



Press Release

OFFICE OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS

For Immediate Release
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November 8, 2011

Press Release:

State Responds to Winter Storms
State Emergency Operations Center Increases Activation Level to 3

ANCHORAGE, Alaska –National Weather Service (NWS) Coastal Flood, High Wind, and Blizzard Warnings are in effect for Western Alaska from the Chukchi Sea Coast to the Kuskokwim Delta, and the Western and Central Aleutians. The NWS forecasts the storm to begin affecting St. Lawrence Island this afternoon and the west coast of Alaska later in the day.

The Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management activated the State Emergency Operations Center (SEOC) in anticipation of emergency response requests from coastal communities. The SEOC activation level is now at level three, which indicates an actual event has occurred or may be imminent. The SEOC starts 24/7 operations today.

Agency liaisons representing the State of Alaska Department of Health and Social Services, Public Safety, Environmental Conservation, Transportation and Public Facilities, as well as the American Red Cross of Alaska, The Alaska National Guard and Federal Emergency Management Agency have joined DHS&EM emergency response staff in the SEOC.

Yesterday, DHS&EM and the NWS conducted a 2011 West Coast Storm teleconference with communities in the path of the storm. 20 communities, two boroughs, seven state agencies, and three federal agencies joined the call. The NWS provided current site-specific weather, sea, and tide information. DHS&EM urged communities to prepare for the incoming storm and provided emergency management guidance.

Communities in the effected region are making efforts to prepare for the storm, including moving boats away from the water, securing fuel, notifying residents, and protecting utilities.

The SEOC will continue to communicate with communities in the path of the storm. DHS&EM emergency response teams and state rescue elements are on stand-by and can be quickly deployed if a community requests state emergency response assistance.

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