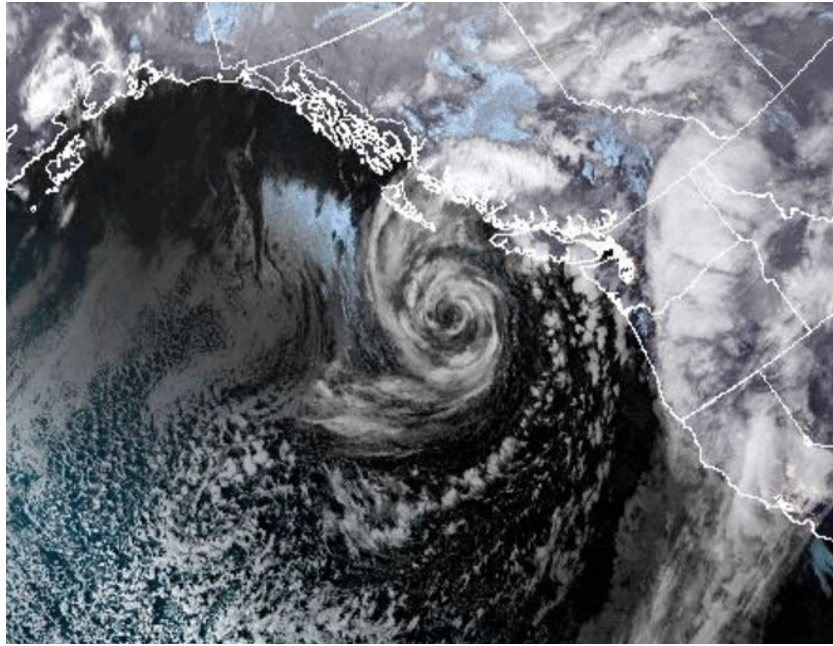




2024 November Winter Storm

Mission #24-4680

After-Action Report/Improvement Plan

08/07/2025

The After-Action Report/Improvement Plan (AAR/IP) aligns response objectives with preparedness doctrine and related frameworks and guidance. Information required for preparedness reporting and trend analysis is included; users are encouraged to add additional sections as needed to support their own organizational needs.

EVENT OVERVIEW

Event Name	24-4680 Winter Storm
Event Dates	November 19, 2024 – March 21, 2025
Event Summary	The Puget Sound region experienced a period of severe weather including heavy rain, strong winds, and snow at higher elevations beginning around 1400 HRS on November 19 and continuing into the early morning of November 20. Weather tracking began on November 11, as the potential for high winds from a storm approaching offshore prompted the National Weather Service (NWS) Seattle Weather Forecast Office (WFO) to issue a Wind Advisory for western King County. Flooding concerns began November 13 as heavy rainfall started to impact the County, which prompted NWS-Seattle to issue a Coastal Flood Advisory for the Pacific Coast and a Flood Advisory for the Puget Sound area. A Winter Storm Watch was issued on November 14 for November 16 through 18, which was upgraded to a Winter Storm Warning on November 15; snow began to fall the afternoon of November 16. Larger impacts were felt starting on November 15, when NWS-Seattle issued a Winter Storm Warning and a Coastal Flood Advisory due to the increasingly severe weather. Impacts continued on November 18, when strong east to southeast winds came in across western Washington as the storm approached, with highest winds over the coastal waters and Strait of Juan de Fuca. Over land, the highest wind gusts were seen along the coast, Strait, and Cascade foothills; snow levels fell to around 2,000 feet. All these effects prompted the NWS to issue wind Warnings and Advisories, along with a Blizzard Warning for the mountains, including in King County. Strong winds caused most of the impacts overnight November 19 into November 20, which downed trees and power lines across the region causing widespread power outages. These power outages peaked at approximately 520,000 customers, representing about 55 percent of customers within King County. The largest number of power outages within the state occurred in King County. The storm activated debris management coordination efforts and caused widespread school closures as well. A second, weaker storm came through the area November 21. This system was not as impactful, as rain and wind continued at much lower rates and recovery from the larger storm began but was still monitored closely. Impacts to King County Government operations included transportation route disruption and power loss to critical infrastructure, such as wastewater facilities and solid waste locations. The Department of Local Services Road Services Division (DLS-Roads) and other agencies deployed teams working 12-hour shifts throughout the response to assess roads and locate downed trees. Utility providers brought in crews from out of the area to assist with service restoration.

Event Name	24-4680 Winter Storm
Event Summary (cont.)	The King County Regional Emergency Operations Center (KCEOC) activated to the Enhanced Monitoring level on November 19, and elevated to the Partial Activation level on November 20; the KCEOC remained at Partial Activation through November 24 to support County agencies and partner jurisdictions in regional situational awareness, warming/charging center coordination, public messaging, and resource management. Representatives from key County agencies staffed Emergency Support Functions (ESF) in the KCEOC. On November 20, the King County Executive signed a Proclamation of Emergency for this event. The KCEOC returned to the Enhanced Monitoring level on November 24 to support recovery efforts related to debris management and damage assessment and remained at that level through March 21, 2025. As operational challenges were identified during the response, immediate corrective actions were taken where feasible to improve functionality and support overall coordination. Some municipalities in King County activated their own emergency operations centers and opened warming/charging centers in response to this event, with the KCEOC supporting public messaging, situational awareness, and resource management. These jurisdictions also worked to collaborate on debris removal activities in coordination with County efforts. King County Emergency Management (KC Emergency Management) continues to support recovery efforts from this storm that caused more than \$17 million in public agency expenses and state-validated property damage to public buildings and infrastructure in King County. In addition to the public infrastructure damage assessment, KC Emergency Management conducted assessments of physical damage to homes and businesses with Washington State Emergency Management (WA EMD), the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), to validate many of the 488 initial damage survey responses that indicated major or destroyed levels of damage to homes and businesses. During that damage assessment process, 297 of 441 homes and businesses assessed had confirmed major or destroyed levels of damage. Objectives for this event were evaluated throughout the response to ensure they were relevant to the needs of the event, and were adjusted accordingly. Objectives noted on this After-Action Report are a summation of all KCEOC objectives for this response. This report also reflects observations from King County departments, partner jurisdictions, and agencies staffing Emergency Support Functions involved in the response, as well as a review of other partner after-action work.
Focus Area(s)	• Response • Recovery

