



Staff Report

JANUARY STORM "AFTER-ACTION" REPORT

Honorable Mayor and Council Members:

Summary

Over the weekend of January 4, 2008 a series of storms impacted the City of Belmont. This staff report summarizes the actions taken by City staff in preparation for and response to the storms. The official operational period for this event is from Thursday, January 3, 2007 – 2:00PM through Monday, January 7, 2007 – 8:00AM.

Some notable items include:

- DPW gave out approx. 700 sandbags. It should be noted that Belmont is the only city in the county who provides pre-filled sandbags. Sandbags are filled in the non-rainy months by work furlough crews and staged at the Corp Yard for winter use.
- During the operational period, Police, Fire, DPW and Parks personnel responded to 120 storm-related calls in Belmont.
- There were no significant storm-related injuries and the most significant damage appears to have occurred to electrical transmission equipment (see PG&E section).

Background

Events, which occurred in advance of the January 3-6 storms.

Monday, December 3, 2007

The Senior Management Team (SMT) held their regular Monday morning meeting. Prior to the start of the regular agenda, as part of an on-going disaster preparedness effort, staff presented an unannounced exercise centered on a major winter storm impacting the city. SMT members were divided into three teams and given 10 minutes to come up with a plan to deal with the storm and its effects. After each team presented their plan, the SMT group discussed the presentations and plans for the upcoming 2007-2008 storm season.

Monday December 17, 2007

The San Mateo County Office of Emergency Services & Homeland Security (OES) notified staff that the first significant storm of the season was predicted to impact the area. The SMT was notified and Staff sent a community alert via the SMCAAlert text messaging system advising of the storm forecast and the availability of sand bags at the City Corporation Yard (Corp Yard).

The alert was sent to 610 subscribers in the city of Belmont, including residents and Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) members. The storm arrived as forecast, however, without significant impact to the City.

Monday, December 31, 2007

SMCo OES notified staff that a series of wet & windy storms were forecast to begin impacting Northern California on Thursday January 3, 2008. Staff relayed the information to the SMT and sent a community alert via the SMCAAlert text messaging system advising of the storm forecast and the availability of sand bags at the City Corp Yard. The alert was sent to Belmont residents and Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) members. Information on the storms indicated that significant rain fall and high winds comparable to those of January 2005, which resulted in flooding and wind-related damage. The storm series was forecast to consist of three storms beginning on Thursday the 3rd through Sunday the 6th.

Staff continued to monitor the weather forecast over the New Year’s holiday.

Wednesday, January 2, 2008

Staff met to discuss the forecast and a decision was made to open the City’s Emergency Operations Center on Thursday, January 3rd as a precaution. SMCO OES sent a community alert via the SMCAAlert text messaging system to all subscribers in San Mateo County, advising of the storm forecast.

Discussion

On Thursday, January 3rd, the first of the three storms impacted the City.

Thursday, January 3, 2008

At 9:00AM a storm briefing was held in the EOC at Belmont City Hall. The briefing was attended by representatives of all City departments and the Belmont-San Carlos Fire Department. The latest information from the SMCo OES and National Weather Service was distributed, department staffing and operational guidelines were discussed.

Building inspectors conducted site inspections at 20 construction projects to verify erosion control measures and storm preparedness. Four(4) of the sites represented hillside construction, which was still in the foundation stage.

DPW responded to 2 storm-related calls involving the clearing of drainage inlets (DI).

At 2:00PM, the City EOC was opened, but not staffed. This information was relayed to SMCo OES along with information, regarding sandbag availability at the Belmont Corp Yard. Police Communications & Records personnel were briefed on Public Works (DPW) and Parks Department storm procedures/protocols. A call-in hotline, with pre-recorded storm-related information was set up. Staff sent a community alert to residents, via the Rapid Notify (formerly

known as Teleminder) telephone notification system, advising of the impending storm as well as sandbag availability and the number for the storm information hotline. An alert was sent via the SMCAAlert system with updated storm forecast information. Storm information was sent to C.E.R.T. members in both Belmont & San Carlos via the Belmont-San Carlos CERT Yahoo Group (e-mail).

January 4, 2008

The second and strongest of the storms impacted the City, with the first storm related damage reported at 5:30AM (tree down on Ralston Ave @ Notre Dame, blocking traffic) and 5:40AM (arching power lines in the 1400 blk of Notre Dame). A mid-storm meeting was held at 3:00PM, to discuss the storm’s impact and plan for the weekend. A project number (9908) was issued by the Finance Department to track expenses relating to the storm response (i.e. overtime, supplies, equipment, etc...). By 4:00PM the major portion of the storm had passed. A community alert to residents of the low-lying areas of the City, via the Rapid Notify telephone notification system, advising of that rain was forecast to continue through Sunday and flooding may occur at high tides (days and times of high tides provided).

