

APPENDIX TWO

WARNING and EMERGENCY PUBLIC INFORMATION

PURPOSE

This appendix provides the structure for immediate dissemination of warnings and alerts to key officials and the general public.

SCOPE

The warning and emergency public information system is to provide for coordination of information released to the news media and the general public in time of crisis in addition to warnings. These systems are multi-jurisdictional multi-agency process and effect all responding organizations.

ORGANIZATION

- A. **WARNING OFFICER:** The Sheriff/Director of Kittitas County Emergency Management (or designee) will act as warning officer for Kittitas county. The Sheriff/Director may designate alternate warning officers, as appropriate.
- B. **INFORMATION OFFICER:** Each jurisdiction / agency will define how their information officer is appointed and the scope of their duties. The joint information center concept will be recognized in the event of a multi-jurisdictional event.

RESPONSIBILITIES

- A. **WARNING OFFICER:** The warning officer is responsible for the rapid dissemination of warnings to key officials and the general public. Twenty-four hour capabilities may be accomplished by the designation of alternate warning officers. The warning officer will use the following facilities:
 - 1. **NAWAS (National Warning System)** - The primary NAWAS facility is located in the Kittitas County EOC. The alternate NAWAS facility is located in the Kittitas County 9-1-1 center.
 - 2. **EMERGENCY ALERTING SYSTEM (EAS):** The EAS can be activated by designated local officials to broadcast official information to the public via local broadcast outlets. Each jurisdiction will designate those officials who are authorized to active EAS.
 - 3. **NOAA WEATHER RADIO:** The National Oceanographic Atmospheric Administration weather alert radio system can be activated by the Warning officer and other locally designated officials.
 - 4. **PUBLIC SAFETY RADIO NETWORKS:** Local public safety communication centers and their paging capabilities will be utilized to

disseminate information throughout the public safety community, as appropriate.

- B. INFORMATION OFFICER: The information officer will be the point of contact for the news media. Responsibilities of the information officer are:
1. Establish a joint information center (JIC) when appropriate.
 2. Prepare information for release to the media and the public.
 3. Obtain approval for all releases from the incident commander.
 4. Coordinate all news media activities associated with the incident.
 5. Coordinate the public information and rumor control process.
 6. Monitor news media coverage of the incident.
 7. Work with warning officer, as appropriate.

WARNING EMERGENCY RESPONSIBILITIES:

- A. Washington State Emergency Management:
1. Is responsible for ensuring the receipt and dissemination of significant national and state warning information throughout the state.
 2. Is responsible for coordinating national, state, National Atmospheric and Oceanic Administration or other warnings via the National Alert Warning System (NAWAS) and the Law Enforcement Teletype system (NLETS).
- B. Kittitas County Department of Emergency Management:
1. Prepares and maintains local warning plans, Suggested Operating Procedures and call lists.
 2. Coordinates the enhancement and helps maintain county-wide communications capabilities which can be utilized for warning purposes.
 3. Is the primary NAWAS answering point.
 4. Coordinates with area's primary EAS station (KXLE radio) and ensures that the EAS plan is reviewed and updated, when appropriate.
 5. Coordinates Emergency Public Information.
- C. The Kittitas County Sheriff's Office communications center: (KITTCOM)
1. Is the 24 hour point of contact for warning information for Kittitas County.

2. Is the NAWAS secondary answering point.
3. Is responsible for disseminating warning information, as appropriate, to:
 - a. Kittitas County Emergency Management
 - b. Cle Elum Police Department
 - c. Ellensburg Control (Fire Communications)
 - d. Washington State Patrol
 - e. Ellensburg Police Department
 - f. Central Washington University Police Department
 - g. Appropriate administrative and field personnel
 - h. Kittitas Police Department
- D. KITTCOM (Fire Communications) is responsible for disseminating warning information, as appropriate, to:
 1. Kittitas County Fire Districts 1,2, 3, 4,5, 6,7, 8, 9
 2. Ellensburg Fire Department
 3. Cle Elum Fire Department
 4. Pangborn Airport Fire Services, Douglas County
 5. Ambulance Services (Cle Elum EMS, Ellensburg Fire)
- E. The Central Washington University Police Department Communications Center is responsible for disseminating warning information received from Kittitas County or any other source to their administrative and field personnel, as appropriate.
- F. All Public Safety Agency Communication Centers are responsible for:
 1. Testing warning systems and devices (daily / weekly depending on the system).
 2. Development and implementation of procedures.
 3. Training of all personnel.
 4. Maintaining warning point records.
 5. Recording communications systems status and advising of deficiencies.