Event Name	24-4680 Winter Storm
Capabilities	• Planning • Operational Coordination • Public Information and Warning • Situational Assessment • Logistics and Supply Chain Management • Mass Care Services • Infrastructure Systems • Health and Social Services
Objectives	• Within two hours of the end of the operational period, produce an Incident Support Plan for the next operational period, if needed; create a staffing plan for the overnight shift • Plan for demobilization to include key elements for returning the EOC to pre-activation ready state and implement as necessary • Coordinate and share information with partner agencies, to include media monitoring and rumor control as conditions warrant, to ensure situational awareness and consistency of messaging • Upon identification of issues, establish priorities, provide strategic direction, coordinate, and resolve policy issues, and facilitate formulation of protective action decisions if necessary • Within 60 minutes of the beginning of the operational period, and periodically as needed, verify that participating partners serving the EOC, directly or indirectly, have established communication links with the EOC and understand the process for sharing situational awareness, resource needs, and other operational priorities • Develop a communication process with a timeline and a common platform to share public information with Public Information Officer (PIO) partners within one hour of activating • Identify, verify, and amplify public safety and recovery messaging through social media platforms and the King County Emergency News Blog within 30 minutes of identification • Within two hours of the beginning of the operational period, gather, organize, and document incident situation and resource information from all sources to produce and disseminate at least one incident Snapshot for the operational period, and others as conditions warrant • Produce one Situation Report during the operational period and distribute before the end of the operational period • Support partner agencies and jurisdictions by responding to resource requests during the operational period; inform partners of the status of resource requests within 30 minutes of request being made; if requested resources are unavailable, brainstorm acceptable alternatives using CSALTT\$

Event Name	24-4680 Winter Storm
Objectives (cont.)	- Identify and coordinate delivery of essential commodities, equipment, and services in support of impacted areas; if resources are deployed, maintain, recover, and demobilize resources within 72 hours from end of operations. Develop a communication process with a timeline and a common platform to share public information with Public Information Officer (PIO) partners within one hour of activating. - Identify, verify, and amplify public safety and recovery messaging through social media platforms and the King County Emergency News Blog within 30 minutes of identification. - Within two hours of the beginning of the operational period, gather, organize, and document incident situation and resource information from all sources to produce and disseminate at least one incident Snapshot for the operational period, and others as conditions warrant. - Within four hours of the start of the operational period, determine the need to continue support for warming centers and/or charging stations with an emphasis on serving individuals with electrically dependent medical equipment. - Within four hours of the start of the operational period, determine the need to continue and, if necessary, provide support for debris management activities. - By the end of the operational period identify requirements and the process for King County agencies and regional partners to assess damages and provide information about costs for debris removal, emergency protective measures, and repairs for submission to WA EMD. - By the end of the operational period determine the need for and, if necessary, identify the process to collect damage information from individuals and businesses for submission to WA EMD for Individual Assistance and SBA recovery support.
Threat or Hazard	Severe Weather
Sponsor	King County Emergency Management
Participating Organizations	This was a broad response involving State, King County Government, cities and special purpose districts, and key private sector partners. See Appendix B for full list.
Point of Contact	Debbie Hunt Assessment and Exercise Program Coordinator King County Emergency Management 3511 Northeast 2nd Street Renton, WA 98056 E: dhunt@kingcounty.gov O: 206-205-4070 C: 425-738-9687

ANALYSIS OF CAPABILITIES

Aligning Incident objectives and capabilities provides a consistent taxonomy for evaluation that transcends individual incidents to support preparedness reporting and trend analysis. Table 1 includes the incident objectives, aligned capabilities, and performance ratings for each capability as observed during the response and determined by survey response from participants the KC Emergency Management Leadership team.

Objective	Capability	Performed without Challenges (P)	Performed with Some Challenges (S)	Performed with Major Challenges (M)	Unable to be Performed (U)
Within two hours of the end of the operational period, produce an Incident Support Plan for the next operational period, if needed; create a staffing plan for the overnight shift	Planning		X		
Plan for demobilization to include key elements for returning the EOC to pre-activation ready state and implement as necessary	Planning		X		
Coordinate and share information with partner agencies, to include media monitoring and rumor control, as conditions warrant to ensure situational awareness and consistency of messaging	Operational Coordination		X		
Upon identification of issues, establish priorities, provide strategic direction, coordinate, and resolve policy issues, and facilitate formulation of protective action decisions if necessary	Operational Coordination	X			

Objective	Capability	Performed without Challenges (P)	Performed with Some Challenges (S)	Performed with Major Challenges (M)	Unable to be Performed (U)
Within 60 minutes of the beginning of the operational period, and periodically as needed, verify that participating partners serving the EOC, directly or indirectly, have established communication links with the EOC and understand the process for sharing situational awareness, resource needs, and other operational priorities	Operational Coordination		X		
Within four hours of the start of the operational period, determine the need to continue and, if necessary, provide support for debris management activities	Operational Coordination		X		
Develop a communication process with a timeline and a common platform to share public information with PIO partners within one hour of activating	Public Information and Warning	X			
Identify, verify, and amplify public safety and recovery messaging through social media platforms and the King County Emergency Blog within 30 minutes of identification	Public Information and Warning		X		
Within two hours of the beginning of the operational period, gather, organize, and document incident situation and resource information from all sources to produce and disseminate at least one incident Snapshot for the operational period, and others as conditions warrant	Situational Assessment		X		

Objective	Capability	Performed without Challenges (P)	Performed with Some Challenges (S)	Performed with Major Challenges (M)	Unable to be Performed (U)
Produce one Situation Report during the operational period and distribute before the end of the operational period	Situational Assessment	X			
Support partner agencies and jurisdictions by responding to resource requests during the operational period; inform partners of the status of resource requests within 30 minutes of request being made; if requested resources are unavailable, brainstorm acceptable alternatives using CSALTT\$	Logistics and Supply Chain Management		X		
Identify and coordinate delivery of essential commodities, equipment, and services in support of impacted areas; if resources are deployed, maintain, recover, and demobilize resources within 72 hours from end of operations	Logistics and Supply Chain Management	X			
Within four hours of the start of the operational period, determine the need to continue support for warming centers and/or charging stations with an emphasis on serving individuals with electrically dependent medical equipment	Mass Care Services		X		
By the end of the operational period identify requirements and the process for King County agencies and regional partners to assess damages and provide information about costs for debris removal, emergency protective measures, and repairs for submission to WA EMD	Infrastructure Systems		X		

Objective	Capability	Performed without Challenges (P)	Performed with Some Challenges (S)	Performed with Major Challenges (M)	Unable to be Performed (U)
By the end of the operational period determine the need for and, if necessary, identify the process to collect damage information from individuals and businesses for submission to WA EMD for Individual Assistance and SBA recovery support	Operational Coordination		X		

Table 1. Summary of Core Capability Performance

Ratings Definitions:

Performed without Challenges (P): The targets and critical tasks associated with the capability were completed in a manner that achieved the objective(s) and did not negatively impact the performance of other activities. Performance of this activity did not contribute to additional health and/or safety risks for the public or for emergency workers, and it was conducted in accordance with applicable plans, policies, procedures, regulations, and laws.

