

Our MISSION:
To administer a campus-based comprehensive emergency management program in partnership with UW academic departments, operating units, staff, administration and neighboring jurisdictions in order to save lives, protect property and safeguard the environment.

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Disaster Digest

VOLUME 1 ISSUE 4

OCT 2010

Thar She Blows...Batten Down the Hatches!



Looks like we are in for another nasty winter, courtesy of our friend “La Niña”. Get ready for what will likely be a colder, wetter winter in the Pacific Northwest than we had this past year. Remember the miserable “no-snow” 2010 Winter Olympics in Vancouver/Whistler? Well, that’s all about to change. The National Weather Service says long-range forecasts indicate a moderate-to-strong La Niña this year.

La Niña in the Pacific Northwest is associated with cooler and wetter-than-normal weather ...so skiers can rejoice ... parents and commuters can cringe. The National Weather Service says most physical models are predicting a moderate-to-strong La Niña while most statistical models indicate it will be weaker. Due to observations over the last several months, forecasters are leaning toward prediction of a stronger episode. The last La Niña was in the winter of 2008 – 2009. Western Washington resi-

dents remember the region was covered in snow and Seattle streets blanketed in ice in late December. In fact, the UW closed for 3 days – actually, technically we “suspended operations” for those days near the Christmas holidays.

Residents in the Green River Valley also remember that winter because that's when the Howard Hanson Dam held back a record amount of water, which led to the discovery of damage to the dam abutment. That now has the valley in danger of major flooding as the Army Corps of Engineers works to fix the dam. Local weather experts note that there are all sorts of La Niñas, so it won't necessarily be like that. 2009-2010 was an El Niño winter. It's fairly unusual to switch from La Nina to El Nino and back to La Nina so quickly.



Oct: Fire Safety
Planning is key to your safety. Identify two ways to exit each room and practice getting out. Have fire extinguishers in your home and know how to use them.



Nov: Shelter in Place
Create a “Safe Room” in your home. One that can easily and quickly be sealed to protect you from airborne agents.



Dec: Home Hazard Hunt
Take 30 minutes to walk through your home. Imagine the ground movement of a significant earthquake. Identify potential hazards and begin mitigation efforts.



Wildfires in WA State

Emergency fire crews were very active the month of July in the State of Washington. As you know, two large fires were reported in the Olympic National Park and in the Swakane Canyon located near Entiat, Washington.

The Swakane Canyon Wildfire~ On July 10th, fires were reported burning in the canyons west of the Columbia River. More than 400 firefighters were at the scene including five helicopters, six engines and two dozers. It threatened about 70 homes along Highway 97A. The highway was subject to intermittent closures due to fire activity and fire traffic.

The cause of the fire was still under investigation at the time. Firefighters worked hard on containing the fires as temperatures were in the mid-80's! Personally, driving through the area at the time, it was an amazing sight to see. Although I did not take the pictures shown, this is what I did witness.

The Olympic National Park Wildfire~ On July 23, two fires burned deep within the park boundary and the designated wilderness in the Olympic National Park due to lightning strikes. As a result of lightning storms on June 13 and July 11,



more than 30 strikes hit within the park, and caused at least four known fires. Emergency crews deemed the fire a natural fire and no structures or people were in danger at the time. Crews worked hard to contain the fires and were eventually successful.

Although natural events that start these fires cannot be controlled, man-made ones can, such as distinguishing cigarettes and campfires completed and thoroughly.

Did You Know?

A local emergency supply vendor in Redmond offers a **20% discount** to UW employees?

Contact disaster@uw.edu to find out more.

This Secretary Does Not Do Shorthand

Steve Charvat, UWEM Director, is running for a full 2-year term as the Secretary of International Association of Emergency Manager's (or IAEM for short). IAEM is the world's largest professional association of emergency managers he International Association of Emergency Managers (IAEM), with more than 5,000 members in 58 countries, is a non-profit educational organization dedicated to promoting the goals of saving lives and

protecting property during emergencies and disasters. He currently is the *interim* Secretary of IAEM, being appointed in 2009 to complete the unexpired term of the Vikki Stempkowski, CEM, who passed away unexpectedly. The results of the election for a 2-year term (through 2012) will be announced at the IAEM Annual Conference in San Antonio, TX on November 3, 2010. Steve is no stranger to the IAEM, having served as a regional

representative on the Board of Directors and a Past President from 1996-1997. In his role as Secretary, he serves on the Executive Board and helps guide the business of the association by ensuring that its records are kept, maintained and available for review by the members.



