

Resilient WA Subcabinet - Recommendations and Issues to be Addressed

Recommendation 2. Encourage utility providers (domestic water supply, wastewater, electricity, natural gas, petroleum, and information and communication technology) to identify the vulnerabilities in their systems and mitigate the deficiencies.

priority actions:

2a. Maintain a state lifelines working group under the Washington State Emergency Management Council to facilitate improved coordination, planning, and response among public and private sector lifeline operators.

2b. Develop and adopt model statewide codes for design performance standards for each utility type. Examine incentives for replacement programs that eliminate non-ductile (rigid) pipelines and replace them with ductile (flexible) alternatives that are less susceptible to breakage in seismic events.

2c. Request that the Northwest Power and Conservation Council examine the feasibility of establishing an interoperable power network (including interoperable parts) within Washington and throughout the Pacific Northwest and/or western United States.

2d. Codify a framework for identifying and communicating which essential facilities will have priority for restoration of utility service following an earthquake. Such a framework will provide greater certainty during the response and recovery phases for critical facilities, etc.

2e. Expand existing requirements regarding facilities that must have backup generators to include any facility that is critical to response and recovery operations. Connection to two different electrical substations alone should not satisfy these new requirements.

2f. Conduct an analysis of the potential economic losses associated with power outages that may result from a variety of earthquake scenarios. (This is to help implement Recommendations 2d and 2e.)

Recommendation 3. Improve the resilience of buildings in areas of high seismic hazard to improve life safety and increase the number of people who will be able to shelter in place.

priority actions:

3a. Compile a detailed inventory of the actual building stock (types of buildings and structural systems, dates of construction, and seismic retrofits) in all jurisdictions across the state.

3b. Mandate that seismic evaluations be completed as part of real estate transactions in order to ensure full disclosure of a property's condition between buyers and sellers.

Short term: Establish a working group with key stakeholders, including real estate, insurance, and financial professionals, to examine potential funding mechanisms and define an approach and requirements. Initiate a demonstration project within a county or region.

Long term: Evaluate the efficacy of the demonstration project and, if such an approach is determined to be feasible, expand on a statewide basis.

3c. Provide model code language for adoption by local jurisdictions in order to ensure that unsafe buildings do not kill or injure occupants. This should include mandatory parapet retrofit (or removal); examining the City of Seattle’s Unreinforced Masonry (URM) building retrofit ordinance; and working with stakeholders to identify federal, state, and local incentives to promote adoption and action (e.g. retrofitting).

3d. Institute a rapid, consistent, and comprehensive fast-tagging building assessment program that may be used in all local jurisdictions.

Short term: Form a task group to further define the concept of “shelter in place” (i.e., allowing residents to stay in their own homes while they are being repaired) after a major earthquake and determine how best to facilitate implementation at a community level. The task group should also:

- Adopt a program similar to San Francisco’s Building Occupancy Resumption Program (BORP).
- Recommend adjustments to the permitting process to make it possible for people to stay in their homes with access to temporary sewage and water services.

3f. Create a task force to identify possible strategies for development of a state-managed earthquake insurance program similar to the California Earthquake Authority or more effectively promote privately-offered earthquake insurance to increase coverage throughout the state and reduce direct losses to individuals and families.

Recommendation 5. Strengthen business continuity planning efforts.

priority actions:

5a. Provide education, tools, and training to help businesses develop continuity plans or analyze existing plans, giving particular consideration to their supply chains and issues related to just-in-time inventories.

Recommendation 6. Strengthen regional transportation networks.

priority actions:

6a. Further define critical state routes into and out of ports, airports, and other key areas (e.g. the Kent/Duwamish Valley) and identify priority routes for retrofitting/hardening as a systematic approach that includes 6b. Decisions about these routes should be made in consultation with all necessary administrative levels/jurisdictions.

6b. Facilitate collaboration between state and local jurisdictions to identify regional lifeline routes and prioritize retrofitting of city and county roads and bridges. Incorporate this into the Transportation Improvement Program.

6c. Develop interagency agreements between WSDOT and local jurisdictions to facilitate the rerouting of traffic following an earthquake.

6d. Require that transit agencies (both large and small) develop robust continuity of operations plans.

Recommendation 7. Make hospitals resilient—structurally and functionally.

priority actions:

7a. Retrofit hospitals and assess and address the vulnerabilities of their supply chains to ensure that they are able not only to withstand the expected earthquake, but to remain operational afterwards.

Short term: Establish a task force to review California’s Office of Statewide Health Planning and Development requirements regarding mandatory retrofitting of existing hospital facilities. This task force should identify and adapt for use in Washington a set of regulations that define the necessary level of building performance for hospitals and require hospitals to retrofit within a specified timeframe in order to achieve that level of performance.

7b. Require that the non-structural elements of hospital buildings be addressed in design requirements: Further define this in the current building code; develop and implement a means of enforcement; and provide opportunities for training.

7c. Strengthen seismic requirements and oversight for design and construction/upgrades of hospital facilities and regional medical centers that serve similar functions.

7d. Require analysis of supply chains of pharmaceuticals and other essential commodities to identify weak links in the health care system and enable health-care providers to develop viable alternatives.

Plan for the distribution of bulk fuel through the use of master contracts in order to support relief efforts, restore essential services, and re-establish commerce.

priority actions:

TBD

Utilize the Cascadia Rising Exercise after-action report to develop a Mass Care Operational Coordination Plan Annex to address collaboration among response agencies and organizations to be housed under Essential Support Function 6.

priority actions:

TBD