

Western States Seismic Policy Council
2011 Awards in Excellence
Outreach to General Public

Administering Agency: Emergency Volunteer Corps of Nehalem Bay
Program Name: Emergency Volunteer Corps of Nehalem Bay
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Program Summary

Born out of need for community and regional resilience, the Emergency Volunteer Corps of Nehalem Bay (EVC), led by board president Linda Kozlowski, was formed in February 2008 following a storm that brought hurricane-force winds and flooding to the north Oregon coast, temporarily isolating the 3 small communities of Manzanita, Nehalem and Wheeler (total full-time population: 1,374).

Using earthquake and tsunami preparedness as the foundation for outreach, education and training, the EVC now includes hundreds of active volunteers and an organizational structure that focuses their efforts into all aspects of readiness, response and recovery. EVC is a non-profit organization that is financially supported by the 3 local city governments and fire district, outside grants and private contributions. Partnerships include the local School District, Tillamook County's Economic Development Council, Health Department, and Emergency Management Department, Oregon State Parks, the Rinehart Clinic (a federally designated, not-for-profit Rural Health Clinic), the Oregon Chapter of the American Red Cross, the Oregon Department of Geology and Mineral Industries (DOGAMI), the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), and Oregon Emergency Management.

With a budget of under \$10,000 per year (excluding one time grants) EVC has established committees responsible for: creating short and long term sheltering strategies following an earthquake and tsunami; water storage; communications during an emergency and Ham radio training; evacuation strategies during a tsunami event; pet preparedness and sheltering; emergency supplies and storage and; an online emergency database and resources center that can be downloaded as a free, web-based template for other coastal communities to use.

EVC has established a local medical corps that is now a registered Medical Reserve Corps (MRC) unit under the office of the U.S. Surgeon General. EVC volunteers are also working with Oregon legislators to update Oregon liability laws, in order to effectively utilize a pool of retired health-care providers in their community (this would benefit all MRCs in the state).

EVC offers Red Cross classes and Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) training on a regional basis. There are now over 50 CERT members, with new CERT classes beginning at the High School – a first for the region. CERT teams hold bimonthly drills and are actively involved in partnering with local public safety officials in response to all kinds of emergencies.

The Map Your Neighborhood (MYN) earthquake preparedness program is the foundation of EVC's regional emergency response plan and well over 1,000 people have seen information on, participated in or led MYN

training. EVC has 105 MYN Captains and 65 neighborhoods mapped. In order to sustain this program EVC has developed a zone organization that supports neighborhoods both in ongoing education and in emergency response. All CERT members and MYN Captains are trained in the FEMA National Incident Management System.

IN addition to CERT and MYN, workshops and training classes during the past year have included Red Cross first aid and CPR training, 72 hour emergency kit preparation, how to maintain a potable water supply during an emergency, creating long term food caches, shelter training, using communication tools in an emergency (FRS and Ham radio), leadership training and business continuity. EVC's first Hispanic Outreach and Education workshop was attended by over 50 Hispanic families and presented a program in Spanish to this under-served group focused on first aid and earthquake and tsunami education and preparedness. Volunteer recognition events and informative presentations by preparedness experts help keep EVC members motivated.

EVC coordinated a community wide tsunami evacuation drill in 2008 and volunteers have participated in the production of a video presentation on tsunami drills as well as being featured on CNN. Tabletop exercises occur at least 2 times a year and plans for another community-wide tsunami evacuation drill is set for 2011.

Encouraged by their state partners, EVC is sharing their "best practices" with other coastal communities and EVC volunteers are teaching classes and workshops on earthquake and tsunami preparedness as part of the state-wide Tsunami Outreach Oregon program.

As one EVC volunteer wrote, "Linda Kozlowski and the EVC Board made all this happen and have essentially created an 'Emergency Preparedness University' with the limited resources available to them... When 'THE BIG ONE' hits, Linda and the EVC have made sure that we will be ready. Lives will be saved because of their efforts."