Island County

Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan

Section Four

CRITICAL FACILITIES AND INFRASTRUCTURE

The identification of what constitutes a critical facility or infrastructure is largely a subjective process. There are obvious types of structures and facilities to include on any such list, but the process is not self-defining or limiting. The Island County critical facilities list (Appendix E) contains many facilities that may not be critical to the entire county, but do represent a necessary or sensitive local function. The larger private schools and senior care facilities were included because they are locations for special populations and present an emergency planning consideration. Likewise post offices and libraries are not critical for life and safety, but the interruption of their services, damage, or destruction of the structure presents a significant financial or social impact to the county. Other structure and facilities that are not included are individual drainage and sewage structure that are components of the larger system. That level of detail will be left to the individual jurisdictions to identify based on their criticality to the overall function.

Another aspect of limiting the list is the widespread concern for security. The inclusion in this plan of a comprehensive list of facilities, named, typed and with specific location data is contrary to currently accepted good security and risk management practices. While natural hazards do not care about the type or location information for a facility, that data can be useful to persons or groups targeting infrastructure and public property for criminal or even terrorism purposes. Therefore, no address level information about critical facilities is included in this plan. The information if and when required is available from the owning organization.

Island County has a large number of water companies and water providers. Only the 100 largest water systems were identified for further classification and even at that they were not included in the listing due to the amount and type of data that should be included. Refinement of the critical facilities and infrastructure listing remains an open and sensitive matter that should be resolved as future part of the mitigation planning process.

The final critical facilities and infrastructure list is still large and should be refocused. However, the size of the list does point out the complexity of the infrastructure even in a small county. It also points out the size of the effort required to properly identify, record, and safeguard infrastructure in any mitigation planning effort.

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