UWEM Staff Support Komen 3-day for the Cure Walk

The last weekend of September and first weekend of October one of our very own participated in the Seattle and San Francisco [Komen 3-day for the Cure](#) walks. This is a 60-mile walk for women and men who want to make a personal difference in the fight to end breast cancer. Participants each raise a minimum of \$2,300 and walk an average of 20 miles a day for three consecutive days, bringing education and awareness to the face of breast cancer. Every year since 2005, Siri

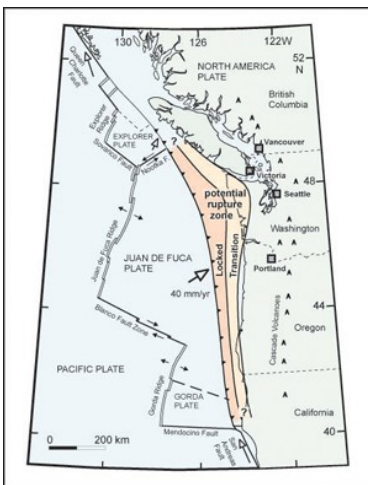
McLean has participated in the 3-day event dedicating her time and energy to a very personal cause. This is an event that the entire department of UW Emergency Management has embraced as each one of us has been touched in some way by breast cancer.

“Breast cancer is the most frequently diagnosed cancer and is the leading cause of death among women worldwide. Somewhere in the world, a woman dies from breast cancer every 68 seconds. Since its inception in

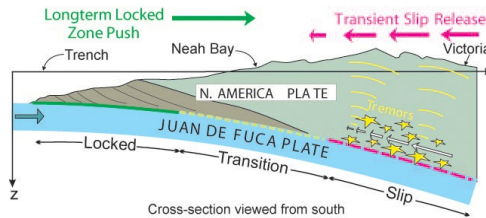
2003, the Komen 3-day for the Cure has raised nearly \$500 million. Net proceeds help pay for vital global cancer research and local community programs supporting education, screening and treatment. Komen for the Cure paid for half a million breast screenings in 2009 – part of a nearly \$1.5 billion commitment to research, advocacy and community programs since Komen was founded in 1982.” www.the3day.org



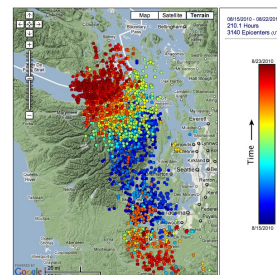
What is a Silent Earthquake? Should I be Concerned?



of years these plates move at an average rate of 4 cm/yr. However the two plates are currently stuck along the upper portion of the subduction fault creating a locked zone that is building up stress over time. Every 300-500 years the stress becomes too much and the locked zone ruptures causing a magnitude 8 or 9 earthquake, the last one occurring in 1700.



discreet time interval (episode) of relative tectonic plate movement (slip) coupled with high frequency seismic energy bursts (tremor). The slow-slip events have been associated with subduction zone faults around the world and there is concern these events may be adding stress to our Cascadia fault. Would you be prepared if this fault were to rupture tomorrow? Read more about the Deep Tremor details [here](#). Review plotted tremor locations maps [here](#).



You must be living under a rock if you didn't know Washington is earthquake country. But what you probably didn't know is that this great state is prone to the worst earthquake this county could see. Known as the Cascadia Subduction Zone this fault extends along the west coast from northern Vancouver Island to northern California. In the simplest form the Juan de Fuca plate is diving under the North American plate. Over millions

So what does this have to do with silent earthquakes? About every 15 months since 2002 scientists have been monitoring slow-moving tremors under the Olympic Peninsula. These tremors are also known as “silent quakes” because they cannot be felt at the surface, however release considerable energy and take weeks to unfold unlike typical earthquakes that can last seconds. In more detail, slow-slip events are defined as Episodic Tremor and Slip (ETS) a

*How did the pig
get off the roof?*



H1N1: Is it Really Gone?

