

Winter Storm 2008 – Corrective Action Plan

Task	Responsible	Target Completion Date	Status
Coordinate alternate opening/closure times among all tenants of each public health site.	PH Director's Office	08/01/09	
Identify revenue to cover response costs.	PH Director's Office	08/01/09	
Identify how to communicate with patients who come to us voluntarily -- often vulnerable populations -- and avoid putting them in danger, while expecting employees to report to work.	PH Director's Office	08/01/09	
Clarify department decision making procedures & executive expectations around inclement weather and site closures (e.g. minimum level of service expected at open sites, differentiating between sites experiencing different weather conditions, acknowledging that staff travel across the county to get to work, etc.)	PH Director's Office	08/01/09	
Set clear safety criteria for patients & clients for site opening. Consider making parking lot plowing, sidewalk shoveling/deicing, mandatory preconditions for a site to open.	PH Director's Office	08/01/09	
Consider whether all sites should be assumed to be open, and allow managers to determine the available scope of service based on who shows up.	PH Director's Office	08/01/09	
Coordinate more closely with local response agencies and EOCs to prioritize critical resources needs of healthcare facilities and patients in need of life saving treatment.	Preparedness Section Director	08/01/09	
Advocate for coordination of business continuity operations at a county level.	Preparedness Section Director	08/01/09	
Activate the PHSKC Business Continuity team early in a severe weather response.	Preparedness Section Director	08/01/09	
Address communication/coordination issues that arose between Area Command, NW Kidney Center, and Seattle EOC – ham radio operators.	Preparedness Section Director	08/01/09	
Activate business continuity operations team early in a response, and task team with identifying critical continuity staff, so these individuals are not deployed to emergency operations.	Preparedness Section Director	08/01/09	
Formalize plans for billeting essential downtown PHSKC staff in the Chinook office building.	Preparedness Section Director	08/01/09	
Communicate expectations and emergency roles/responsibilities more clearly to partners.	Preparedness Section, Partnership Manager	08/01/09	
Establish triggers to begin active monitoring of healthcare facility status vs passively waiting for information.	Preparedness Section, Partnership Manager	08/01/09	

Task	Responsible	Target Completion Date	Status
Ensure calls to CBOs and businesses are more targeted.	Preparedness Section, Partnership Manager	08/01/09	
Educate partners on area command expectations for facility status reports: timing (e.g. 9 a.m. and 4 p.m.) & desired information.	Preparedness Section, Partnership Manager	08/01/09	
Refine distribution lists for situation status reports, incident action plans and other types of information.	Preparedness Section, Partnership Manager	08/01/09	
Request that 2-1-1 better communicate hours of operation and type of support they can provide community members.	Preparedness Section, Partnership Manager	08/01/09	
Secure an exemption from the State of Washington allowing for an official DEA number be assigned to the Alternate Care Facility regardless of location; thus allowing unrestricted pharmaceutical delivery and resupply.	Preparedness Section, Field Operations Manager	08/01/09	
Identify and establish agreements and facility plans with additional sites.	Preparedness Section, Field Operations Manager	08/01/09	
Redesign deployment processes to make a greater effort to staff emergency operations with interested volunteers among PHSKC staff, before mandating their participation.	Preparedness Section, Finance Manager	08/01/09	
Recruit Reserve Corps volunteers from all over the county, and make a greater effort to deploy them to sites close to their home, especially in adverse weather.	Preparedness Section, Finance Manager	08/01/09	
Communicate Seattle EOC changes in operational hours / cancellation of liaison requests to liaisons prior to beginning of shift.	Preparedness Section, Finance Manager	08/01/09	
Shift procurement and setup of food for ACC staff to logistics section.	Preparedness Section, Finance Manager	08/01/09	
Schedule the HR manager in the ACC for the first 8 hours of every activation to identify and resolve HR issues.	Preparedness Section, Finance Manager	08/01/09	
Clarify staff parking issues (eligibility for reimbursement, access to Chinook garage, availability of Goat Hill after hours passes).	Preparedness Section, Finance Manager	08/01/09	
Transfer the duty officer line to the ACC operator earlier in the response	Preparedness Section, Plans Chief	08/01/09	
Forward situation status reports from the county and city to partners, as appropriate.	Preparedness Section, Plans Chief	08/01/09	