WARNING POLICIES AND OBJECTIVES

- A. State-wide warning fan out will be received by the Ellensburg warning point at the Kittitas County 9-1-1 Communication Center over the National Warning system or

the law Enforcement Teletype Access System. Upon receipt of warning or test information the Kittitas County Sheriff's Office will fan out all warning information via the Law Enforcement Teletype System (ACCESS), telephone, and voice radio, as provided in their emergency Suggested Operating Procedures. (NOTE: The Kittitas County Emergency Management Office also has NAWAS.)

- B. In the event of any national, state, or local incident requiring warning dissemination, the Kittitas County Sheriff's Office or the initial agency contacted, will alert the Kittitas County Emergency Management duty officer. The Kittitas County Emergency Management duty officer will activate the warning procedures, as necessary.
- C. Warning to the general public will be accomplished by all means available including the Emergency Alerting System, National Weather Service Alert Weather radio system, helicopter, door to door, media, sirens, voice radio, or any other workable method.

EMERGENCY PUBLIC INFORMATION RESPONSIBILITIES

- A. In the occurrence of a major local, state or national disaster situation affecting Kittitas County, the Kittitas County Emergency Management Specialist or a designated Public information Officer (Usually the Sheriff or designee, as appropriate) will be responsible for the coordination, preparation and dissemination of all emergency information. Individual responding organizations or agencies, such as the Red Cross, Salvation Army, etc., will speak for their own operations, as they choose. It is not the intent of the PIO to be a spokesperson for all agencies. The PIO's primary purpose is to coordinate information to ensure accurate information is being provide to the public and to monitor rumor control.
- B. In localized emergency which involve a multiple agency response to a specific incident, a Public Information Officer may be assigned as part of the Incident Command Team conducting operations at the scene, normally working from a field command post
- C. In the event the Emergency Operations Center is activated, a PIO (either local personnel or support from a request to the state) will be assigned to the EOC to coordinate information from PIO's in the field and with incident command posts. The EOC will coordinate information between operations by acting as the information collection point and then disseminating information back out to those operations.
- D. Other emergency public information responsibilities include planning and coordination of procedures with the local media to ensure effective dissemination of emergency information and/or subsequent public instructions.
- E. The PIO will establish an information center (joint, if appropriate) at a location that affords access by the media. The establishment of any type of information center will be incident specific and cannot be pre-determined.

- F. For each incident, the command agency will determine the media's official point of contact. The location of this point of contact shall be relayed to all appropriate communications centers and the EOC, if opened. During a large scale incident, the legislative authority of the affected political sub-division shall have the opportunity to determine the location of the media's point of contact. They may also allow that authority to remain with the incident commander.
- G. All Agencies:
1. In a major emergency or disaster situation, the release of all emergency information to the public shall be coordinated as best it can be. The Kittitas County EOC can act as coordination point, as appropriate.
 2. Information concerning localized incidents will be released through the designated Public Information Officer at the scene or by the Incident Commander.
- H. Media: In a major disaster situation, designated members of the media may be assigned public information responsibilities at the Kittitas County Emergency Operation Center or will function from a field location to provide real time emergency public information or instructions.
- I. In an actual emergency, the Kittitas County Emergency Management Specialists or the designated Public Information Officer is responsible for:
1. Distribution of information regarding emergency preparedness activities, by all available means. (This should be a coordinated effort with local Red Cross.)
 2. Coordination and dissemination of emergency information and authorized news release to the public.
 3. Establishing liaison with neighboring counties and their Public Information Officers in regional disasters, to avoid information overlap.
 4. Coordinating incident information between different commands and / or incident locations, when appropriate and disseminating information out to the appropriate commands and incidents.

EMERGENCY PUBLIC INFORMATION POLICIES AND OBJECTIVES

- A. Prior to or during a local emergency, Kittitas County Emergency Management will coordinate the dissemination of emergency information and subsequent instructions to the public, via the local media. Priorities for release to the public include:

1. Presidential Declaration and announcements by federal officials.
 2. Kittitas County and City Governments instruction or announcements.
 3. Gubernatorial Proclamations and announcements or other state official announcements.
 4. Kittitas County general information on details and progress.
 5. Kittitas County information concerns individuals and families or the effects of the emergency on the population and resources.
- B. All public information released during an emergency situation will be coordinated through the Sheriff/Director of the Kittitas County Emergency Management, or a designated Public Information Officer to minimize confusion
- C. The Emergency Alerting System and all available local communications and warning systems will also be utilized for disseminating emergency public information.

