

SANTA BARBARA COUNTY BOARD AGENDA LETTER



Clerk of the Board of Supervisors
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Agenda Number:
Prepared on: 11/24/2005
Department Name: County Fire/OES
Department No.: 031
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Placement: Departmental
Estimate Time: 30 min
Continued Item: NO
If Yes, date from:

TO: Board of Supervisors
FROM: Michael F. Brown, County Executive Officer
STAFF CONTACT: Bruce Carter
Emergency Services Manager, 681-5526
SUBJECT: Disaster Planning and Preparedness

Recommendation:

That the Board of Supervisors consider a report regarding overall disaster preparedness and provide direction as appropriate.

Alignment with Board Strategic Plan:

The recommendation is primarily aligned with Goal No. 1. An Efficient Government Able to Anticipate and Respond Effectively to the Needs of the Community.

Executive Summary and Discussion:

At the September 13, 2005, Board of Supervisors hearing, the Board directed staff to return with a report on the status and recommendations for the County's overall disaster preparedness and recommendations for improvement.

Overall Disaster Preparedness

Emergency Plans

Santa Barbara County has a number of emergency plans and procedures in place to ensure an effective response to emergencies that may impact the County. County response personnel also participate in a number of emergency exercises designed to evaluate and refine existing plans and procedures. The goal is to provide effective management tools for a coordinated emergency response to meet the needs of the citizens of Santa Barbara County. In light of the lessons learned from Hurricanes Katrina and Rita and as part of the ongoing review of existing emergency plans, OES will be coordinating improvements and updates to existing plans and working with other agencies to develop plans and annexes to the County's existing emergency plan. Plans recently approved or undergoing revision and development include:

- Multi-Hazard Functional Plan, MHFP (County's Emergency Plan) – undergoing revision and update
- County Oil Spill Contingency Plan – undergoing revision and update
- Landslide Contingency Plan (annex to MHFP – in development)
- Tsunami Plan (annex to MHFP – in development)
- Mission Critical System Contingency Plan – undergoing revision and update
- Pandemic Response Plan (*Public Health Dept.*) – recently completed & to be annexed to MHFP
- Animal Disaster Plan (*Public Health – Animal Services*) – in development & to be annexed to MHFP
- Oil & Gas Industry Mutual Aid Plan – undergoing revision and update

Drills and Exercises

Drills and exercises ensure the county responders' preparedness. Santa Barbara County personnel have participated in a number of exercises and emergencies that have impacted Santa Barbara County. Incident specific Incident Action Plans are prepared for each of these scenarios. A list of recent and future events is provided below:

Recent responses and exercises

- County Emergency Operations Center (EOC) activation during the 2005 winter storms. County personnel, in coordination with the cities, state agencies, utilities and volunteer organizations responded to provide emergency management command and control.
- Representatives from OES, Public Health, and the Agriculture Commissioners office participated in two FEMA evaluated nuclear power preparedness exercises with Santa Maria, San Luis Obispo County and PG&E. The exercises evaluate a coordinated federal, state and local government response to simulated emergencies in the unlikely event of a release from the Diablo Canyon Nuclear Power Plant. The 3-day November 2004 dress rehearsal and subsequent 3-day December 2004 exercise evaluated a response to a plume release from the power plant impacting foodstuffs and livestock. The April 2005 dress rehearsal and May 2005 exercise evaluated the County's ability to provide care and shelter for evacuees from San Luis Obispo County. Over 8 days were dedicated to the County's response to a multitude of issues concerning a nuclear power plant event.
- In April 2005, County OES facilitated a voluntary evacuation exercise for the high-fire hazard area of Mission Canyon in the Santa Barbara foothills. Participants included local and state response agencies and volunteer organizations witnessed by state and local political representatives. Several hundred residents as well as numerous organizations and agencies participated in the exercise.
- Community Awareness and Emergency Response (CAER) Industrial Mutual Aid Plan was exercised in August 2005 with participants from private industry, OES and the Santa Barbara County Fire Department. The Plan provides an emergency management framework and a process for requesting mutual aid among industry participants. The Plan is a collaborative effort among industry and public response agencies.
- Public Health Department conducted "Operation Gaucho" with UCSB's Student Health Services on July 29, 2005 to exercise the mobilization of mass clinics and provide antibiotics or vaccines to the public. Over 300 student, faculty volunteers and health care workers participated.
- County Fire, Sheriff's and Public Health Departments participated in a joint anthrax response exercise with the US Postal Service and other state and federal agencies in August. A field drill was

conducted with the USPS and the County Fire Department's Hazardous Materials Team on September 7, 2005.

