

Emergency Preparedness Briefing

East Sooke Fire Chief Roger Beck

1900 Monday September 11 East Sooke Community hall.

1. Overview of the East Sooke Fire Department.

Opened 1985 in this hall.

Opened the new hall January 2016.

In our 32nd year of service.

Currently have 7 commissioners, 6 officers, 1 administrative assistant and 22 firefighter/first responder/auxiliaries.

Our serving apparatus consists of; 2 engines, 2 tenders, 1 command vehicle, 1 squad truck, 1 rapid response trailer and 1 utility trailer.

Our volunteers train to the NFPA 1001 level 2 standard for interior structural fire fighting, s-100 and s-185 for forestry fire fighting and automotive fire attack.

In addition to fire protection we train in Medical first response, MVI response, Low angle rescue, flood/run off abatement and about any other emergency response you may come across.

911, how it works.

2. The risks wild fires pose to our forests, homes, environment and community.

What wild fire is. Every 50 to 80 years. Duff build up.

The simple answer, Total loss. Loss of critical infrastructure, homes, property, plants, life.

The longer answer, The value changes. What was a growing community would become an opportunity to rebuild. East Sooke Park would change from a beautiful mature wild land into a barren, burnt out, deforested area that in and of itself would offer an entirely different set of habitats for plants and animals that would inevitably move back in. Although there is a positive side to "Cleansing by fire" I don't think anyone here would be in favour of letting that happen.

3. What can be done to reduce the risks.

Urban interface?

Fog zone?

Own an old house furnished with antiques and roofed with metal.

Brush back, wayyyyy back.
Fire breaks.
Green lawn.
Construction materials.
Demoss roofs.
Structural protection sprinklers (Discuss SPU).
Declutter.
Brush out the duff.

Call 911 as soon as you see smoke!!!!!!!!!!

4. Fighting wild fires: what it entails.

Size dependant.
Many resources.
Fire dept, forestry (helicopters, water bombers, crews, cats etc.),
parks fire crews,
hydro,
SAR,
Other volunteer manpower,
heavy equipment,
Mutual aid fire departments,
SPU,
Fire breaks,
TRIAGE,
evacuation teams,
housing,
food,
communications,
ambulance,
Emergency social services,

Initial response from local fire dept. fire too big then
Next mutual aid departments and parks if in park. Fire too big then
Forestry. Fire too big then
JDFEP activate their EOC.

5. Terms

We often hear conflicting terms on T.V. and radio. Level 1, 2 or 3??? Order, Watch, advisory, recommendation, etc... Confusing? Don't worry.

All is well explained at the time evacuations are ordered or planned. However, here they are.

For evacuation.

Evacuation order. Go now. RCMP will enforce this.

Evacuation alert. You should get away voluntarily at this time.

Evacuation rescind. Things are safe enough for you to go back home.

For Tsunamis

Warning is the highest level of alert, a tsunami is confirmed to be coming.

Advisory is next for the potential of strong currents. Low lying areas may need to be evacuated.

Watch is lowest but can get upgraded. No confirmed tsunami but it isn't ruled out.

Cancellation is ordered when all is confirmed tsunami free.

For flooding

Flood warning, River has or soon will overflow it's banks.

Flood watch, Rising river may overflow it's banks.

High stream flow advisory, River is rising but not no major flooding is expected.

6. What will be expected of us in the case of a wild fire or earthquake.

Fire do's and don'ts

Do, Listen for alerts. They will be on the radio, T.V., facebook, door to door, halls answering machine etc. Do, Leave the area.

Don't forget to inform people that you got out.

Huge columns of smoke may not be in evidence so

Don't, Rely on smoke to be your tell tale. Night time, low fog, wind direction or just a very hot fire can make smoke a poor indicator

Don't Be a Harry! People are adverse to leaving if it isn't absolutely required and have even refused to leave when their lives will be lost. Harry Truman of Mt St Helens fame is an example of this.

Don't procrastinate. 2 sheep get attacked by a wolf, #1 ran, #2 stopped to look back. Guess which one got eaten. Let's assume the wolf didn't attack... the one that ran got some exercise and will be better able to run when the wolf does attack. "Grab and go" kit (JDFEP Web site for kit information).

Do, remember that there are limited escape routes.

Do, remember that time is of the essence.

Do, Take what's needed for immediate survival but,

Don't get dead because you saved replaceables.

Do, Make escape plans ahead of time especially if you have mobility issues.

Tsunami do's and don'ts

Do, Go to high ground.

Do, Be prepared to be there for several hours.

Do, Be aware that bridges and power may well be interrupted

Do leave an "OK" sign in a visible spot.

Don't leave a "We all got out and the house and it's empty" sign.

Don't go to the sea shore to watch the spectacle. There's more than one kind of Harry.

The JDFEP web pages have top quality info on what steps need to be taken and what minimum supplies are needed prior to an earthquake.

Earthquake do's and don'ts

Do, get to safety until the shaking stops. If you're inside get under heavy furniture like a bed or table. If you're outside get to an open area.

Don't stay near windows if indoors or windows, walls, wires, traffic, etc (anything dangerous) outdoors.

Do keep in mind that there will be more shakes after the initial one.

Do, **IF IT'S SAFE**. Shut off your homes electricity and gas until you can confirm that it's safe to turn them back on. Unplug any damaged electronic items before turning power back on.

Don't go back into your home if you suspect it's unsafe.

Do listen to the radio for up to date information and instructions.

Do pull over and stop in a safe controlled manner if driving.

Don't hammer on the binders and screech to a stop.

Do be cautious of downed power lines. Stay 10 or more meters away.

If you get injured or have a fire or MVI to report be aware that the 911 system is likely to be way overloaded.

Do try calling 911 first but if that doesn't work

Do try calling fire or ambulance on their nonemergency numbers for help.

Do, If you or anyone in your household needs assistance put a "Help" sign in the front doorway.

Do, Once you've determined everyone in your household is OK help your neighbours.

Every household should already have a fire plan and an earthquake plan.

Every household should already have an escape plan.

Every household should already have an emergency kit.

A basic emergency kit should include

- a. Water. 2 litres per person per day. Remember that your hot water tank should be full of water. Don't waste it. Have some smaller containers so you can take water with you.
- b. Food that's preserved. Canned and dried work well.
- c. A manual can opener if all of your canned food isn't the "Easy open" type.
- d. A good knife.
- e. Battery powered flashlights and radios with spare batteries. Or dynamo powered.
- f. Well stocked first aid kit including any prescription medications.
- g. Cash money and change. Credit and debit systems will likely not be working.

Premade emergency kits are available in many places and are not limited to basic home kits.

GetPrepared.ca has information on available emergency kits.

EMBC has tons of information on earthquake preparedness.

Phone 250-952-4913 or on the web at www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/safety/emergency-preparedness-response-recovery/preparedbc.