JOINT INFORMATION CENTER

In large events, or when more than one jurisdiction is impacted by the emergency, a Joint Information Center (JIC) may be established to coordinate the release of information. The designated information officers will equally and cooperatively staff and operate the JIC.

COOPERATION WITH THE JIC

All agencies and organizations involved in emergency response and recovery will contribute their designated information personnel to the JIC in order to ensure accurate information regarding their individual operation is released to the media. All response and recovery agencies are required to cooperate with the JIC to the fullest extent possible regarding the release of any information involving the incident. Each participating agency will assist in providing current information to the PIO/JIC.

DISSEMINATION OF WARNINGS AND INFORMATION TO SPECIAL POPULATIONS

Due to the technical non-support from state and federal organizations, there are limited provisions for special dissemination of warnings and information to persons who are hearing or visual impaired. Locally, Emergency Management addresses what these special needs individuals should do to prepare and emergencies, including receiving warnings.

DISASTER VICTIM INFORMATION SYSTEM

The disaster victim information systems provide for central coordination of casualty lists and other victim information. The disaster victim information system is coordinated by the American Red Cross.

RUMOR CONTROL

The information officer(s) will activate, staff and supervise the rumor control system, if necessary. They will work in coordination with the JIC and other public information systems.

WARNING FAN OUT RESPONSIBILITIES

Warnings can be received in a number of ways. Via NAWAS, Law Enforcement teletype, field units or the public. Notification will be made by the best way possible (phone, radio or teletype). The following are the fan out responsibilities of local agencies:

1. Emergency Management will notify:
 - a. Kittitas County Sheriff's Office
 - b. Kittitas County Board of Commissioners
 - c. Kittitas County public schools
 - d. The media, via EAS / EBS
 - e. Kittitas County R.A.C.E.S. coordinator, who will:
 1. Activate the R.A.C.E.S. plan and notify personnel

2. The Kittitas County Sheriff's Office will notify:
 - a. Ellensburg Fire Department
 - b. Cle Elum Police, Ellensburg Police, Roslyn Police, Central Washington Police Departments and Kittitas Police Dept.
 - c. Kittitas County P.U.D., Puget Sound Energy
 - d. Washington State Patrol (District 6 - Ellensburg)
 - e. Kittitas County Public Works
 - f. Any others identified in their warning SOP's

3. Ellensburg Fire Department will notify:
 - a. Ellensburg Police Department
 - b. Ellensburg Street Department
 - c. All Kittitas County fire districts, except fire dist. 5 & 7

- d. Kittitas County fire districts 2 and 4
 - e. Any others identified in their warning SOP's
4. Roslyn Police Department will notify:
 - a. Roslyn City fire Department
 - b. Any others identified in their warning SOP's
 5. Ellensburg Police Department will notify:
 - a. Central Washington Campus Police department
 - b. Any others identified in their warning SOP's

WARNING SYSTEMS

A. Emergency Alerting System / Emergency Broadcast System

1. The primary EBS / EAS station for the Kittitas County area is KXLE - AM. Local activation of the system can be done by:
 - a. Emergency Management Sheriff/Director or Emergency Management Specialists.
 - b. Kittitas County Sheriff, or designee.
 - c. Police Chief's of Ellensburg, Cle Elum, Roslyn or Kittitas Police.
 - d. Fire Chief's
 - e. Legislative authorities of:
 1. Kittitas County
 2. Cities of Kittitas County
2. To activate EBS / EAS:
 - a. Know what you want to tell the public:
 1. Who are you
 2. What is the problem / emergency
 3. What do you want the public to do
 4. How do you want the public to accomplish this goal. In other words, if you want them to evacuate, tell them how much time do they have, where should they go and where they should not go.
 - b. Contact KXLE and advise them you want to activate EBS/ EAS.
 - c. Tell KXLE if you want it to go live, taped or live and to have it taped so it can be replayed.

B. NOAA Weather Alert Radio

1. To activate the NOAA Weather Alert Radio:
 - a. Coordinate with Emergency Management
 - b. Contact National Weather Service
 - c. Advise Spokane NWS of who you are and what you want said to the public.