

**WASHINGTON PUBLIC PORTS ASSOCIATION
2022 ANNUAL MEETING
ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSIONS**

WHAT HAPPENS AFTER A CATASTROPHE ON PORT PROPERTY?

Patsy Martin and Frank Chmelik

BEFORE THE CATASTROPHE OCCURS DEVELOP A “DISASTER RESPONSE PLAN”.

- ◇ Who will be in charge even when the executive director or manager is away from the port district.
- ◇ Who will be the port spokesperson?
- ◇ Accurate and up-to-date contact list, including cell phones that will be answered at night and on the weekends.
 - Port attorneys should be included.
- ◇ Working communication devices; cell phones, radios
- ◇ Know who has the keys or easy and immediate access to the keys to Port properties and facilities
- ◇ Create a Crisis Communication Plan
- ◇ Interlocal agreements in place if your port will need assistance.
 - A WPPA port districts interlocal is available.
 - Does a nearby port have a staff or equipment resource.
- ◇ Standby vendor contracts in place.
- ◇ Standby grief counselors identified
- ◇ Conduct an annual table top catastrophe exercise and amend plan as needed

AND WHEN A CATASTROPHE OCCURS

1. **FIRST**, mitigate the damage or injury.
 - ◇ Call 911.
 - ◇ Know who is in charge for the Port at that moment.
 - ◇ Know who is in charge of the first responders and communicate clearly with that Incident Commander.
 - ◇ Activate the Disaster Response Plan
 - ◇ Empower staff to act.
 - ◇ Have safety supplies and equipment on site and know how to use it.
 - ◇ Be adaptable, the situation can change quickly
 - ◇ Delegation of Powers resolution should address emergencies.
 - ◇ Emergency public work statute RCW 39.04.020.

2. **SECOND**, notify the commissioners and keep them informed.
 - ◇ Consider a special meeting.
 - ◇ Commissioners will likely want to see the scene.

3. **THIRD**, secure the scene and log all entries onto the scene
 - ◇ Be prepared to erect temporary fencing.
 - ◇ Consider private security.
4. **FOURTH**, slow down and develop a specific plan to:
 - ◇ Maintain essential port operations.
 - ◇ Protect port staff, port tenants and the public.
 - ◇ Have specific areas to hold, search personnel, grieving families, media etc.
 - ◇ Be prepared to communicate appropriate information with the media. Work with the Incident Commander on press releases.
 - ◇ Monitor the media via on site radios and TV's
 - ◇ Preserve port records (including computer records).
 - ◇ Begin to accurate account for all costs.
 - ◇ Consider a preliminary budget.
5. **FIFTH**, notify the port's insurance carriers
 - ◇ Include all possible tenant insurance carriers that have provided "also insured" certificates to the port.
 - ◇ Take pictures, take pictures, take pictures using Port owned phones and cameras
 - ◇ Notify all potentially liable parties that a loss has occurred.
6. **SIXTH**, hold a ""all-hands"" staff meeting and push out accurate information.
 - ◇ Remind staff that any texts or pictures while on duty or using port provided or reimbursed devices are public records.
 - ◇ Communicate with neighboring tenants the nature of the catastrophe. They may not be directly impacted but they will want to know.
7. **SEVENTH**, develop a plan to allow investigation and then restoration of the property.
 - ◇ Allow adequate time for insurance adjusters, experts, law enforcement, state investigators and federal investigators, others to visit the site.
 - ◇ Each visitor is logged in, wears appropriate safety attire and signs a release.
 - ◇ Make all experts visit the scene at the same time.
 - ◇ Notify every one of the timeline.
 - ◇ The port must "fully cooperate" with all insurance company, state and federal investigations.
 - The timeline may need to be revised to accommodate the need to fully cooperate.