

VOLUNTEER EMERGENCY WORKER MEETING - NOTES

JANUARY 22, 2020

UPDATES

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Rain: Kenmore and Lake Forest Park fared pretty well--LFP due to the installation of new culverts that carry more water. This is an example of mitigation grant funding. Some flooding issues in Kenmore were due to Swamp Creek which backed up across 73rd Ave. N.E. Some of the homes were purchased and moved; other homes were raised and didn't suffer from flooding. There were landslide issues in front of the new home on 522 that caused no major damage, but was inconvenient. McAleer Creek had substantial flow.

Snow: Predictions of accumulations hit north of here, less here but enough to close schools but didn't cause a major inconvenience.

Power Lines: Neither Kenmore nor Lake Forest Park lost power because of the snow and rain. Carl witnessed a residential power line in Edmonds that was laid down and burned/dug into concrete sidewalk and affected nearby condominiums. **When power lines are down STAY BACK 30 FEET.**

Coronavirus (Wuhan China)

This is a great reminder with a viral situation to *be mindful*—if you have a cough and are sneezing **STAY HOME**. General recommendations to prevent spreading--wash hands, cough into your elbow, wipe down doorknobs and counters. Call Snohomish County Health District if you have questions about Coronavirus.

I-800-525-0127 Then press #

More information is available at <https://www.snohd.org/484/Novel-Coronavirus-2019>

- Countries affected: China, Japan, Thailand, Taiwan, Korea, USA
- 17 deaths in China. It is being tracked like SARS; however, this has been identified earlier on.
- Spread by coughing and sneezing which looks like flu virus.
- 2003 SARS virus infected 8,000 in 37 countries with 800 deaths.

JOB FAIR Wednesday 1/29/2020 at Northshore Fire Station. CERT will have a table at the fair. Interested in helping? Contact Carl

CERT Classes Registration begin February 1

Short Weekend Intensive: Class begins on Friday evening March 20th at 6:30-9:30 PM followed by Saturday the 21st and Sunday the 22nd 9 AM – 4PM and a final exercise simulation on the following Saturday the 28th 9 AM -12 NOON.

May 30 – 5th Saturday Exercise

Severe Weather Facility was recently activated to accommodate homeless (or people whose power goes out or when there is a heat wave) in former Shoreline Police Department building at 180th and Midvale.

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TRAINING - Mass Fatality Incidents and the Role of the Medical Examiner

Nikki Yarid, MD Associate Medical Examiner, King County Medical Examiner's Office

Her training has been online, has limited practical experience with the Oso landslide.

In a mass casualty incident, how to you handle dead bodies? **Leave the body** where it is for those people who have specific duties to deal with fatalities.

Forensic pathology

Forensic – related to the field of law

Pathology – the study of disease

Forensic pathology is the meeting ground between the law/criminal justice and medicine. For practical purposes, forensic pathologists try to figure out how someone died, especially in cases of unnatural death.

There is a difference between a medical examiner and a coroner.

Medical examiner: A physician with medical degree who specializes in forensic pathology and whose job it is to determine cause and manner of death

Coroner: An elected official whose job it is to determine cause and manner of death. There is no training for this in Washington state.

What do Medical examiners do?

Autopsies to determine the cause and manner of death in a lab/suite. Police can observe from a windowed room or in the lab if they use personal protective equipment, e.g., 3 layers of gloves.

Normal Fatality Management

- Investigation and recovery
- Custody of clothing and property
- Identification
- Notification of family
- Examination of body
- Death certificate and other reports
- Release of body, clothing, personal property

Medicolegal death investigation involves going to the scene, taking photos and samples, making notes and writing. The body is then taken to the office for an external examination, e.g., disease, physical, blood for toxicity studies, after which they write a death certificate.

Mass Fatality Management is multiplied by the number of fatalities. Coordinated Response:

Site /incident	Transportation
Family management	Morgue operations
Investigation /recovery	Death certification
Decedent manifest	Contaminated remains
AM & PM data	Temporary storage
Health and safety	Final disposition
Communication	Responder care

Incident Command System—they would be in Command

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Structure & Control Zones = Cold (Medical Examiner), Warm () and Hot () Zone

Scene Operations

- Safety and security, establish perimeter
- Debris removal
- Evidence preservation and collection
- Recovery of intact remains, fragmented remains, clothing and property
- Maintain protocols, establish methodology, and insure documentation
- Family Assistance Center
- Provides information and support to families
- Supports the collection of antemortem information
- Notification of families of positive identification of victims
- Meeting rooms, childcare area, eating areas, etc.

When would a FAC activate? When there are non-legislated incidents producing fatalities that overwhelm local resources

- | | |
|-------------------|-----------------------|
| Number of victims | Condition of remains |
| Remains storage | Victim identification |
| Responders | Geography |
| Community impact | Interest to others |

For example, the crash of Flight 93 resulted in plane bits and bodies pieces spread over a large area. Morgue operation where information about fragmented remains is in a database with info such as location, tattoos, medical/dental hardware or devices, jewelry, skin with identifying characteristics, etc.

Examples of mass fatalities

- Freeway propane tanker explosion
- Mass shooting
- Multiple homicide die to fire
- Tsunami
- Terrorist suicide bombing

Questions and Answers

What diseases can be contracted from bodies? Tuberculosis, bloodborne pathogens (HIV, Hepatitis).

What communicable diseases can be contracted from bodies and what are the risks?

Short of ebola, use the usual standard precautions--gloves, eye protection, mask

What jurisdiction has authority in mass fatalities? Local vs national? Depends on size of incident and resources available. Federal FEMA response organized at Oso augmented resources at Snohomish County.

Where are dental records obtained? Families know the dentist whose records can help identify victims

What does a CERT team do if it finds a body in the event of a Cascadia Rising 9.0 earthquake? Call 911. If they aren't available, what is the hierarchy to report to or procedure to follow?

Document what you find and where you found it and pass it forward to your team lead and other agencies. Tag the door and go to the next person.

Is the King County Medical Examiners Office staffed 24 hours a day? Yes

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What is the length of a normal autopsy? Technicians do a lot of processing (photo, taking off clothing, etc.) thus 30-60 minutes. By herself it would take a couple hours.

What kind of training is required for a coroner? Washington doesn't have required training for coroners, although there is training available. Counties contract with other counties that have more resources for examination.

How long is an unidentified body kept in the morgue? Depends on condition of body--could be indefinitely.

How realistic are some TV shows showing bodies with sutures on bodies? Y-shaped incision is typical on torso; due to viewing afterward, incisions on skulls is usually behind the hairline.

Do all deaths require an autopsy? No. 9,000 of 15,000 deaths results in calls to the office--they do ~1,500 autopsies a year.

Does physician-assisted suicide require an autopsy? No. Euthanasia cannot be included in a death certificate; it is considered natural death.

Why are body parts weighed? Size and weight can be an indication of disease.

How does organ donation work? People who qualify are often on a ventilator in the hospital; their condition will be maintained until someone needs an organ. Organ, skin or tissue donations are rarely restricted

Are you subject to any legal liabilities? The County covers their liabilities. If someone objects to findings, they can get a second opinion and go to court.

What are the temperature of the refrigerators/freezers? Refrigerator ~40°, walk-in freezer is -10° and storage freezer is -80°.