



Evacuation – Public Alerting

1.0 Introduction

The intent of these guidelines is to provide consistent public message content and directions in the event that an incident creates the need for notification and/or evacuation of members of the public from a hazardous areas. These guidelines provide incident commanders with tools to effectively implement evacuation procedures throughout Kitsap County.

1.1 Shelter In Place

Shelter-in-Place is a directive for members of the public to take refuge due to a hazardous threat or event. It can be issued audibly and/or visually through personal or technical means such as public address systems, television and social media. A Shelter-In-Place directive may be given for a type of emergency where the building is not evacuated but the occupants are instructed to remain inside or to go to a specific location within the facility. Such emergencies may include but are not limited to chemical or weather-related emergencies.

A. Shelter-In-Place:

- a. Bring your family and house pets inside;
- b. Lock doors and close all windows, air vents and fireplace dampers;
- c. Turn off bathroom and exterior fans, air conditioning and forced air heating systems;
- d. Go into an interior room with few windows, if possible;
- e. Stay OFF the phone and do not call 911 unless it is a life-threatening emergency;
- f. Listen to radio, television and social media for further information; and
- g. Do not leave shelter until you receive and ALL CLEAR message from local authorities.



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B. Enhanced Shelter-In-Place: If told to do so, in addition to sheltering-in-place, taking simple measures to reduce contaminated air.

- a. Seal all windows, doors and air vents with 2-4 mil. thick plastic sheeting and duct tape. Consider measuring and cutting the sheeting in advance to save time.
- b. Cut the plastic sheeting several inches wider than the openings and label each sheet.
- c. Duct tape plastic at corners first and then tape down all edges.
- d. Be prepared to improvise and use what you have on hand to seal gaps so that you create a barrier between yourself and any contamination. Wet towels to seal doors and window sills for instance.

Local authorities may not immediately be able to provide information on what is happening and what you should do. However, one should watch TV, listen to the radio or check the internet often for official news and instructions as they become available.

1.2 Evacuation

Under federal law, no one has the legal authority to force citizens to evacuate their homes against their will unless they are obstructing emergency operations. Officials can, however, encourage an evacuation of public facilities or places of business. In addition, law enforcement officers may arrest, or take into protective custody, persons who have violated an established perimeter or who interfere with responders.

Evacuation directives:

Evacuation levels are identified by three categories depending on severity of the threat to life safety. They are Levels 1, 2 and 3, with Level 3 being the highest threat. These levels and actions to take, may be communicated to the public audibly and/or visually



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through personal or technical means such as public address systems, television, social media and other media outlets.

A. **LEVEL 1 – “GET READY”** ADVISEMENT OF POTENTIAL NEED TO EVACUATE

Persons are warned that current or projected threats from hazards associated with the current incident are severe. This is the time for preparation and precautionary movement of person with special needs, mobile property and (under certain circumstances) pets and livestock. These levels and actions to take, may be communicated to the public audibly and/or visually through personal or technical means such as public address systems, television, social media and other media outlets.

B. **LEVEL 2 - “GET SET”** YOU MUST PREPARE TO LEAVE AT A MOMENTS NOTICE

Conditions indicate a good probability that the hazards associated with the current incident will severely limit our ability to provide emergency service protection. Dangerous conditions exist that may threaten your residence or business.

Fire and Law Enforcement personnel are working in this area to provide specific information about when to leave and the route(s) to be taken. These levels and actions to take, may be communicated to citizens audibly and/or visually through personal or technical means such as public address systems, television, social media and other media. Social Media, and area Radio and TV stations have been asked to broadcast periodic updates.

C. **LEVEL 3 – “GO!”** YOU ARE ADVISED TO EVACUATE IMMEDIATELY. Current conditions present specific and immediate threat(s) to the life and safety of persons within this area.

Fire and Law Enforcement personnel are working in this area to provide specific information on the route(s) to use for evacuation. **THIS IS AN IMMEDIATE LIFE-THREATENING EMERGENCY, YOU MUST ACT NOW TO EVACUATE!**

If you choose to ignore this directive, you must understand that emergency services may not be available to help you as all personnel will be evacuating for their own life safety. No one will be allowed to enter the area



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to provide assistance. Road blocks and 24 hour patrols may be established in the area. Members of the public will not be allowed to return until conditions are safe or by special permission through law enforcement.

Social Media, and area Radio and TV stations have been asked to broadcast periodic updates. Continue to monitor television, radio, social media and other media outlets.

1.3 Evaluation Criteria

If the known hazard is expected to threaten areas where members of the public may be affected, the Incident Commander will request activation of the appropriate notification and evacuation level based on recommendations and information gathered from agency decision makers and technical specialists. This activation request will be provided to the law enforcement authority having jurisdiction

1.4 Activation

A. Steps for implementing the notification and evacuation process is as follows:

Need for possible evacuation is identified	Incident Command
Request Law Enforcement/Establish Unified Command (UC)	Incident Command
Geographical areas identified and mapped	Incident Command
Decision made between shelter-in-place and/or evacuation	Unified Command
If evacuation is chosen a level will be determined and implemented (Level 1,2,3)	Unified Command
Notify DEM of shelter in place or evacuation request and provide mapped perimeter file	Unified Command
Decision taken whether to open EOC	Unified Command and/or Emergency Management
Coordination with Law Enforcement, DEM and Public Information Officer regarding press releases, information dissemination, evacuation routes and	Unified Command and/or Emergency Operations Center



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shelter locations	
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- B. Decision “Trigger” points and re-evaluation intervals will be established in the Incident Action Plan to decide when Evacuation Levels will be upgraded, downgraded or canceled.

1.5 Evacuation Area Re-Entry

- A. The Incident Commander will provide recommendations to the law enforcement agency having jurisdiction on lowering or canceling evacuation levels (and issuing an All CLEAR). Considerations for safe re-entry of evacuated areas are:

- Public and firefighter safety
- Incident stabilization
- Emergency related traffic/activities
- Hazard mitigation
- Utilities secured
- Minimizing economic impact/consequences
- Community Integrity

- B. The public should be advised that Evacuation Levels may change at any time during the incident. Re-entry should not impact incident operations and those requesting re-entry must coordinate with law enforcement to ensure proper identification and proof of ownership.

KEY CONSIDERATIONS

Law Enforcement agencies may assist in any evacuations as needed.

Public and Emergency personnel safety should be evaluated prior to initiating evacuations.

Coordination with Law Enforcement agencies and Emergency Management are critical to the success of evacuation.

Communication is critical and must be disseminated properly and effectively to ensure



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success.

When developing public messages use the descriptions of Level 1, 2, 3 as partial content.