

Executive Summary

Regional Disaster Plan for Private And Public Organizations

King County is 2,134 square miles of diverse terrain with over 1.7 million people, 39 cities, more than 120 other taxing districts (fire, school, water/sewer, etc.), and over 700 elected officials. The county faces periodic river valley and urban flooding events, earthquakes, severe weather, hazardous materials releases, and transportation accidents, and it has the potential to be affected by volcanic and terrorist activity.

State law requires that cities and counties have emergency programs, but provides only minimal guidance to special purpose districts, businesses, and non-profits. The Federal government had focused on government response with the Federal Response Plan. With the recent release of the National Response Plan in December 2004, the focus shifted to include public, private, tribal and nonprofit organizations. The population density, complex system of governance, and significant risks we face (for both natural and technological disasters) created the need to plan for a coordinated response among public, private, tribal and nonprofit entities in King County.

The Regional Policy Committee of King County, comprised of elected officials from Seattle, Suburban Cities, and King County, passed a motion in October, 1998, that initiated development of a regional disaster plan for King County. This Regional Disaster Plan for Public and Private Organizations in King County provides the framework needed to inter-link the emergency response plans of a wide range of organizations. By conveying “who is going to do what” among all public and private organizations, this plan allows potentially hundreds of entities to coordinate following a severe disruption.

The process for creating this plan involved representatives from local government, specific emergency functions, schools, private sector, hospitals, and other stakeholder groups.

The plan emphasizes collaborative response operations, building on geographical coordination by zones within the County. The goal is to streamline the information necessary to assess county-wide impacts of disaster and increase the speed and efficiency of the relief effort.

Activation of this plan may be for an intense, localized event, or a widespread regional or catastrophic event. It is intended to be activated in conjunction with other state and local emergency plans. Mutual Aid Agreements are still the “first line of defense” for plan participants. Because mutual aid (sharing with “like” agencies) may be unavailable during regional disasters, the plan defines the legal and financial ground rules for resource sharing among plan participants (found in the plan’s Omnibus Financial & Legal Agreement).

The Regional Disaster Plan for Public and Private Organizations in King County is being redesigned using the National Response Plan model; i.e. basic plan followed by a series of “Emergency Support Functions” (ESFs) such as communications and transportation.

The Regional Disaster Planning Task Force has developed the following sections of the Plan:

- Basic Plan
- Omnibus Legal and Financial Agreement
- Basic Plan, Appendix 1: Direction and Coordination
- Appendix 6 - Training and Exercises
- Emergency Support Function 1 - Transportation
- Emergency Support Function 2 - Telecommunications and Warning
- Emergency Support Function 6 - Mass Care, Housing, and Human Services
- Emergency Support Function 7 - Resource Support
- Emergency Support Function 8 – Public Health and Medical Services
- Emergency Support Function 15: External Affairs, Appendix 2 - Public Information
- Terrorism Incident Annex

Changes to the Omnibus Agreement, the Basic Plan, the Plan’s ESFs, Appendices, or Annexes will be developed by the Task Force and then reviewed and approved by the Emergency Management Advisory Committee prior to being sent to participating organizations for their endorsement.

Other sections to be developed include:

- Non-Medical Pandemic Influenza Incident Annex
- ESF 3: Public Works & Engineering
- ESF 5: Emergency Management

These will be submitted to all participating entities for review and approval as they are developed.

Participation in the Regional Disaster Plan is voluntary and its success will be dependent upon widespread endorsement of various cities, tribes, special purpose districts, businesses and nonprofit organizations throughout King County.

For more information, go to <http://www.metrokc.gov/prepare/programs/regionalplan.aspx> or contact the King County Office of Emergency Management at 206-296-3830.