Performed with Some Challenges (S): The targets and critical tasks associated with the capability were completed in a manner that achieved the objective(s) and did not negatively impact the performance of other activities. Performance of this activity did not contribute to additional health and/or safety risks for the public or for emergency workers, and it was conducted in accordance with applicable plans, policies, procedures, regulations, and laws. However, opportunities to enhance effectiveness and/or efficiency were identified.

Performed with Major Challenges (M): The targets and critical tasks associated with the capability were completed in a manner that achieved the objective(s), but some or all of the following were observed: demonstrated performance had a negative impact on the performance of other activities; contributed to additional health and/or safety risks for the public or for emergency workers; and/or was not conducted in accordance with applicable plans, policies, procedures, regulations, and laws.

Unable to be Performed (U): The targets and critical tasks associated with the capability were not performed in a manner that achieved the objective(s).

The following sections provide an overview of the performance related to each exercise objective and associated capability, highlighting strengths and areas for improvement.

ANALYSIS OF GAPS

The strengths and areas for improvement for each capability aligned to this objective are described in this section.

Objective 1: Within two hours of the end of the operational period, produce an Incident Support Plan for the next operational period, if needed; create a staffing plan for the overnight shift

Core Capability: Planning

Strengths

The partial capability level can be attributed to the following strengths:

Strength 1: Staff members new to KCEOC operations were able to utilize just-in-time training and documentation for their position to get up to speed quickly or identify potential roadblocks.

Strength 2: Planning Section staff members had an opportunity to rotate roles within the section, allowing staff members to gain a wider range of experience.

Strength 3: The Planning Section was staffed to meet the needs of the incident, allowing for effective operational rhythm establishment.

Strength 4: The Planning Section was engaged and responsive to requests.

Strength 5: Previously developed documentation templates were engaged throughout the incident, leading to use of a standardized process.

Areas for Improvement

The following areas require improvement to achieve the full capability level:

Area for Improvement 1: EOC training for KC Emergency Management staff should continue, and focus on familiarization with specific roles and KCEOC tools. Provide position-specific EOC training to KC Emergency Management staff. Provide training to KC Emergency Management staff on the tools used in the KCEOC (such as WebEOC). Training should include the technical aspects of the tool and focus on practical application and use.

Reference: ICS Role-Specific Training, WebEOC Training, Section Specific Job Aids

Analysis: Newer staff members being assigned roles they were unfamiliar with led to misunderstandings of how tasks should be performed. This was evident in the Call Taker, Mission Tracker, and Zone Liaison roles.

Area for Improvement 2: ESF Partners lacked training on KCEOC operations. Increase awareness of EOC 101 videos and access to job aids to assist in KCEOC onboarding for ESF partner staff members. Create email template for activated staff outlining these training tools. Create opportunities for partners to work in the KCEOC to improve familiarity. Further

build out the roles and responsibilities of ESF partners (and Branches) in the position specific job aids. Provide training on position-specific job aids.

Reference: KC Emergency Management EOC 101 videos, Position-specific Job Aids

Analysis: Some ESF partner staff were unfamiliar with KCEOC operations, tools, and assigned roles, either due to lack of prior experience or time since their last activation.

Area for Improvement 3: Need to identify which Planning Section role is responsible for dissemination of documentation and ensure there is consistency in identifying from whom information is coming. Planning Section staff members signed emails differently when disseminating information, which may have caused confusion.

Reference: Planning Section Job Aid

Analysis: Throughout the response, information (Situation Reports, Snapshots, Incident Support Plans) was disseminated in a timely manner, but there was inconsistency in which role in the EOC was sending out the information. For example, some communications were signed by the Situation Unit, others by the Planning Section Chief.

Area for Improvement 4: Inconsistent Incident Support Plan (ISP) dissemination process. KC Emergency Management should determine desired ISP delivery audience and document this decision appropriately.

Reference: Planning Section Job Aid

Analysis: There was inconsistency in dissemination of the ISP. When the ISP was disseminated, it was unclear whether this should be sent out via the All-Hazards group in CodeRED or some other group or mechanism.

Area for Improvement 5: Call Center operations were unfamiliar to personnel assigned to this function, and there was a lack of sufficient tools and resources for startup and continued functioning. Just-in-Time (JIT) training for Call Center personnel needs to be developed, and there should be clarification on where the Call Center falls in the EOC structure, updating relevant documentation.

Reference: Call Center Just-in-Time training, Section-specific Job Aid

Analysis: There was confusion about which section the Call Center falls under. In practice during this activation, it fell under the Planning Section.

Objective 2: Plan for demobilization to include key elements for returning the EOC to pre-activation ready state and implement as necessary

Core Capability: Planning

Strengths

The partial capability level can be attributed to the following strengths:

Strength 1: Planning for demobilization was considered from the beginning of the response.

Strength 2: Planning and continuity of response throughout the activation.

Strength 3: Communication about demobilization to EOC staff.

Areas for Improvement

The following areas require improvement to achieve the full capability level:

Area for Improvement 1: Transitioning from Response Operations to Recovery Operations. Continue operational rhythm until all short-term recovery operations are complete in future operations. The ESF 14 Annex needs to be completed to document this.

Reference: ESF 14 Annex to the CEMP

Analysis: Demobilization of the KCEOC could have been held off to assist with recovery coordination and information sharing efforts. KC Emergency Management staff were engaged in significant recovery activities following demobilization of the KCEOC, such as debris clearance efforts and damage assessments. Continuing the operational rhythm until all short-term recovery operations were complete could have improved coordination.

Objective 3: Coordinate and share information with partner agencies, to include media monitoring and rumor control, as conditions warrant to ensure situational awareness and consistency of messaging

Core Capability: Operational Coordination

Strengths

The partial capability level can be attributed to the following strengths:

Strength 1: All information was shared as expected and operations ran according to plans.