Task	Responsible	Target Completion Date	Status
Identify potential long term incident impacts (e.g. solid waste issue) and proactively request assessments from partners.	Preparedness Section, Plans Chief	08/01/09	
Improve means of getting up to date shelter information.	Preparedness Section, Plans Chief	08/01/09	
Ensure that tasks such as point of sale outreach, coordination of 4x4 transport resources, and business continuity management are assigned to appropriate ICS sections.	Preparedness Section, Plans Chief	08/01/09	
Consistently anticipate and gather information for mayor's press conferences.	Preparedness Section, Plans Chief	08/01/09	
Keep better lists of businesses and organizations contacted in outreach efforts; take care when splitting lists or decentralizing efforts (we double contacted many gas stations).	Risk Communications	08/01/09	
Improve communication with public health staff, addressing. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Differing site opening/closure times; ➤ confusing terminology (public health center); ➤ time lags between employee hotline & website updates; ➤ reversal of decisions previously communicated to staff; ➤ Updating employee hotline & website earlier in morning, before staff depart for commute. 	Risk Communications	08/01/09	
Provide division managers with templates for employee messages, and allow each division to tailor and distribute, as is appropriate.	Risk Communications	08/01/09	
Send a thank you message to staff acknowledging those who reported to work during the severe weather, and those who participated in the response.	Risk Communications	08/01/09	
Improve seamlessness of logistics section shift handoffs.	CPRES Manager	08/01/09	
Improve IT system support for logistics operations.	CPRES Manager	08/01/09	
Formalize plans to transport critical staff and field staff/volunteers to and from job site.	CPRES Manager	08/01/09	
Create a Public Health Reserve Corps volunteer team tasked with transporting patients to medical facilities in 4x4 vehicles.	Preparedness Section, Reserve Corps Manager	08/01/09	
Develop and train a planned PHSKC health educator team to augment future emergency risk communication efforts.	Preparedness Section, Senior HR Analyst	08/01/09	
Reduce frequency or consider alternate mechanisms for reporting business continuity status.	Business Continuity Manager	08/01/09	

Task	Responsible	Target Completion Date	Status
Develop division contingency plans for Priority 1 functions, addressing issues like employee transportation and vendor resupply.	Business Continuity Manager	08/01/09	
Change staffing and deployment procedures for King County & Seattle liaisons in order to deploy liaisons to sites closer to their homes, particularly in adverse weather.	Preparedness Section, EOC Liaison Coordinator	08/01/09	
Allow area managers more lead time to mobilize staff to work in order to offer the full scope of services.	CHS Operations Manager	08/01/09	
Formalize safe transportation plans for EH field inspection staff.	Environmental Health	08/01/09	
Increase communication and coordination with EH sites regarding closure information (both CHS co-located sites and non-CHS sites)	Environmental Health	08/01/09	
Formalize contingency plans for psychiatric services.	Jail Health Services	08/01/09	
Instruct essential staff not to leave before replacement shows up.	Jail Health Services	08/01/09	

December 2008 Winter Weather Activation Summary of Events

12/12 (Friday):

- KC Medic 1 begins action plan development for winter weather expected during the upcoming weekend
- Preparedness Section develops and delivers a Business Continuity status report form to all Divisions for use Monday morning to document impacts to services, functions and programs caused by staff absenteeism due to weather.