On August 10, the Director General of the WHO (World Health Organization), Dr. Margaret Chan, declared H1N1 to be in the 'Post-Pandemic' phase where H1N1 has largely run its course throughout the countries of the world. Even with that announcement, the United State's Centers for Disease Control (CDC) is including the H1N1 vaccination in this year's regular flu vaccine as an added precaution against future outbreak of the 2009 strain of H1N1.

The nature of pandemics in general and viruses in par-

ticular is their ability to change in a relatively short amount of time. Mutations can occur in previously moderate flu strain that makes it more virulent (basically, easier to catch from others). This is why it's important to remember that while the most recent epidemic of H1N1 has passed away, the potential for another outbreak is always present.

The best way to be prepared for such future outbreaks, is to follow the basic common sense we've all been taught since grade-school:

1. Wash your hands with soap and water after using the restroom and before eating.
2. Cover your sneezes and coughs.
3. Stay home when sick.
4. Get your annual flu shot.

A little extra effort is all it takes to be prepared and keep prepared for the next outbreak of H1N1 or whatever Mother Nature decides to throw at us.



UWEM & Husky Football

This year, UWEM will take a more proactive role in supporting the Command Post at Husky Stadium during special events and home football games. UWEM staff will provide staff to officially support 4 of the 6 home games this season by acting as additional responders for the Command Post to provide information on the various reported incidents and medical emergencies that occur during every game.

The majority of spectators attending Husky football games enjoy themselves and have a good time. A small fraction of the spectators (1/10-1/20th of 1%)

require some form of assistance from emergency responders to help them during a moment of need. This response is coordinated through the Command Post at Husky Stadium. That is where UWEM staff will receive their assignment to respond to incidents and help the Command Post determine what is occurring and what emergency resources are needed to ensure patron and public safety.

This is just the latest in a series of efforts by UWEM to better collaborate with

and support public safety at the UW through cooperation with UW Police, UW EH&S, the Seattle Fire Department and the Seattle Police Department. As with all services we offer, UWEM does not charge for this extra effort, so there will be no additional cost to the public or the University.



Time to Fix the Roof is When the Sun is Shinning

One of my favorite quotes from a famous person is the one above from John F. Kennedy about when to get ready for the next storm. As we ease out of Summer and into Fall, we have a few weeks left of fairly good weather with cooler mornings and warm afternoons. These days are some of my favorite time of year and a perfect time for football, a little yard work and getting ready for that first fall/winter storm.



Getting ready for late fall/winter need not be expensive. A little improvement here and there is all you need. Here are some simple steps to get prepared that are great for home or work:

1. **Have alternative lighting for a power outage.** We recommend flashlights and electric lanterns with enough batteries for at least 3 days. Candles and oil lamps represent an increased fire hazard. If you absolutely MUST use them, be extra careful with pets, small children and any clutter around the candles/oil lamps that may cause a fire.
2. **Have a way to get information.** Battery-operated or wind-up radios are a great idea. Your car radio may work well, too. We recommend tuning into AM's KOMO 1000 for emergency alerts and information.
3. **Have a way to call for help.** We all love our high-tech phones, but in a power outage, they probably won't work. Cell phones are great, but sooner or later need recharging. Vintage rotary phones with plain old telephone service (POTS) don't require house/office power to operate. These classic phones run off of the trickle of power that exists on every standard phone line.
4. **Have some short-term emergency water.** The Pacific Northwest floods every year. A lot. One of the problems with such flooding is that if floodwaters enter the municipal water systems, the public water supply may become unsafe to drink. Have enough for yourself for 3 days- that's 3 gallons of water- in case the local water supply is unsafe. Bottled water can be purchased at your local grocery store for \$1-3 for 1-2.5 gallons or so. Store it someplace cool and dark and swap out every 6 months.