Strength 2: Timely and relevant information was sent out.

Strength 3: Support offered, and communication given to partners enhanced the response.

Strength 4: Implementing a Teams channel as a supplemental tool to the Joint Information System (JIS) improved communication with partner PIOs during the EOC activation. Around 50 partners – such as the King County Department of Natural Resources and Parks (DNRP) and Public Health– Seattle & King County (PHSKC) – contributed information for the King County Emergency News Blog.

Strength 5: Joint Information Center (JIC) and Call Center created a Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) list that could be used as a resource for the oncoming shift and to identify possible blog topics.

Strength 6: Partner communication and support was observed throughout the response.

Areas for Improvement

The following areas require improvement to achieve the full capability level:

Area for Improvement 1: Expand opportunity for partners to engage in KC Emergency Management JIC/JIS.

Reference: King County JIC/JIS Plan

Analysis: Would have been a good opportunity to lean forward and practice a more involved regional JIS/JIC, since everyone was responding to the same incident challenges. Some local JICs were activated and felt disconnected from the County JIC.

Area for Improvement 2: Information sharing and situational awareness tracking. Partners (internal and external to the KCEOC) contributing to situational awareness were unclear on the process for submitting information. Clarify to partners and those in the KCEOC where to provide updates (WebEOC, Situation Reports, e-mail). Standardize what goes into the WebEOC Events Board and from what sources, especially regarding Situation Unit information gathering. Complete WebEOC JIT document for training on this topic.

Reference: WebEOC, JIT WebEOC training

Analysis: While a central location for information sharing is established not everyone was familiar with the process to collect and share situational awareness information.

Area for Improvement 3: The Operations Section Job Aid lacked information on the Mission Tracker position. This needs to be developed and added to the Operations Section Job Aid.

Reference: Mission Tracker Section of the Operations Section Job Aid

Analysis: KCEOC Staff assigned to the Mission Tracker role were unclear on the role and responsibilities of the position. The Mission Tracker position in the Operations Section Job Aid was not developed prior to the activation. Clearly defined roles and responsibilities of the Mission Tracker position would have allowed KCEOC staff to carry out the duties of the position.

Area for Improvement 4: Confirm availability of utility partners to brief on regional coordination calls, and stress the importance of participation, especially in situations where utilities are heavily involved. Intentional coordination with utilities, prior to scheduled calls, may be required to ensure participation.

Reference: Incident regional coordination call agenda and invitation

Analysis: Though utility partners were invited to the regional coordination calls conducted by the KCEOC throughout the incident, their participation was inconsistent, making it difficult for other partners to understand the utilities' power restoration efforts. One challenge utility partners faced — addressed by OEM staff in the EOC — was identifying the appropriate point of contact. Initially, EOC staff used day-to-day contact information to reach out, but during an activation, communications to partners such as Puget Sound Energy must be directed to their EOC rather than to individual staff members, whose personal lines are not monitored during response operations.

Objective 4: Upon identification of issues, establish priorities, provide strategic direction, coordinate and resolve policy issues, and facilitate formulation of protective action decisions if necessary

Core Capability: Operational Coordination

Strengths

The full capability level can be attributed to the following strengths:

Strength 1: The KCEOC was very responsive to partner inquiries and requests.

Strength 2: Information requests were made early and expectations for providing that information were reasonable.

Objective 5: Within 60 minutes of the beginning of the operational period, and periodically as needed, verify that participating partners serving the EOC, directly or indirectly, have established communication links with the EOC and understand the process for sharing situational awareness, resource needs, and other operational priorities

Core Capability: Operational Coordination

Strengths

The partial capability level can be attributed to the following strengths:

Strength 1: KCEOC responded to partner requests in a timely manner.

Strength 2: Communication flow and engagement with the activated ESF partners.

Areas for Improvement

The following areas require improvement to achieve the full capability level:

Area for Improvement 1: KC Emergency Management and agencies representing ESFs in the KCEOC should work together to clarify expectations of ESF partners in the KCEOC and the process for agency representative transitions. King County agencies identified as a Lead or Support Agency in the respective ESF Annex should, when possible, send representatives familiar with KCEOC operations, as well as operations within the agency they represent, to the KCEOC when activated and requested. ESF partners should ensure their representatives are attending KCEOC trainings when offered.

Reference: ESF Annexes

Analysis: Due to availability issues, some responding ESF partners had never worked in the KCEOC prior to the November storm. ESF Partners working in the KCEOC expressed difficulty in understanding agency specific roles within the KCEOC. ESF partners were unclear on the

structure of the KCEOC and the use of EOC tools such as WebEOC. ESF Partners noted a lack of clarity on the transition process between agency representatives of the same department serving in the KCEOC.

Area for Improvement 2: KC Emergency Management staff members transitioning from day-to-day work to EOC assignments, which may differ from day-to-day work. KC Emergency Management should make clear to partners the role of the EOC, when activated, and that incident related communications should transition to the EOC and away from KC Emergency Management staff members. KC Emergency Management should work with KC Emergency Management staff members to understand the shift. KC Emergency Management should consider having KC Emergency Management staff members put out of office notices on their email, directing partners to contact the EOC, when activated, for incident related communications. KC Emergency Management should update the EOC Job Aids with references to the above.

Reference: KCEOC Job Aids.

Analysis: Some KC Emergency Management staff members were unclear on the transition to EOC operations and the shift from normal day-to-day responsibilities to EOC positions.

Area for Improvement 3: When the EOC is activated, ESF partner agencies should be aware that they are empowered to operate out of the EOC. KCEOC should fully assess the needs of the EOC and make requests to specific ESF partner agencies to be present in the EOC. KC Emergency Management should reinforce with all partners that this is the King County Regional EOC, not the KC Emergency Management EOC.

Reference: CEMP and ESF Annexes, KC Emergency Management EOC Activation SOG

Analysis: KCEOC made notification to partners of the EOC Activation. Specific ESF Partners were requested. Some ESF Partners thought an invitation was required to be present in the EOC.

Area for Improvement 4: Jurisdictions and County partners need to coordinate on critical route identification to assist in prioritization of road openings in the future.

Reference: CEMP and relevant ESF Annexes

Analysis: Roads crews, utilities, and jurisdictions were not coordinated in efforts to ensure smooth road reopening and power restoration. There needs to be better coordination between jurisdictions and utility partners to identify these critical routes.