- County Emergency Medical Services Agency coordinated a Multi-Agency Mass-Casualty Hospital Exercise – November 17, 2005, South coast emergency responders and all county hospitals participated with a field component at Earl Warren Showgrounds and transportation of several dozen patient-actors to local hospitals.
- County Hazardous Materials and Bomb Team participated in a regional “Hot Drill” on November 8 through November 10, 2005.
- There are eleven executed and/or planned energy facility exercises at eleven major permitted facilities (permit condition requirements)

Future Exercises

- Participation in the City of Santa Barbara's Airport tabletop exercise on December 10, 2005
- Emergency Public Communications exercise on December 15, 2005 with Emergency Public Information Communicators (EPIC) group made up of all local agency PIO's, local media and other interested organizations such as Wildland Resident's Assoc., Amateur Radio Emergency Services (ARES) American Red Cross, and community members
- Multi-jurisdictional Tsunami Workshop and facilitated exercise scheduled for January 19-20, 2006
- Full-scale Emergency Operations Center Exercise planned for Spring 2006
- Nuclear Power (Diablo Canyon) tabletop exercise planned for late Spring 2006
- Energy facility exercises are ongoing for major permitted facilities (permit condition requirements)

Disaster Preparedness and Training

In addition to emergency plans and exercises, overall disaster training is a key component to the County's disaster preparedness. A list of future training is provided below:

- Response Information Management System and Emergency Operation Center training is scheduled for December 13, 2005 at the County Interim EOC facility
- Storm Summit/Disaster Preparedness Training is scheduled for December 20, 2005 at the County Interim EOC facility
- Emergency Operations Center (EOC) Section Training for EOC staff is to be completed by June 2006
 - EOC Sections – *Management, Operations, Planning/Intelligence, Logistics, Finance/Administration*
- Standardized Emergency Management System (SEMS) training is incorporated into the County Employee Orientation training through the Employees' University
- National Incident Management System (NIMS) training will be required of all first responders and incorporated into existing training programs.
- The County Executive Office annually sponsors ten employees with EOC responsibilities to attend a 5-day Earthquake and Emergency Management course at the California Specialized Training Institute.

Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) Program

A local Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) course was recently completed on November 12, 2005. CERT training is designed to prepare individuals to help themselves, their families, and neighbors in the event of catastrophic disaster. Because emergency services personnel will not be able to help everyone immediately, CERT graduates can make a difference by using the skills learned in this program to save lives and protect property. The CERT program covers basic skills that are important to know when emergency services are not available. With this training and practice and by working as a team, CERT participants will be able to do the greatest good for the greatest number after a disaster, while protecting themselves from becoming victims. CERT training has been offered after-hours so that citizens can attend the training after work.

The Federal CERT program has been continuously under-funded and recent grant cycles have been decreasing rapidly. Last year, there was so little federal CERT funding allocated to the State that it simply kept the CERT grant funds without issuing sub-grants to local agencies. Overtime funding for CERT trainers was also cut due to budget constraints. It is recommended that the CERT program continue and that funding opportunities be pursued by staff.

Public Education Efforts

Since September, the Office of Emergency Services and other county departments have been actively promoting public education efforts through attendance at various forums and hearings. Below is a list of venues with estimated number of attendees.

Public Forums

- *Santa Barbara Human Resources Association* – September 21, 2005 (estimated attendance of 100-125 HR representatives representing dozens of local businesses ranging in size from small companies to major corporations)
- *Montecito Town Hall Meeting* – October 17, 2005 (estimated attendance of 200 community members)
- *Public Works Department Disaster Preparedness Workshop* (estimated attendance of 40-50)
- *Congresswoman Lois Capps Briefing* – October 11, 2005 (estimated attendance of 40-50 local agency representatives including the American Red Cross and special districts)
- *CAER Community Safety Fair* - October 15, 2005 (several thousand attendees)
- *Tri-County City Managers meeting* – October 19, 2005 (estimated attendance of 15 city managers)
- *Goleta City Council briefing*– November 7, 2005 (televised on GATV Channel 19)
- *State Assembly Hearing on Emergency Preparedness and Response* – November 10, 2005 (estimated attendance of 75 representatives from various agencies and the community, televised on GATV Channel 20)
- *Monte Vista Elementary PTA Workshop* – November 14, 2005
- *Santa Barbara School District Disaster Panel Meeting* – November 16, 2005 (estimated attendance of 40 local school district officials)

Future Public Venues

- *County School District Superintendents* – December 5, 2005 (audience of County school district superintendents)

Public Education Materials

The majority of disaster preparedness public education materials come from State OES and the American Red Cross. The State's "Bear Responsibility" campaign brochures are available and have been distributed at various locations throughout the County. At the September 13, 2005, Board hearing the Board requested that staff research the cost of similar materials to be marketed by the County of Santa Barbara with the County logo. Design and production of such public education materials and a marketing campaign would cost approximately \$20,000.