The following is a breakdown of significant events, by department:

Department of Public Works (DPW)

- Started with 12 pallets (approx 50 bags per pallet) of sandbags. Ended up going through 14 pallets. Many of these bags were taken by people who were not Belmont residents. Many people took more than the 10 bag limit.
- Responded to 42 storm-related calls.
- Marburger Ave. Slide area covered with plastic & sandbags. No movement noted. Small slide at Marburger & Upper Lock. Slide found to be stable, debris cleared from drainage culvert and sandbags placed to prevent further water damage.
- Sem Lane. Flooding required that 2-3 staff members be assigned to situation for several hours. Flooding also required sandbag center to be moved to high ground at 1301 Shoreway Rd.
- San Juan Pump Station. Lost power for 10 hours, power provided by DPW emergency generator.
- North Rd Sewer Pump Station. Lost power for 3 hours, requiring the rental of an emergency generator to provide power.
- Street flooding at Harbor Blvd & Old County Rd and on Wessex Way.
- Power interruptions in various sections of the City (see PG&E section)

Parks Department

- Primary response to 9 storm-related calls, including minor flooding at the Community Learning Center & Library, trees which had fallen or were in danger of falling (various locations).
- Secondary response as support to DPW field crews.

- Community Learning Center closed due to no power or heat as a result of power outage.
- Drainage problems at Barrett Community Center.
- Backstop fence at Nesbit School separated due to high winds during the storm. Estimates for repairs to the Nesbit field fence and the Sports Complex fence are being obtained.

Community Development (Building Division)

- Responded to two residences which sustained damage due to falling trees, 1104 Ladera Way & 2711 Carmelita Ave (damage at both locations found to be minor).
- Retaining wall project at 1212 North Rd was checked and no issues were found (project was 90% complete at the time of the storm)

Police Department

- Communications staffed with one additional dispatcher from 11:00AM-11:00PM
- One additional officer assigned to patrol from 7:00AM – 5:00PM
- Responded to 39 storm-related calls beginning at 5:30AM, including multiple reports of trees/branches/wires down and flooding.
- Electronic sign-board trailers deployed with storm info on Ralston Ave.
- Sent Rapid Notify and SMCAAlert notifications as previously noted.

Belmont - San Carlos Fire Department

- Extra engine company (E13) staffed from 8:00AM Friday to 8:00AM Saturday.
- Between 8:00AM on Friday Jan 4th through 8:00AM on Saturday Jan 5th, BSCFD responded to 16 storm-related incidents in Belmont, including 4-wires down, 1-tree down, 1-Public Assist for water-related problems, 2-Public Assists for other reasons.

Pacific Gas & Electric (PG&E)

- Power outages in western hills of Belmont including San Juan Canyon and Carlmont Dr (Bonnie Brae Terrace Senior facility).
- Traffic signals lost power at Ralston Ave & Hwy 101 and Ralston Ave & Cipriani Blvd.
- Utility poles fell at Skymont Dr & Dionne Ct and on Bayview Ave.
- Wires fell at 8 locations.

Saturday January, 5 & Sunday January 6, 2008

Rain continued to a lesser degree through Sunday, January, 6, 2008. Electrical service to the entire City was restored by 3:30PM Sunday afternoon. An additional 6-8 pallets of sandbags (approx. 300-400 bags) were given out since Saturday. Police responded to 7 storm related calls and BSCFD responded to 5 storm-related calls in Belmont that included one power outage related fire. A family in Belmont was trying to stay warm with a portable stove and accidentally started a fire in the kitchen.

Monday, January 7, 2008

At 8:00AM the EOC was closed and the operational period for this storm event officially ended.

General Plan/Vision Statement

No Impact.

Fiscal Impact

The final fiscal impact of these storms has not been determined. Items in this area include overtime by Police, Fire, DPW & Parks as well as, Equipment & supplies such as tarps and emergency generator rental.

Public Contact

Posting of City Council agenda.

Recommendation

This report is provided for informational purposes and no specific recommendation is made. However, after the operational period ended, Staff asked involved City personnel to provide feedback on the preparation and response effort. Comments included:

- Pre-event communication was good and it was good that the storm warnings were taken seriously.
- Opening of the EOC was good preparation for a larger event.
- Would like more storm situation monitoring and preventative cleanup.
- Incorporate timeline/schedule into emergency checklists under development (i.e. at what points do you hold dept meetings, send community alerts, deploy electronic signboards, etc...).
- Storm briefings extremely helpful.
- Citizens appreciated community alerts (Rapid Notify & SMCAAlert).
- All departments worked extremely well together.
- Suggestion to utilize CERT members to staff sandbag station to control resident & business use.
- Suggestion to assign someone (possibly volunteer or CERT) to take photos of incidents & locations for documentation.

Alternatives

1. Take No Action.
2. Provide Additional Direction

Attachments

- A. Storm-related Photos

Respectfully submitted,

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Attachment "A"

Photos taken during the storm on Friday January 4, 2008



Belmont Creek at Old County Rd
View east from Old County Rd



Belmont Creek at Old County Rd
View north toward Harbor Blvd
from east side of Old County Rd



Belmont Creek at Old County Rd
View north toward Harbor Blvd
from west side of Old County Rd



**Belmont Creek as it passes
through Twin Pines Park**