12/16 (Tuesday):

- Preparedness Section begins electronic information management within WATrac

12/18 (Thursday):

- 9:00 AM - Public Health activates the Health and Medical Area Command (EOC) to coordinate information and resource support for PH and healthcare partners. Initial objectives are:
 - Identify impacts to the continuity of department functions
 - Provide logistical support to Divisions to maintain critical functions; implement contingency plans
 - Provide accurate, timely information to staff and the public regarding the status of Department services
 - Maintain contact with emergency management and health care partners
- 12:40 PM – PH requests to Executive’s office that:
 - Eastgate and Blackriver close at 1PM;
 - All other PH sites close at 3 PM
 - JHS, Medic 1, MEO, Communications and Emergency Operations to remain operational through normal hours / emergency hours
 - Delay opening all PH sites on Friday to 10AM
- 12:52 PM – Exec’s Office approves all items requested above
- 3:28 PM - staff are notified by email of site closures and delayed openings Friday morning; staff are told to check the website and hotline by 9 PM Thursday night for updated information on site openings Friday morning.
- King County and Seattle EOCs activate
- Hospitals begin working with local car dealers and internal staff to identify available 4x4 vehicles for transporting key staff
- PH Logistics dispatches a limited number of 4x4 vehicles to assist critical PH staff with transport
- Area Command works with local EOCs to ensure snow plows maintain access to hospital facilities

- Transit service is extremely limited for the afternoon commute (50% capacity)
- PH participates in multiple media interviews stressing preparedness for winter weather and avoiding health threats

12/19 (Friday)

- 6 AM conference call (decision change):
 - All PH sites outside of downtown Seattle are scheduled to open at 10 AM
 - All sites within downtown Seattle will open at 8 AM.
 - Many staff in downtown Seattle facilities arrive at work based on earlier information (10 AM).
- Area Command Center remains activated throughout the day
- Area Commander identifies 2 Areas of Operations:
 - Area 1: East KC - forecasted to experience high winds, power outages, little snowfall, potential for medical evacuation and sheltering
 - Area 2: West KC – forecasted to receive light winds, heavy snow, impacts to roads and transit, staff absenteeism expected to be extreme.
- Incident objectives for Friday include:
 - Assess status of PHSKC critical functions
 - Provide logistical support for maintaining PHSKC critical functions
 - Provide timely information to PHSKC staff, healthcare partners and the community regarding public health threats and response activities
 - Assess impacts on healthcare system functions
 - Identify and support logistical and resource needs of healthcare partners
- Risk communications team activates its emergency response plan. Key objectives:
 - Surge capacity for communications team
 - Provide timely safety messaging regarding cold weather
 - Develop local messaging and media releases for distribution to public, community partners and staff regarding service delays and closures
 - Media outreach
 - Joint Information Center operations
- Reached out over 100 CBO partners through CCN regarding winter storm safety/press release; made follow-up phone calls to 45 CBOs asking them to post CO poisoning prevention flyer and share information with staff and clients.
- Logistics and Field Operations identifies 4 sites to serve as medical needs shelters if needed; staffing plan is developed primarily utilizing MRC volunteers
- NW Kidney Center identifies challenges with transporting patients for treatment, plowing parking lots

- All PH sites outside downtown Seattle close at 3 PM; all PH sites in downtown Seattle close at 5 PM
- Weather forecast for weekend: snow, high winds, hard freeze Saturday night.

12/20 (Saturday)

- Area Command Center remains activated from 9 AM until 8:30 PM
- Medical needs shelter plans are finalized and ready for activation
- CO poisoning becomes reportable and physicians asked to report confirmed and suspected CO poisoning.
- CO outreach and education efforts are maximized - extensive collaboration with mainstream and ethnic media and private partners:
 - contacted 171 gas stations; sent flyers to those that has email or fax capability.
 - All of the following agreed to post flyers in all of their stores: Safeway, QFC, Costco, Albertsons, Walgreens, ACE, True Value, McClendons, Lowes, Home Depot (total of 31 hardware stores)
 - Sent out media release on CO and weather hazards; followed up with all major media; conducted interviews
 - Translated key messages into Spanish, Russian, and Vietnamese and send to local ethnic media; following up with calls to each station
 - Contacted 20+ neighborhood blogs with ready-to-post information -- several have already posted
 - Connected with WA State Pharmacy Association, they agreed to blast fax fliers to all pharmacies in KC.
- CO flyers are forwarded to all city emergency managers to widely distribute throughout their communities
- PH 4x4 vehicles are dispatched by Logistics to support MEO in transporting key staff to and from work
- Six PH staff stay overnight in Chinook (bring own sleeping gear) due to unsafe driving conditions Saturday night