Emergency Operations Center

The County currently does not have a permanent, dedicated Emergency Operations Center (EOC) that meets essential facilities standards. The Interim EOC is located at the Employees' University that is transformed into an EOC during disaster response. The single most important improvement to enhance coordination and communications in a disaster response is the construction of a permanent EOC with state of the art equipment and communications and constructed to meet essential facilities standards. Rather than have to convert the Employees' University into an EOC by plugging in phone lines, computers and converting the existing workspace for EOC activities, a permanent and dedicated EOC will facilitate an integrated and timely response by the County of Santa Barbara. Such an EOC would greatly enhance the countywide command post for official policy decisions and agency coordination during disasters. The EOC would be constructed to include a Joint Information Center to further increase emergency communications and coordination of multiple agencies during an emergency. The EOC project is currently in the County's Capital Improvement Plan at an estimated cost of \$4.3 Million (*See Attached*). Further, the Fire Department is requesting that the Legislative Committee consider recommending that the County advocate for Federal funds for a Regional EOC.

The generator at the existing EOC does not have an automated switch for the generator. Instead, EOC personnel must rely on department staff to activate the switch manually in the event of a power outage. The estimated cost of the automated generator switch is \$30,000 for the necessary equipment and installation.

Staff has recently brought the EOC issue to the attention of our State and Federal representatives on several occasions. The need to provide funding for a dedicated EOC was recently brought to the attention of local legislators at the October 11, 2005, Congresswoman Lois Capps briefing and the November 10, 2005, State Assembly hearing before State Assembly members Pedro Nava, Rebecca Cohn, and Hector De La Torre.

Alternative EOC in North County

OES staff is currently coordinating with the Public Works Department (PWD) for the creation of an alternate EOC at the PWD new north county facility on Foster Road. This site would serve as an alternate EOC in the event that the current Interim EOC co-located at the Employees' University is damaged. The large conference room at the Public Works facility is suitable for EOC operations with some modifications and additional equipment and an emergency generator.

EOC Emergency Food & Water Supplies

The EOC currently does not have a cache of emergency food and water supplies and relies upon local vendors and the jail cafeteria as a back-up contingency. The recent hurricanes have demonstrated the need for emergency food and water supplies for EOC personnel. The number of emergency meals required for 40

EOC personnel working in two 12-hour shifts for 5 days at 2 meals per shift would be 800 meals. Depending on the type and brand, emergency food and water supplies have a shelf life of 6 months to 2 years or more. Therefore, the emergency supplies would have to be rotated on a scheduled basis. The Fire Department will purchase appropriate supplies and stock the EOC.

EOC upgrade recommendations/actions

- Staff recommends continuing to advocate both at the State and Federal level for funding to construct a dedicated Emergency Operations Center. Staff will continue to pursue funding alternatives for installation of an automated generator switch (\$30,000) at the existing Interim EOC.
- Staff will continue to pursue funding alternatives (\$75,000) for modifications to create an alternate EOC in the north county at the Foster Road Public Works facility.
- The Fire Chief will purchase up to \$5,000 worth of emergency food and water supplies to be stored at the Interim EOC.

Potential Flooding Threats

Santa Maria River

The Board has sent letters to our Congressional and State Representatives regarding funding for the Levee along the Santa Maria River. Following that, staff has met with Congresswoman Capps' office, and Senator Boxer's office. In addition, staff met with Colonel Dornstauder, Commander of the Los Angeles District of the Corps of Engineer's. Staff discussed with Colonel Dornstauder the importance of the project and the current deficiency. Finally, staff met with members of the Santa Maria City Council. who expressed concern over the Levee and are supportive of bringing resolution. Staff will continue to coordinate these efforts.

Santa Ynez River

The Board approved a letter to State and Federal Representatives requesting legislative relief from the environmental processes associated with Flood Control work in river beds and debris basins. Along with that effort and as directed by the Board, staff has received a proposal from a consultant to do the necessary environmental documents regarding increasing the channel width to that of the current channel scoured out this past winter. This proposal is on the Board's December 6, 2005 agenda.

Actions to Continuously Improve Future Disaster Operations

1. OES staff will develop a funding strategy for the construction of a permanent, dedicated County Emergency Operations Center.
- 3.2. OES staff will pursue funding alternatives for the installation of an automated switch for the emergency generator at the existing Emergency Operations Center.
3. OES staff will pursue funding alternatives for the development of an alternative Emergency Operations Center at the North County Public Works facility.
4. The Fire Department will purchase up to \$5,000 worth of emergency food and water supplies for the existing Emergency Operations Center.

5. OES staff will pursue funding alternatives for development of disaster related public education campaign and materials.
6. OES staff will pursue funding alternatives to maintain the CERT program.
7. OES staff will continue to provide disaster training and exercise drills as well as relevant public education.

Mandates and Service Levels:

None.

cc: John Scherrei, Fire Chief
Jim Anderson, Sheriff
Phillip Demery, Director of Public Works
Tom Fayram, Deputy Director of Flood Control/Water Resources