Area for Improvement 5: Deconflict meeting schedules with other relevant response partners as able during the incident. Update the Job Aids to consider existing partner meetings prior to scheduling a new meeting.

Reference: CEMP and relevant ESF Annexes

Analysis: Some partners expressed concern with the time of Mass Care sheltering calls relative to other operational meetings and events.

Objective 6: Develop a communication process with a timeline and a common platform to share public information with PIO partners within one hour of activating

Core Capability: Public Information and Warning

Strengths

The partial capability level can be attributed to the following strengths:

Strength 1: JIS Teams channel was effective in engaging partner PIOs and sharing information.

Strength 2: The JIC was staffed effectively with KC Emergency Management staff members which made updating the King County Emergency News Blog efficient.

Areas for Improvement

The following areas require improvement to achieve the full capability level:

Area for Improvement 1: All-staff training on JIC role is needed. High-level understanding on responsibilities may be there, but more specific training on what information the JIC needs should be conducted.

Reference: All-staff JIC training

Analysis: Some of the newer KC Emergency Management staff members taking calls did not have a full understanding of what the JIC does in an activation. Many times, they would assume any communications-related task could be routed to the JIC.

Area for Improvement 2: When time allows, KCEOC should notify regional emergency management partners of the intent to send an ALERT King County message to the public.

Reference: Alert and Warning SOG

Analysis: Partners expressed desire to be notified prior to an ALERT King County message going out, so that they can amplify or appropriately respond.

Objective 7: Identify, verify, and amplify public safety and recovery messaging through social media platforms and the King County Emergency Blog within 30 minutes of identification

Core Capability: Public Information and Warning

Strengths

The full capability level can be attributed to the following strengths:

Strength 1: Sending warning information and updates as weather approached was helpful in preparedness efforts.

Strength 2: Information identification and verification processes were followed, and the Emergency Blog and Facebook were leveraged to share this information and amplify partner messaging (e.g., information on warming/charging centers).

Objective 8: Within two hours of the beginning of the operational period, gather, organize, and document incident situation and resource information from all sources to produce and disseminate at least one incident Snapshot for the operational period, and others as conditions warrant

Core Capability: Situational Assessment

Strengths

The partial capability level can be attributed to the following strengths:

Strength 1: Communication about information needs was stated clearly.

Strength 2: The Snapshots were helpful in maintaining situational awareness.

Strength 3: Information sharing between KCEOC and partners was effective.

Areas for Improvement

The following areas require improvement to achieve the full capability level:

Area for Improvement 1: Planning Section should publish documents (such as ISP and Situation Reports) according to established schedule and note the effective date and time of the information.

Reference: Planning Section Job Aid

Analysis: The Planning Section has a need for consistent information updates, to include staffing needs, situation updates, and critical activity updates. Information was sometimes delayed or changed frequently, requiring last minute changes to documents (i.e., ISP and Situation Reports) delaying their publication.

Area for Improvement 2: Section Chiefs should delegate appropriate duties to section members.

Reference: Job Aids

Analysis: The flow of information between Operations and Planning during this activation was slow due to lack of delegation of work in the Operations Section.

Objective 9: Produce one Situation Report during the operational period and distribute before the end of the operational period

Core Capability: Situational Assessment

Strengths

The full capability level can be attributed to the following strengths:

Strength 1: Situation Reports were sent out in a timely manner throughout the event.

Strength 2: Multiple personnel staffing the Situation Unit allowed for robust gathering and verification of information, and for training opportunities during shift change.

Strength 3: An effective process was created for ensuring all situational information was accounted for in the Situation Reports and Snapshots.

Strength 4: Lifeline impacts “stop light assessment” was an effective visual on status.

Areas for Improvement

The following area requires improvement to enhance the full capability level:

Area for Improvement 1: Information gathering process used by the Situation Unit should be documented for future use.

Reference: Situation Unit Leader Job Aid

Analysis: The Situation Unit developed a good process for capturing information from all pertinent parties as the Situation Reports and Snapshots were developed.

Objective 10: Support partner agencies and jurisdictions by responding to resource requests during the operational period; inform partners of the status of resource requests within 30 minutes of request being made; if requested resources are unavailable, brainstorm acceptable alternatives using CSALTT\$

Core Capability: Logistics and Supply Chain Management

Strengths

The partial capability level can be attributed to the following strengths:

Strength 1: Requests were fulfilled in a timely manner.

Strength 2: Operations Section functioned effectively and had all the information it needed to manage incoming resource requests.

Areas for Improvement

The following areas require improvement to achieve the full capability level:

Area for Improvement 1: Determine if KCSO staffing can be increased or how to more efficiently respond to calls with lower staffing.

Reference: KCSO emergency staffing plan policies and procedures

Analysis: KCSO staffing for patrol operations was about 62 percent during this incident, which impacted the ability to take all calls for service, as well as get to those calls in a timely fashion. Staffing percentage was rectified after the incident by an increase in minimums for patrol initiated by King County Council.

Area for Improvement 2: Update the Resource Management Job Aid to include an assessment of the need to request a liaison from Finance and Business Operations Division Procurement and Payables Section to support the Resource Management Branch, which aligns with the guidance in ESF 7 - Resource Management annex of the CEMP.

Reference: CEMP and ESF 7 – Resource Management

Analysis: Large scale incidents may require the additional expertise of a liaison in the KCEOC from FBOD Procurement and Payables Section for contracting and other related purposes.

Objective 11: Identify and coordinate delivery of essential commodities, equipment, and services in support of impacted areas; if resources are deployed, maintain, recover, and demobilize resources within 72 hours from end of operations

Core Capability: Logistics and Supply Chain Management

The full capability level can be attributed to the following strength:

Strength 1: While many of the requests were cancelled, fulfillment of requests was completed in a timely manner.

Objective 12: Within four hours of the start of the operational period, determine the need to continue support for warming centers and/or charging stations with an emphasis on serving individuals with electrically dependent medical equipment

Core Capability: Mass Care Services

Strengths

The partial capability level can be attributed to the following strengths:

Strength 1: Information was gathered and shared per documented processes.

Strength 2: Sheltering call alerted partners to the widespread need for medical and other device charging stations.

Strength 3: ESF partners were engaged, and shared the information needed about the people who were showing up at hospitals to charge medical devices (and non-medical devices).

Strength 4: ESF Branch Director coordinated and worked with cities and other partners to explain and discuss sheltering needs.