12/21 (Sunday)

- NW Kidney Center requests assistance transporting patients for treatment (ongoing mission for several days)
- 10 PH Centers are scheduled to open Monday at 10 AM, all other PH sites scheduled to open regular time Monday morning.
- Transit service expected to be 50% or less throughout the week.
- PH 4x4 vehicles are dispatched by Logistics to support MEO, EMS, Communications in transporting key staff to and from work
- Area Command Center deactivates at 3 PM – continues to work ongoing missions associated with NW Kidney Center and business continuity.

12/22 (Monday)

- 6:30 AM conference call: Decision is made to close all PH sites for the entire day; staff hotline and web site are updated with new information
- 8:30 AM: Decision is revised to open 10 PH centers at 10 AM, all other PH sites are directed to open regular time.
- 4:10 PM: Decision is made to close all PH sites at 4 PM Monday and re-open all sites Tuesday at 10 AM
- Outreach and phone calls to business, restaurants and, churches regarding CO poisoning prevention continues (continues through 12/24)

12/23 (Tuesday)

- 2:27 PM – decision is made to close all PH sites at 3 PM, and reopen all sites Wednesday at 10 AM
- Transit services remains at or below 50% capacity

12/24 (Wednesday)

- 6:30 AM conference call – decision is made to close all PH sites for the entire day. Medic 1, JHS, MEO, Emergency Operations and Communications remain operational and report for work. All other Department staff are notified to stay home.
- 8:30 AM – decision is changed to open all PH sites at 10 AM with limited staffing. Contingency plans for maintaining continuity of key Department functions are implemented across Divisions
- KC Executive proclaims an emergency to assist with Roads and Transit response
- 2:00 PM – decision is made to keep PH functions operational until 5 PM Wednesday

12/25 (Thursday) Christmas

- PH Duty Officer, Preparedness Director, Logistics and MEO coordinate to provide JHS access to 4x4 vehicle for transport of critical JHS staff to work

12/26 (Friday)

- Transit service remains limited and highly unpredictable; all PH operations open and close regular hours

Health Alert: Carbon Monoxide Poisoning Reporting Required, 20 DEC 2008

Action requested:

- Hospitals and healthcare providers should report confirmed and suspected unintentional CO poisoning immediately to Public Health from DEC 20 through DEC 27, 2008.
- Report CO poisoning cases immediately using on-line reporting 24 hours a day at <https://s-bz3ci-91686.sgizmo.com>
- If you do not have internet access, you can report by calling the Communicable Disease Section at 206-296-4774 (after hours you can page the epidemiologist on call by pressing "1").

A severe winter storm warning is in effect for DEC 20-21, with the potential for power outages and cases of carbon monoxide (CO) poisoning from improper use of fuel burning devices. Common symptoms of CO poisoning include headache, dizziness, weakness, nausea, vomiting, dyspnea, chest pain, and confusion. Severe cases may have loss of consciousness, metabolic acidosis and death.

Laboratory criteria for confirmed diagnosis: A case in which carboxyhemoglobin concentration exists >5% in venous or arterial blood in nonsmokers and >10% in smokers. The typical range of carboxyhemoglobin concentrations in smokers is 6%-10%.

Criteria for suspected case: A physician diagnosis of CO poisoning based on signs, symptoms and history of exposure to a source of CO or link to a confirmed case.

Advice regarding diagnosis and management of CO intoxication is available 24/7 through WA Poison Center at 1-800-222-1222. Consultation regarding management of severe CO intoxication is available through the Virginia Mason Hyperbaric Medicine program, call 206-583-6450 to reach the hyperbaric medicine physician on-call.

