

Responding to Disasters: A Whole Community Approach



Office of Emergency Management

253 Wilson Lane, Soldotna, Alaska 99669 • (907) 262-4910 • (907) 714-2395 Fax

OEM Goals

- Mitigation: Preventing future emergencies or minimizing their effects
- Preparedness: Preparing the community to be ready for emergencies
- Response: Responding safely and effectively to emergencies
- Recovery: Recovering from the effects of an emergency



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Why discuss disaster preparedness and response?

- Being prepared vs. good intentions
- Lessons from the November 30, 2018 earthquake
- Tsunami warnings
- North Fork Fire, Caribou Lake Fire, Swan Lake Fire
- Lessons learned



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Past Disaster Events on the Kenai Peninsula

- 2020
 - COVID-19
 - Seward Flood
- 2019
 - Fires: Swan Lake, North Fork & Caribou Lake
 - Seldovia & Nanwalek drought
- 2018
 - Cook Inlet earthquake
 - Fall Flooding- Seward
- 2015
 - Card Street Wildfire
 - Stetson Creek Wildfire
 - Juneau Lake Wildfire
- 2014
 - Funny River Wildfire
- 2013
 - Kalifornsky Beach Flooding
- 2012
 - Severe Storm, Winds, Flooding, and Landslides
- 2011
 - Severe Storm



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Past Disaster Events on the Kenai Peninsula

- 2009
 - Shanta Creek Fire
 - Mile 17 East End Road Fire
 - Redoubt Volcano Eruptions
- 2007
 - Caribou Hills Fire
 - Kenai River Flooding & Ice Jams
- 2006
 - Seward Flooding
 - Seward Severe Winter Storm & Avalanches
 - Seabulk Pride Tanker Grounding
- 2005
 - Augustine Volcano Eruptions
 - King County Creek Fire
 - Fox Creek Fire
 - Irish Channel Fire
- 2004
 - Tracy Avenue Fire
 - Glacier Creek Fire



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Keeping the right perspective...helping others

- Neighbors
- Employees
- Disabled or need functional assistance help
- Visitors/tourists



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Good Friday Earthquake (1964)

- On March 27, 1964, an earthquake with a magnitude of 9.2, the strongest North American earthquake ever recorded, hit Anchorage, Alaska.
- 131 people were killed—115 in Alaska and 16 in Oregon and California.
- The resulting tsunami, the largest ever to strike North America, destroyed Valdez and was responsible for the majority of deaths.



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Perspective

	1964	Sept. 28, 2016	Nov. 30, 2018
Magnitude	9.2	7.1	7.1
Depth (miles)	15.5	76	29

A 9.2 earthquake releases 1,412 times
more energy than a 7.1 earthquake
(USGS calculator)



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Refinements after disasters

- Unforeseen issues during emergencies can change policy or current practices.
- New ideas can suddenly become a “Best practice” to be repeated and shared among the disaster response community.
- History should not repeat itself if the disaster response was not adequate to meet the needs of the community.
- New technologies to be implemented.



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Challenges in your company or organization?

- What are the biggest challenges your organization faces in regards to preparedness?
- No-notice event...what is your real time to respond, or recover?
- What assumptions are included in your planning?
- Do you have a plan for emergencies?
- Surviving an emergency or disaster



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Continuity of Operations Planning (COOP)

- Alternative site
- Backup of servers and key systems
- Employees
- Communications
- Transporting resources, people, and equipment
- Partnerships on the other side of the bridge?



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Whole Community Planning

- In order to respond appropriately to all hazards on the Kenai Peninsula, we must transform the way we think about, plan for, and respond to local incidents.



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What is “Whole Community”?

- Whole Community is a means by which residents, emergency management practitioners, organizational and community leaders, and government officials can collectively understand and assess the needs of their respective communities and determine the best ways to organize and strengthen their assets, capacities, and interests.
- Responding together as a community.



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Whole Community Principles

- Understanding and meeting the actual needs of the whole community.
- Engage and empower all parts of the community.
- Strengthen what works well in communities on a daily basis.



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Community organizations and businesses

- Well grounded in the community.
- Able to incorporate the values, priorities, and spirit of the community in disaster relief efforts.
- Can identify specific individuals, families, or groups who have access or functional needs difficulties that may be amplified during a disaster.
- Serve different segments of the community.
- Result is communities become more self-sufficient and resilient.



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Resources

- What capabilities does your company have that could benefit your community during an emergency?
- Transportation
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- Knowledge
- Other resources



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Whole Community means...Bringing together:

- Private Sector
 - Chambers of commerce
 - Businesses
 - Professional groups
 - Other for-profit organizations



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Whole Community means...Bringing together:

- Nonprofit Sector
 - Voluntary organizations
 - Faith-based organizations
 - Community-based organizations
 - Foundations
 - Professional associations
 - Academic institutions



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Whole Community means...Bringing together:

- Government
 - Local
 - State
 - Tribal
 - Territories and Commonwealths
 - Federal



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Whole Community means...Bringing together:

- Public Sector
 - Individuals with specific skills (i.e., chefs)
 - Unions
 - Spontaneous volunteers
 - Community members



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Whole Community

- Meeting the needs:
 - Opening a venue that can provide information, assistance, food, and a place to stay if needed.
 - Provide information and resources (Local, State, or Federal assistance).
- Volunteer management- building capacity
- Donation management- monetary or in-kind



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