Areas for Improvement

The following area requires improvement to achieve the full capability level:

Area for Improvement 1: Review the Operations Section Job Aid and its tools for resources such as a meeting agenda template that can be used by Branch Directors when conducting taskforce or branch specific meetings; if none exists, create a template.

Reference: Operations Job Aid

Analysis: Human Service Branch did not utilize a standard process for facilitating the Mass Care shelter calls. Partner agencies expressed difficulty in understanding the purpose and scope of the Mass Care shelter calls that were initiated by the Human Services Branch during the activation. Some partners commented that the calls did not share actionable information.

Objective 13: Within four hours of the start of the operational period, determine the need to continue and, if necessary, provide support for debris management activities

Core Capability: Operational Coordination

Strengths

The partial capability level can be attributed to the following strengths:

Strength 1: Acknowledgement of the need for debris management.

Strength 2: KCSO was able to communicate what patrol operations were dispatched, and coordinate with power company and roads for debris management.

Strength 3: King County Debris Management Plan was used for the first time.

Areas for Improvement

The following area requires improvement to achieve the full capability level:

Area for Improvement 1: Clarify roles and responsibilities between King County and cities for mid-scale debris events and document this in the Debris Management Plan.

Reference: Debris Management Plan

Analysis: While DNRP Solid Waste Division (SWD) recently completed the Debris Management Plan, the plan had not been socialized and did not contain procedures or checklists for key personnel involved.

Objective 14: By the end of the operational period identify requirements and the process for King County agencies and regional partners to assess damages and provide information about costs for debris removal, emergency protective measures, and repairs for submission to WA EMD

Core Capability: Infrastructure Systems

Strengths

The partial capability level can be attributed to the following strengths:

Strength 1: Early engagement allowed partners to start the process of gathering information early.

Strength 2: Process is in place to collect damage assessment information from both business and individuals, and can filter and sort these data.

Strength 3: For this event, the damage assessment survey was put out in a timely manner.

Areas for Improvement

The following area requires improvement to achieve the full capability level:

Area for Improvement 1: FMD needs to review and revise the existing processes for assessing buildings and ensure the process is communicated with King County agencies. Processes will vary between properties based on facility lease or property ownership.

Reference: FMD Building Access Standard Operating Procedures

Analysis: FMD leases some buildings, so getting true impact of damage costs for locations may be challenging due to collaboration with the landlord. Identified damages may fall outside of the scope of the custodial responsibilities of FMD and may require collaboration with King County agencies or external parties.

Objective 15: By the end of the operational period determine the need for and, if necessary, identify the process to collect damage

information from individuals and businesses for submission to WA EMD for Individual Assistance and SBA recovery support

Core Capability: Operational Coordination

Strengths

The partial capability level can be attributed to the following strength:

Strength 1: King County took the lead on the damage assessment process which assisted in the efficiency of the process for jurisdictional partners.

Areas for Improvement

The following area requires improvement to achieve the full capability level:

Area for Improvement 1: Need to train additional personnel on the ArcGIS solution that will map damage reporting.

Reference: ArcGIS training

Analysis: KC Emergency Management personnel were not familiar with ArcGIS, creating challenges in mapping damage areas.

LEGAL AND POLICY BARRIERS TO DISASTER RECOVERY SUPPORT

Identification of any legal or policy barriers to providing disaster recovery support to those impacted by the November 19, 2024, storm or any past or future storms, including recommendations for potential changes to King County ordinances, state law, or other law or policy that would address legal barriers to support disaster recovery.

- There is a lack of funding sources for Public and Individual Assistance Programs, at the state and local levels.
- The Washington State Individual Assistance Program is structured in a way that limits accessibility to the people who need it the most
- Federal Individual Assistance declarations are limited due to stringent federal requirements, particularly in less urban areas.
- Federal Public Assistance was requested and denied, despite the county and state exceeding the federal indicators for a Presidential Declaration for Major Disaster.

PROPOSED KING COUNTY ORDINANCE CHANGES

Identification of the changes required to King County ordinances to implement an expedited permit process for home and business repairs stemming from storm damage.

- No code changes are necessary. The Department of Local Services (DLS) Permitting Division has a process in place to prioritize the intake, review and issuance of

permits submitted to repair storm damaged properties. During this event, DLS Permitting followed that process, and it worked as designed.

PROPOSED UPDATES TO KING COUNTY EMERGENCY PLANS

Recommendations for updates to any King County emergency plan, such as the Regional Hazard Mitigation Plan, the Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan, the Regional Coordination Framework, King County Continuity of Operations plans, and the King County Continuity of Government Plan.

- **Debris Management Plan**
 - Clarify roles and responsibilities between King County and cities for mid-scale debris events and document this in the Debris Management Plan.
- **CEMP and related plans**
 - All relevant items in Appendix A: Improvement Plan will be incorporated into the appropriate plans, such as the Response Mission Area Framework, ESF Annexes, Recovery Framework, Job Aids, etc.
- **County Department COOP Plans**
 - None identified; KC Emergency Management will continue to work with and support county agencies in continuity assessment, planning, training, and exercises.

Appendix A: IMPROVEMENT PLAN

This Improvement Plan (IP) is developed specifically for King County Emergency Management because of 24-4680 Winter Storm response on November 19, 2024 – March 21, 2025.

Capability	Issue/Area for Improvement	Corrective Action	Primary Responsible Organization	Organization POC	Start Date	Completion Date
Capability 1: Planning	1. EOC training for staff should continue and focus on familiarization with specific roles and KCEOC tools.	EOC training for KC Emergency Management staff should continue, and focus on familiarization with specific roles and KCEOC tools. Provide position specific EOC training to KC Emergency Management staff. Provide training to KC Emergency Management staff on the tools used in the KCEOC (such as WebEOC). Training should include the technical aspects of the tool but focus on practical application and use.	KC Emergency Management	Regional Integration (Training)	8/7/2025	Ongoing

Capability	Issue/Area for Improvement	Corrective Action	Primary Responsible Organization	Organization POC	Start Date	Completion Date
	2. ESF Partners lacked training on KCEOC Operations.	Increase awareness of EOC 101 videos and access to job aids to assist in KCEOC onboarding for ESF partner staff members. Create email template for activated staff outlining these training tools. Create opportunities for partners to work in the KCEOC to improve familiarity. Further build out the roles and responsibilities of ESF partners (and Branches) in the position specific job aids. Provide training on position-specific job aids.	KC Emergency Management	Risk Reduction & Operations	8/7/2025	12/31/2026
	3. Throughout the response, information (Sit Reps, Snapshots and ISPs) was disseminated in a timely manner, but there was inconsistency in which role in the KCEOC was sending out the information. Some	Need to identify which Planning Section role is responsible for dissemination of documentation and ensure there is consistency in identifying from whom information is coming. Planning Section staff members signed emails differently	KC Emergency Management	Risk Reduction & Operations	8/7/2025	12/31/2026