These are just a few of the many ideas UW Emergency Management can share with you on how to get yourself, your family and your office ready for the next storm. You can find more information at www.washington.edu/emergency.

Doing More with Less: UWEM Raises the Bar

The UWEM Team recently reviewed its last annual performance activities – which are measured weekly and reported on a quarterly basis. As most of you know, we use the nationally-accepted system called the “Balanced Scorecard” to track our progress in meeting our department’s strategic and operational goals. Many of our activities also support those of our parent division, Facilities Services and ultimately the entire university. The good news is that last fiscal year, UWEM met and/or exceeded – 14 of its 15 activity measures! Even in these days of severely

reduced budgets, over-stretched staff, limited resources, and curtailed training and professional development opportunities, the UWEM Team decided to continue to look toward a brighter future and stretch our goals.

Following the proverbial ideal of “turning lemons into lemonade,” the UWEM Team collectively decided that the status quo was simply not acceptable into the current fiscal year. We decided to not only maintain our current level of services and high-level of

customer service ratings, but to increase them. Of our 15 activities, we have raised the targets this year for 9 of them. For more information about our creative balanced scorecard, click [here](#).





UWEM Looking for Good Grant Proposals

With a 100% success-rate under our belts for all grants applied for being ultimately awarded, UWEM is on the cusp of another federal homeland security grant application process. Called the “Urban Area Security Initiative” (or *UASI*) grant program, this federal homeland security provides targeted funding to the nation’s largest metropolitan areas to prepare for, respond to and recover from acts of terrorism, and other catastrophic disasters and crises. Since the UW-Seattle campus is wholly located in the City of Seattle – one of the 26 UASI-designated cities – we are eligible to apply for this competitive federal grant funding. And, in these days of diminishing state funding support, we are encouraging our UW partners to put on their thinking caps and come up with some creative project proposals that we may ask to be considered under this unique grant opportunity.

Since 2003, UWEM has been designated as the UW’s primary point-of-contact (or *P-I* in “grant-speak”) for all disaster and homeland security operational grant applications. We have brought in over \$4 million in grants to the UW to support our disaster planning, response and recovery efforts. Past examples include the earthquake bracing in the Padelford Parking Garage, specialized earthquake shelves in the Burke Museum, the UW Police Department’s bomb dog, hazardous materials clean-up supplies and equipment, utility system alarms, and specialized decontamination and patient support equipment for both Harborview and the UW Medical Centers.

Various internal partners such as members of the UW’s Emergency Management Planning Committee and the UW’s disaster response partners have al-

ready received a basic information packet on the 2011 UASI application cycle. If you or someone in your UW department or unit is interested in learning more about this *grant* (i.e., *eligible activities/projects, deadlines, cost-share, etc...*), please contact UWEM at as soon as possible 206-897-8000 or via email at disaster@uw.edu. UWEM requests that all UW department proposals be submitted by **October 15th** so that staff can review them, get the combined grant package approved by the UW’s Office of Sponsored Programs and place them into the State-mandated format.



Did You Know?

If there is a major service disruption that impacts communications, computing, networking and power you can check the www.washington.edu/eOutage webpage to find out what has occurred. Check this page to make sure UW Information Technology is aware of the problem you are experiencing or call 206-368-8243. Join the [eOutage](#) mailing list to receive outage postings via email.

Earthquake Shelving in Burke Museum

In 2008 the Burke Museum was awarded a Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) grant of almost \$1M. This type of grant is only available following a Presidential Disaster Declaration within Washington State. Projects for consideration need to be structural or non-structural mitigation. The Burke Museum was awarded this grant for the seismic shelving replacement of their Special Collections. To date this project is 90% complete. Enjoy photos of Steve inspecting the new shelving system and emergency lighting.



