Cascadia Playbook

Overview

Developing a Quick Reference Guide for the first 14 days
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Threats in Oregon

Every year, Oregon’s Office of Emergency Management (OEM) collects and analyzes threats, hazards and overall risk to communities throughout the state. OEM works with local emergency managers to develop the Threat and Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment (THIRA). The THIRA provides data necessary to support statewide response and recovery planning efforts. The threat with the highest consequence levels and potential to significantly effect people, property, the environment, and our economy is often used as a planning scenario to develop plans, training, and exercises. These activities build a stronger, more resilient community to be better prepared for our worst possible day.

About The Cascadia Playbook

Oregon’s greatest threat is a Cascadia Subduction Zone earthquake and tsunami resulting in significant loss of life, widespread injuries, and major property and critical infrastructure destruction. The Oregon Office of Emergency Management, per the Governor’s request, is kicking off a new initiative to synchronize efforts across the state in response to a Cascadia event and other significant disasters. The Cascadia Playbook will be a cross-cutting emergency management tool for the State of Oregon that supports various existing plans and efforts for the first 14 days of a catastrophic incident.

The Cascadia Threat

A Cascadia event is based on the threat of a catastrophic magnitude 9.0 Subduction Zone earthquake and resultant tsunami. Coastal communities will experience a devastating tsunami on top of severe ground shake (up to five minutes). Shaking intensity will be less in the I-5 Corridor and Southern Oregon, but older buildings and critical infrastructure may incur extensive damage.

Expected Impacts

- Ground shaking for 4-6 minutes causing massive critical infrastructure damage
- Liquefaction and landslides causing disruption of transportation routes
- Tsunami inundation to coastal areas with as little as 15 minutes warning
- Up to 25,000 fatalities resulting from combined effects of earthquake and tsunami
- Buildings destroyed or damaged, up to 10,000+ damaged structures
- Households destroyed or damaged, up to 10,000+ people in need of shelter
- $50+ billion in economic losses, not including critical infrastructure rebuilding

Cascadia Playbook Structure

- Covers the initial response timeframe of the first 14 days of the event
- Reflects content from Oregon Cascadia Subduction Zone Plan and FEMA Region X’s Cascadia Execution Checklist as source content
- Identifies decision-making structures and authorities to initiate response and ensure smooth operations and unified effort
- Focuses on action items to create a punch list of missions for each “play”
- Is organized by Emergency Support Functions (ESFs)
- Supports existing plans developed by local, tribal, state and federal agencies
- Presents actions in a streamlined, easy-to-navigate, flip-chart style document
- Playbooks will only be issued in hard copy format, assigned to one specific individual for each partnering organization, to better manage version control, as edits are made
What is a Playbook?
Disaster management requires specific and coordinated actions by many different players involved in emergency response. Playbooks, in the emergency management context, are designed to reduce confusion during the immediate chaos that ensues following any type of major disaster or catastrophe. Playbooks ensure all the players:
- Have defined roles and responsibilities
- Understand the decision-making processes and authorities required to prioritize missions and allocate resources
- Follow specific action-oriented mission tasks for each play
- Are well-coordinated to support response and recovery

Why does Oregon need a Cascadia Playbook?
Various state agencies have emergency or continuity plans specific to their functions or particular hazards. The Playbook ensures state agencies are in sync and provides decision-makers with a practical guide to save lives and property, and allocate and manage resources efficiently and with urgency and speed. The Playbook conceptual format has gained support throughout the State of Oregon and has been received well at the national level in emergency management and homeland security communities.

Will the Playbook be compatible with other plans?
Many public safety agencies, scientists and academics, regional planning teams, and task forces have examined and developed plans to prepare for the Cascadia threat. The Playbook is complementary to existing plans, serving as a condensed, quick reference guide of pre-identified action items assigned to various entities. The initial working draft of the Playbook uses source content from the Oregon Cascadia Subduction Zone Plan and the FEMA Region X Cascadia Plan.

How is the Playbook organized?
Action items are organized by Emergency Support Functions (ESFs) using an expanded 18 ESF structure to provide clear roles for managing traditional ESF functions and new areas of military support, volunteers and donations, animal care, and address the capabilities and needs of businesses and industry.

When will the Playbook be complete?
The Governor, The Adjutant General, and the Office of Emergency Management are working in concert with state agencies, local emergency managers, tribal nations, non-governmental partners, and federal agencies to ensure the Playbook is well-vetted and valuable to its users.

Much more work and ongoing collaboration will ensure the Playbook captures feedback via subject matter experts in their respective fields. The current working draft is the starting point for critical response partners to collaborate, vet, and revise the content. The Playbook will not be considered complete for several years to come as state agencies develop implementation plans to support the action items categorized by ESFs.

How can partners become involved?
The official project kick-off to collaborate with state agencies took place in June 2014. The next phase of the project will focus on collecting revisions and edits to verify and refine the Playbook. Implementation plans for supporting the Playbook developed by ESF partners will be the final stage of the overarching Playbook project. OEM will be hosting Playbook workshops for ESF partners to provide a collaborative forum for discussion, planning, and edits.
The Cascadia Playbook is a work in progress. Oregon’s Office of Emergency Management is committed to making it a useful document and welcomes suggested edits and recommendations to improve its functionality. Please email suggestions or inquiries to deputy@oem.state.or.us.