



TOWN OF FAIRFAX

STAFF REPORT

January 14, 2015

TO: Mayor and Town Council

FROM: Garrett Toy, Town Manager

SUBJECT: Accept report on the Town's emergency preparedness activities related to the December storm

RECOMMENDATION

Accept report on the Town's emergency preparedness activities related to the December storm.

DISCUSSION

With the recent storm and the Council's interest in disaster preparedness, this report provides a brief overview of the activities undertaken by the Town, including the Ross Valley Fire Department, in preparation for the December 11th storm and a summary of the impacts of the storm.

At the February Council meeting, the County's Emergency Operations Center (EOC) staff will be making a brief presentation to the Council regarding EOC operations and what residents can do to prepare. The presentation will be part of an agenda item to provide the Council an opportunity to discuss one of its goals for 2014 which is "Implement Disaster Preparedness outreach and education programs."

Preparedness Activities

Below is a brief summary of the Town's storm preparedness activities from December (not in order of priority).

- Emergency Operations Center (EOC) set up (i.e., equipment deployed) in the Fire Station in advance of the storm for potential use (we did not need to activate the EOC),
- Town Hall and Police Department sandbagged and storm doors readied for installation,
- Reviewed Emergency Operations Plan (EOP),
- Ensured Town Hall/Police Department Emergency Generator was ready for use
- Satellite phone tested in event landline and cell towers went down,
- Police deployed extra staffing (dispatch and field personnel) the day of the storm

- Police coordinated staffing and interdepartmental needs with RVFD,
- Installed creek cam and set up access on the Town's website,
- Coordinated activities between Police and Public Works (DPW) with regard to the Town's potential needs,
- Purchased 4,000 sand bags and delivered over 30 cubic yards of sand (4 dump truck loads) to the Pavilion parking lot for resident/business use,
- Public Works cleared storm drains and had contractors trim trees,
- Public Works crews placed on stand-by call during the evening for call out as needed by Police,
- Confirmed with RVFD, Ross and San Anselmo the policies for the use of the flood siren and the emergency notification systems (TENS) during the storm.
- Tested the creek alert system for informing key staff of water levels,
- RVFD developed an Incident Action Plan (IAP) that outlined the operational priorities, staffing assignments, communications plan, and a medical plan for the storm. The IAP was designed to be integrated into the overall Marin County IAP that outlined the same resources for all jurisdictions. RVFD staffed all four stations with an additional engine with two personnel and a third person on the lead engine,
- Town newsletter emailed out with information regarding the storm (e.g., how the flood siren works) and periodic storm alert updates posted on the Town website, and
- Council was kept informed of storm related events and Town responses to address the incidents.

Storm Assessment

The storm did cause: a) power outages for residents due to downed trees, b) a tree to fall on and damage a home, c) flooding in certain streets causing some roads to be closed, d) the collapse of creek culvert in a resident's back yard, and e) a mudslide to undermine a portion of Manzanita Road which caused a portion of the road to be closed. There was no loss of communication or power (radio and telephones all worked 100%) at Town Hall or PD. Police, RVFD, and Public Works personnel performed well during the storm and responded appropriately to the needs of the community with coordinated efforts to better utilize our resources. For example, DPW continued to clear storm drains, cut trees, and clear debris during the storm. Staff observed that many residents were in the neighborhoods clearing flooding issues.

Staff is in the process of evaluating its response to this past storm to identify and make improvements in preparation for the next storm event. This would include additional EOC training for staff as well as capital projects needed such as the installation of a trash rack in the creek at the end of Wood Lane to prevent the culvert for the creek from being clogged by debris.

Next Council Meeting

In addition to the County's Emergency Operations Center (EOC), the Police and Fire Chiefs will also be present at the February Council meeting to provide a brief overview of their operations during an emergency event such as the recent major storm and to answer any questions.

At the meeting, the Council also may want to discuss the role of the Town's Disaster Council in the process. The Disaster Council's role was to develop the Town's emergency plan, which it did. The Disaster Council approved the Town's current Emergency Operations Plan (EOP- dated 2006) and in 2010 determined that the EOP was in compliance with current standards and did not need to be updated. Staff has recently reviewed the EOP (now dated 2014) and determined it is still in compliance with current standards.

FISCAL IMPACT

n/a