Universities Far & Wide Face Challenges & Opportunities

On August 2, 2010, Steve Charvat received a scheduled visit from Inmaculada Gomez, Head of Finance Administration and External Services, Technical University of Catalonia, Barcelona, Spain. Ms. Gomez' position oversees Public Safety (including Police), Emergency Management, Risk Management and Facilities. The Technical University of Catalonia is a public institution dedicated to higher education and research that specializes in the fields of architecture, science and engineering with over 28,000 students enrolled. The University' schools and research centers are known, nationally and internationally, for the education and training of professionals and for research in these areas. The Chancellor of the Univer-

sity established a new emergency management program for their campus. Ms. Gomez was given the task to research, study and interview the top three universities in the United States for emergency management styles, programs, research and goals. She spent two weeks in the US discussing these topics. Steve met with her for two hours. She was particularly interested in how we measure our success, outreach and strategic plans. Our key tool, of course, is our Balanced Scorecard. She was also interested in how to manage in times of budget cut backs. The Technical University of Catalonia is also dealing with a 20% budget reduction while at the same time faced with increased emergency management crises and disasters. Barcelona is located in an earthquake-prone region of their country, such as ours; however they

have no programs ready for such disasters!

Steve provided her with basic tools and suggestions on how to implement or start a program from scratch, similar to what the UW did in 2003. Ms. Gomez was very appreciative of our time together and of the assistance the UW was able to provide. Although we come from different parts of the world, we quickly realized that all universities and colleges face the same challenges and opportunities in dealing with crises and disasters.



The Emergency Manager's Dilemma: Should You Take Your Blackberry on Vacation?

By Eric Holdeman, July 28 2010, *Emergency Management Magazine*



You're packing for vacation and your spouse turns to you and says, "You're not taking your BlackBerry with you — are you?" How should you respond? I can give you the "by the book" guidance on vacations. Vacations are meant to be times of renewal. The expert's advice is to disconnect from work and find an activity or form of relaxation that you enjoy. It might be a service project associated with your volunteer organization, or just sitting on a beach watching the waves come in while you read a book. Sounds heavenly — right?

The other recommendation is that you take at least two consecutive weeks of vacation. The first week is to decompress from work and the second week lets you actually relax. The goal is for you to return to work relaxed, refreshed, ambitious, creative and energized. Enter the emergency manager's dilemma: Disasters don't take a holiday. In fact, I've always called Thanksgiving and Christmas "disaster magnets." It's rare that emergencies happen on a weekday during normal work hours. Disasters wait for weekends and the middle of the night to pop into your life and ruin a good sleep or time with the family.

Directors of emergency management programs carry a special burden. I believe that you can delegate authority for people to carry out the organization's missions, but like any elected official, the buck must stop somewhere. As emergency managers, you can't delegate responsibility for what happens — when you're there or on vacation, you're responsible for what gets done or is left undone. The other reality is that as the director, you're expected to be there when disaster strikes. If you're on vacation and a disaster occurs — get home as fast as you can. When there's a disaster in progress, perhaps even "winding down," do not leave town for a planned vacation. The family may not like it, but tending the home fires at the emergency operations center will keep you employed. Leaving town sends the wrong message to your boss, elected officials, the media and the public. This is what we do as emergency managers — and you must be there to do it. Monitoring events from afar won't cut it.

Given the above, what do you do when vacation time comes knocking on your door? Do you disconnect, leave town and all your cares and worries behind, or stay plugged in electronically? There are three possibilities for staying plugged in:

1. Monitor e-mail so you can, at a minimum, know if a disaster or significant emergency is happening that might need your attention.
2. You go beyond that to monitor e-mail traffic so you're abreast of projects and their progress so that when you return to work, you don't have such a steep mountain of e-mail to read and respond to?
3. 3. You are actively plugged into the network and responding to e-mails as though you are at work. People don't know that you aren't in the office, but "on vacation."

I prefer to stay connected and actively monitor e-mail traffic so that junk e-mails are tossed and I'm up to speed on what's transpiring while I'm gone. Another alternative, and a solution to the "be connected or disconnect" dilemma, is to vacation someplace exotic where there isn't any cell phone reception and or free Wi-Fi at the hotel. Then the choice becomes easier. You'll have to trust those tending the farm and accept the fruits of their labor when you walk through the door.

If nothing else, it will allow you to honestly say, "Earthquake? What earthquake?"