take their threat seriously. What if you received a Tornado Warning? Do you know where to go? What would you do to protect yourself and your family?



Photo by Veronica Mirchouse

Damage from the October 23rd, 2014 tornado in Kelso, Washington.

The AmeriCorps Work Begins on North County CERT, and More

By Courtney Hagain, PCEMA AmeriCorps Member

In October I took basic Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) training in Clatsop County. During introductions I found out there were two other AmeriCorps Members at the training. Like me, one of the members works in the emergency management sector, for the Clatsop County Emergency Management Agency.

On the first day of training we talked about how to perform triage. I learned that the first thing to do is call out and if someone comes to you they are considered "level green" or "walking wounded". If no one comes to you then you begin to search for people. We learned how to check for a radial pulse and do a blanch test to check circulation. We practiced victim assessments and other first aid measures like controlling bleeding.

During the second day of training we learned how to use a fire extinguisher and we each got to put out a fire. This was especially fun as it was my first time ever holding one. On the third and final day of the class we had a full scale disaster simulation exercise and practiced our victim search skills.

PCEMA is in the process of trying to build an active CERT group in the northern part of Pacific County, and I'm currently working to organize a meeting to get things started. In December I will travel to Everett to take the CERT Train-the-Trainer course so that I can better help with the CERT program.

Also in October, I attended the annual SERVES Conference in Yakima, Washington. SERVES is coordinated by the Washington Service Corps for all individually-placed AmeriCorps members in the state. I attended workshops and took advantage of networking opportunities with about 400 other AmeriCorps members. The workshops helped us set goals for our year of service, and we received guidance on completing core training requirements. My favorite class was Vicki Legman's class 'Uncommon Sense: Listening and Effective Communication'. The class taught us that in order to have effective communication we need to use language that everyone can understand. We were taught that you cannot be vague when talking to people. Everything I was taught in this class is something I will use when out working in the community.

Since I got back from these trainings I also have been working to put together some presentations about the Map Your Neighborhood program, which I will be giving next month.



PCEMA welcomed AmeriCorps Service Member Courtney Hagain to the team in September 2014 for a twelve month term. Courtney is working as part of a Disaster Preparedness Public Education Outreach project. Over the course of her term she will build and strengthen the local volunteer base by developing a strong public education outreach program to enhance disaster preparedness and response needs in Pacific County.

AmeriCorps engages more than 75,000 Americans in intensive service each year at nonprofits, schools, public agencies, and community and faith-based groups across the country. Courtney is the fourth AmeriCorps member to serve with PCEMA.

2014 Preparedness Fair at South Bend High School



PCEMA held its annual Preparedness Fair on October 14th at the South Bend High School. The event was well attended, with around 70 students and community members participating.

A table was set up for the CERT program, and PCEMA gathered contact information from several people interested in having a CERT Team for North Pacific County. Many high school students also expressed an interest in the CERT program.

Eighteen fair participants were selected by a raffle to receive a free NOAA Weather Radio. Participants also received preparedness kit items and useful information from exhibitors. The exhibitors included: Farmer's Insurance, the American Red Cross, Pacific County PUD #2, NOAA, HAVA, Thrive, Dr. Bob DeGroot, Timberland Regional Library, Pacific County Health and Human Services, Raymond Fire, and the Pacific County Sheriff's Office.



From left to right: Shanna Coty, Sheriff Johnson, Stephanie Fritts, Scott McDougall, and Courtney Hagain.



From left to right: Raymond Fire Captain Darren Manlow, Key McMurry, and Dr. Bob de Groot from the Southern California Earthquake Center.

County Employees Participate in Shakeout

On October 16th at 10:16 a.m., millions of people across the world practiced how to drop, cover, and hold as participants in Great ShakeOut Earthquake Drills. Pacific County employees participated in this important event and also used the drill as a chance to practice workplace evacuations.



Courthouse employees assemble outside after the Great Shakeout earthquake drill on October 16th.

Pacific County Amateur Radio Among the Best

In June, Pacific County amateur radio volunteers gathered at the Port of Peninsula to participate in the 2014 Amateur Radio Field Day along with HAMs from across the globe. The event results were released in November, and out of 384 entrants in the 2A Category (by far the most popular) Pacific County amateur radio volunteers rank 17th in the U.S. and Canada.

According to volunteer Dick Lemke, "We are by far number one in Washington and Oregon, [and] on the West Coast we are only behind 10th ranked San Francisco, California. That's doing mighty fine for our small club down here in Pacific County."

In October, many of the same amateur radio volunteers participated in the 2014 National Radio Amateurs Simulated Emergency Test (SET) as members of the Amateur Radio Emergency Services (ARES) and Radio Amateur Civil Emergency Services (RACES) groups. The SET is designed to exercise tasks that will be necessary during any emergency. Volunteers provide "traffic control" between the field units and the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) as part of the exercise.

Results for the 2014 SET won't be published until 2015, but if the 2013 results are any indication, the group will likely rank high. In 2013, Pacific County was 9th in the nation with 582 points; 449 points were submitted for the 2014 SET.

PCEMA

Pacific County Emergency Management Agency

Contacts & Info.

The Pacific County Amateur Radio Club meets every second Saturday of the month at Hunter's Inn, Naselle - 9:00 a.m.
All Hazards Alert Broadcast (AHAB) Sirens occur the first Monday of every month at noon.

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Office Locations:
Long Beach: 7013 Sandridge Rd.
South Bend: 300 Memorial Dr.

Office Hours:
Monday - Friday
8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

LIKE the PCEMA Facebook page at www.facebook.com/pcema to follow frequent emergency management and preparedness dialogue.

FOLLOW @PCEOCNews on Twitter to get updates from the Pacific County EOC when it is activated. If you are not signed up for Twitter, you can receive the same information via text message. Just text "follow PCEOCNews" to 40404.

RECEIVE the latest emergency management information, hazardous weather notices, and monthly newsletter by signing up for the PCEMA Weather Warning list.

Provide your name via email to PCEMA staff and include the word "Subscribe" in the subject line.

READ the latest emergency management information on the PCEMA blog at www.pcema.blogspot.com.

VISIT the PCEMA website at www.co.pacific.wa.us/pcema for valuable preparedness materials and to learn about hazards prone to Pacific County.

Emergency Notification

Sign Up for the Emergency Notification System!

Residents can register cellphones on the PCEMA website. Use the QRL code below to sign up using your smart phone!

In the event of an emergency, this system may be used by emergency response personnel to notify specific homes and businesses at risk.