Capability	Issue/Area for Improvement	Corrective Action	Primary Responsible Organization	Organization POC	Start Date	Completion Date
	communications were signed by the Situation Unit, others by the Planning Section Chief.	when disseminating information, which may have caused confusion.				
	4. There was inconsistency in dissemination of ISP. When the ISP was disseminated, it was unclear whether this should be sent out via the All-Hazards group in CodeRED or some other group or mechanism.	KC Emergency Management should determine desired ISP delivery audience and document decision appropriately.	KC Emergency Management	Risk Reduction & Operations	8/7/2025	Complete
	5. Call Center operations were unfamiliar to personnel assigned to this function, and there was a lack of sufficient tools and resources for startup and continued functioning.	Just-in-Time (JIT) training for Call Center personnel needs to be developed, and there should be clarification on where the Call Center falls in the EOC structure, updating relevant documentation.	KC Emergency Management	Regional Integration (Training) Risk Reduction & Operations	8/7/2025	12/31/2026
	6. Demobilization of the KCEOC could have been held off to assist with recovery coordination and	Continue operational rhythm until all short-term recovery operations are complete in future operations. ESF 14	KC Emergency Management	Planning & Finance (Recovery) Risk Reduction & Operations	8/7/2025	12/31/2026

Capability	Issue/Area for Improvement	Corrective Action	Primary Responsible Organization	Organization POC	Start Date	Completion Date
	information sharing efforts.	Annex needs to be completed to document this.				
Capability 2: Operational Coordination	1. Would have been a good opportunity to lean forward and practice a regional JIS/JIC, since everyone was facing the same incident challenges. Some local JICs were activated and felt disconnected from the County JIC.	Expand opportunity for partners to engage in KC Emergency Management JIC/JIS.	KC Emergency Management	PIO	8/7/2025	12/31/2026
	2. While a central location for information sharing is established not everyone was familiar with the process to collect and share situational awareness information.	Clarify to partners and those in the KCEOC where to provide updates (i.e., WebEOC, Situation Reports, e-mail). Standardize what goes into the WebEOC Local Events board and from what sources, especially regarding Situation Unit information gathering. Complete WebEOC JIT document for training in this topic.	KC Emergency Management	Risk Reduction & Operations	7/1/2026	12/31/2026

Capability	Issue/Area for Improvement	Corrective Action	Primary Responsible Organization	Organization POC	Start Date	Completion Date
	3. Operations Section Job Aid lacked information on the Mission Tracker position.	Update the Operations Section Job Aid to include roles and responsibilities of the Mission Tracker Position.	KC Emergency Management	Risk Reduction & Operations	8/7/2025	12/31/2026
	4. ESF Partners lacked clarity on expectations and the process for agency representative transitions.	KC Emergency Management and agencies representing ESFs in the KCEOC should work together to clarify expectations of ESF partners in the KCEOC and the process for agency representative transitions. King County agencies identified as a Lead or Support Agency in the respective ESF Annex should, when possible, send representatives familiar with KCEOC operations, as well as operations within the agency they represent, to the KCEOC when activated and requested. ESF partners should ensure their representatives are attending KCEOC trainings when offered.	KC Emergency Management	Regional Integration (Training)	8/7/2025	12/31/2026

Capability	Issue/Area for Improvement	Corrective Action	Primary Responsible Organization	Organization POC	Start Date	Completion Date
	5. Some KC Emergency Management staff members were unclear on the transition to EOC operations and the shift from normal day-to-day responsibilities to EOC positions.	KC Emergency Management should make clear to partners the role of the EOC, when activated, and that incident related communications should transition to the EOC and away from KC Emergency Management staff members. KC Emergency Management should work with KC Emergency Management staff members to understand the shift. KC Emergency Management should consider having KC Emergency Management staff members put out of office notices on their email, directing partners to contact the EOC, when activated, for incident related communications. KC Emergency Management should update the EOC Job Aids with references to the above.	KC Emergency Management	Risk Reduction & Operations	8/7/2025	12/31/2026

Capability	Issue/Area for Improvement	Corrective Action	Primary Responsible Organization	Organization POC	Start Date	Completion Date
	6. KCEOC made notification to partners of the EOC Activation. Specific ESF Partners were requested. Some ESF Partners thought an invitation was required to be present in the EOC.	When the EOC is activated, ESF partner agencies should be aware that they are empowered to operate out of the EOC. KCEOC should fully assess the needs of the EOC and make requests to specific ESF partner agencies to be present in the EOC. KC Emergency Management should reinforce with all partners that this is the King County Regional EOC, not the KC Emergency Management EOC.	KC Emergency Management	Risk Reduction & Operations	8/7/2025	12/31/2026
	7. While Solid Waste Division (SWD) recently completed the Debris Management Plan, the plan was not yet very operational as it did not have procedures or checklists for key personnel involved.	Clarify roles and responsibilities between King County and cities for mid-scale debris events and document this in the Debris Management Plan.	DNRP-SWD	Debris Management Plan Team	8/7/2025	12/31/2026
	8. Though utility partners were invited	Confirm availability of utility partners to brief on	KC Emergency Management	Regional Integration (Exercise)	8/7/2025	12/31/2026

Capability	Issue/Area for Improvement	Corrective Action	Primary Responsible Organization	Organization POC	Start Date	Completion Date
	to the regional coordination calls conducted by the KCEOC throughout the incident, their participation was inconsistent, making it difficult for other partners to understand the utilities' power restoration efforts. One challenge utility partners faced — addressed by OEM staff in the EOC — was identifying the appropriate point of contact. Initially, EOC staff used day-to-day contact information to reach out, but during an activation, communications to partners such as Puget Sound Energy must be directed to their EOC, rather than to individual staff members, whose personal lines are not	regional coordination calls, and stress the importance of participation, especially in situations where utilities are heavily involved. Intentional coordination with utilities, prior to scheduled calls, may be required to ensure participation.				