When reporting CO poisoning, please have the following information:

- Patient name, date of birth (age if DOB unavailable), street address and ZIP code of residence
- Street address and ZIP code of location of poisoning if different from residence
- Initial carboxyhemoglobin level or indicate if testing was not done
- Source of CO (cooking stove, generator, etc)
- Type of fuel used (wood, charcoal, kerosene, oil, etc.)
- Disposition (e.g., admitted, ICU admission, died, discharged)
- Primary language spoken if not English
- Ethnicity and cultural group. Cultural group and ethnicity are important so that we can target appropriate prevention messages to affected groups in the community.
- Facility and name of person reporting

Shelter information is available from the King County Emergency Coordination Center at 296-3830.

Information on CO poisoning including pictograms and fact sheets in multiple languages is available at: <http://www.kingcounty.gov/healthservices/health/preparedness/disaster/carbon-monoxide.aspx>

To subscribe to receive e-mail and/or fax health alerts from Public Health, contact Maybelle Tamura at 206-296-4774 or Maybelle.tamura@kingcounty.gov

Winter Storm Talking Points to Community-Based Organizations serving Vulnerable Populations

Why we're calling

There is an approaching winter storm with high winds and temperatures in the twenties. We are concerned that the winds could lead to power outages which could place your community members at greater risks, in particular carbon monoxide poisoning. We are reaching out to you b/c you serve some of our county's most vulnerable residents. We would like your assistance in getting these important winter safety messages.

Winter Storm Preparedness

- *Dress warmly and eat right*
- *Watch out for hypothermia*
- *Additional precautions*

Gather supplies today, that you may need for the weekend, including blankets to keep warm.

Be careful not to overexert yourself when shoveling snow or other physical activity

Take frequent breaks and drink plenty of water.

Check on elderly friends, family, and neighbors to make sure they are safe.

Watch your footing on surfaces that may be icy and slick, and wear shoes that provide traction.

- Direct them to the Public Health website (www.kingcounty.gov/health) and our **Stay safe when temperatures drop** media release (right-side of the website).
- Ask them to **stress the importance of personal preparedness to staff and their families**

Carbon Monoxide Prevention

- Remind them that if they lose power to:
- ONLY use a generator outside and far from open windows
- NEVER use a generator indoors or in carports or garages
- NEVER cook inside on a charcoal or gas grill
- Direct them to our **Carbon Monoxide information flyers** located at www.kingcounty.gov/health/vpat (third bullet down, **Prevent against carbon monoxide poisoning and keep food safe during power outages**)
<http://www.kingcounty.gov/healthservices/health/preparedness/disaster.aspx>

Additional Information

- Information will be forthcoming on locations of warming shelters and a Public Health media release on the approaching storm.
- Public Health has activated its Health and Medical Area Command Center so electronic information will be sent from the HealthEOC email address and specific questions about Public Health response to the storm should be sent to 206.296.4606 (please do not disseminate this phone number)

Questions to pose to our CBO partners

- If necessary, can we reach this individual over the weekend to assist in disseminating health and safety information?
 - o If so, what's the best way to reach them (if we have their info in After-hours workbook, confirm contact info with them)?
- Where they suggest we post health and safety information in event of a power outage?

Public Health Site Opening / Closure Times, December 18 - 24, 2008

Date →	Dec 18 time open	Dec 18 time close	Dec 19 time open	Dec 19 time close	Dec 22 time open	Dec 22 time close	Dec 23 time open	Dec 23 time close	Dec 24 time open	Dec 24 time close
SITE										
Department wide	Normal opening times									
Eastgate		1 p.m.								
Black River		1 p.m.								
All other		3 p.m.								
Auburn, Federal Way, Renton, Eastgate, Columbia, White Center, North, North Shore, Kent and their satellites			10 a.m.	3 p.m.						
Downtown core includes Chinook, Harborview, Yesler, King County Admin. Bldg, and Downtown clinic			10 a.m.	5 p.m.						
Auburn, Federal Way, Renton, Eastgate, Columbia, White Center, North, North Shore, Kent, PLUS downtown clinic and their satellites					10 a.m.	4 p.m.				
Downtown core includes Chinook, Harborview, Yesler, King County Admin. Bldg					8:00 a.m.	4:00 PM				
All Sites							10 a.m.	3 p.m.	Closed	Closed