Capability	Issue/Area for Improvement	Corrective Action	Primary Responsible Organization	Organization POC	Start Date	Completion Date
	monitored during response operations.					
	9. Roads crews, utilities and jurisdictions were not coordinated in efforts to ensure smooth road reopening and power restoration. There needs to be better coordination between jurisdictions and utility partners to identify these critical routes.	Jurisdictions and County partners need to coordinate on critical route identification to assist in prioritization of road openings.	KC Emergency Management	Risk Reduction & Operations Regional Integration	8/7/2025	12/31/2026
	10. Some partners expressed concern with the time of Mass Care sheltering calls relative to other operational meetings and events.	Deconflict meeting schedules with other relevant response partners as able during the incident. Update the Job Aids to consider existing partner meetings prior to scheduling a new meeting.	KC Emergency Management	Risk Reduction & Operations	8/7/2025	12/31/2026
	11. KC Emergency Management personnel were not familiar with ArcGIS, creating challenges in mapping damage areas.	Need to train additional personnel on the ArcGIS solution that will map damage reporting.	KC Emergency Management	Regional Integration (Training)	8/7/2025	12/31/2026

Capability	Issue/Area for Improvement	Corrective Action	Primary Responsible Organization	Organization POC	Start Date	Completion Date
Capability 3: Public Information and Warning	1. Some of the newer KC Emergency Management staff taking calls did not have a full understanding of what the JIC does in an activation. Many times, they would assume any communications-related task could be routed to the JIC.	All-staff training on JIC role is needed. High-level understanding on responsibilities may be there, but more specific training on what information the JIC needs should be conducted.	KC Emergency Management	Regional Integration (Training)	8/7/2025	12/31/2026
	2. Partners expressed desire to be notified prior to an ALERT King County message going out, so that they can amplify or appropriately respond.	When time allows, KCEOC should notify regional emergency management partners of the intent to send an ALERT King County message to the public.	KC Emergency Management	PIO	8/7/2025	12/31/2026
Capability 4: Situational Assessment	1. The Planning Section has a need for consistent information updates, to include staffing needs, situation updates, and critical activity updates. Information was sometimes delayed or changed frequently, requiring	Planning Section should publish documents (such as ISP and Situation Reports) according to established schedule and note the effective date and time of the information.	KC Emergency Management	Risk Reduction & Operations	8/7/2025	12/31/2026

Capability	Issue/Area for Improvement	Corrective Action	Primary Responsible Organization	Organization POC	Start Date	Completion Date
	last minute changes to documents (i.e., ISP and Situation Reports) delaying their publication.					
	2. The flow of information between Operations and Planning during this activation was slow due to lack of delegation of work in the Operations Section.	Section Chiefs should delegate appropriate duties to section members.	KC Emergency Management	Risk Reduction & Operations	8/7/2025	12/31/2026
	3. The Situation Unit developed a good process for capturing information from all pertinent parties as the Sit Reps and Snapshots were developed.	Information gathering process used by Situation Unit should be documented in the Planning Section Job Aid for future use.	KC Emergency Management	Risk Reduction & Operations	8/7/2025	12/31/2026
Capability 5: Logistics and Supply Chain Management	1. KCSO staffing for patrol operations was about 62 percent during this incident, which impacted the ability to take all calls for service as well as get to those calls in a timely fashion.	Determine if KCSO staffing can be increased or how to more efficiently respond to calls with lower staffing. Staffing percentage was rectified after the incident by an increase in minimums	KCSO	Patrol Operations	8/7/2025	12/31/2026

Capability	Issue/Area for Improvement	Corrective Action	Primary Responsible Organization	Organization POC	Start Date	Completion Date
		for patrol initiated by King County Council.				
	2. Large scale incidents may require the additional expertise of a liaison in the KCEOC from FBOD Procurement and Payables Section for contracting and other related purposes.	Update the Resource Management Job Aid to include an assessment of the need to request a liaison from Finance and Business Operations Division Procurement and Payables Section to support the Resource Management Branch, which aligns with the guidance in ESF 7 - Resource Management annex of the CEMP.	KC Emergency Management	Finance & Planning	8/7/2025	12/31/2026
Capability 6: Mass Care Services	1. Human Service Branch did not utilize a standard process for facilitating the Mass Care shelter calls. Partner agencies expressed difficulty in understanding the purpose and scope of the Mass Care shelter calls which were initiated by the Human Services Branch during the activation. Some partners	Review the Operations Section Job Aid and its tools for resources such as a meeting agenda template that can be used by Branch Directors when conducting taskforce or branch specific meetings; if none exists, create a template.	KC Emergency Management	Risk Reduction & Operations	8/7/2025	12/31/2026

Capability	Issue/Area for Improvement	Corrective Action	Primary Responsible Organization	Organization POC	Start Date	Completion Date
	commented that the calls did not share actionable information.					
Capability 7: Infrastructure Systems	1. FMD needs to review and revise the existing processes for assessing buildings and ensure the process is communicated with King County agencies. Processes will vary between properties based on facility lease or property ownership	FMD leases some buildings, so getting true impact of damage costs for locations may be challenging due to collaboration with the landlord. Identified damages may fall outside of the scope of the custodial responsibilities of FMD and may require collaboration with King County agencies or external parties.	FMD	FMD Safety & Security Operations	8/7/2025	12/31/2026

APPENDIX B: INCIDENT PARTICIPANTS

Participating Organizations
Federal
National Weather Service
Federal Emergency Management Agency
U.S. Small Business Administration
State
Washington State Emergency Management Division
King County
King County Emergency Management
King County Department of Natural Resources and Parks
King County Road Services Division
King County Facilities Maintenance Division
King County Sheriff's Office
King County Department of Community and Human Services
King County Metro Transit
Public Health - Seattle & King County
King County Library System
City Jurisdictions
City of Auburn
City of Bellevue
City of Bothell
City of Covington
City of Duvall

Participating Organizations
City of Enumclaw
City of Issaquah
City of Kenmore
City of Kirkland
City of Lake Forest Park
City of Maple Valley
City of Mercer Island
City of Redmond
City of Renton
City of Seattle
City of Sammamish
City of Tukwila
Other Government Agencies
Sammamish Plateau Water & Sewer District
Mirrormont Water District
Private Business/NGOs
Puget Sound Energy
Tanner Electric Cooperative
Team Rubicon
Eastside Fire & Rescue
Highline Water District
Valley Communications Center
Northwest Healthcare Response Network