



Let's Talk Disaster Resilience

By: Marge Jozsa, President, Board of Directors, STCEVC

Recent Wind Storm/Forest Fire Debrief

In summary, power was out in many areas, internet was out for most residents, trees were blocking roads, and little to no information was getting to South Tillamook County residents.

- Slab Creek residents were one-mile from the fire with trees blocking the road in both directions. They were receiving no information.
- For Neskowin residents, there was little to no information forthcoming. Multiple trees were down in South Beach as well as powerlines. People did not know whether or not to leave their homes or what routes out were open. No one was on the GMRS radios communicating facts. Inaccurate/incorrect information was being disseminated.
- While a group of CERT members were placed on stand-by by the County, they struggled to get any communication from Incident Command. In several neighborhoods, neighbors stepped up to clear the roads and helped each other prepare to leave, if necessary.
- Cascade Ranch residents awakened their neighbors. People packed up and met at a designated location. Some people evacuated. No information was available to them.
- Pacific City and Tierra Del Mar residents were also not receiving any information.

For the residents of South County, this was a real world "drill" and there is no doubt we need to do better. After a series of meetings with neighborhood captains, CERT members and other south Tillamook County residents, the STCEVC Board of Directors will be working on the following:

- We will hold quarterly Neighborhood Captains' meetings. We are urging every neighborhood to have a Captain. If you are interested in becoming a Captain, please email me.
- Each Captain will have contact information for all other captains in order to facilitate communication.
- Our Emergency Communications Committee will develop an emergency communications' protocol for South Tillamook County, including a list of radio bands for accessing information. We continue to urge residents to get a GMRS radio and/or become a Ham operator.
- We will better publicize the STCEVC website as the place to go for emergency preparedness information.
- We are developing and will launch a public information campaign focusing on emergency preparedness utilizing the STCEVC website, the Nestucca School District and the *Pacific City Sun*.
- We will reach out to North Lincoln County's Emergency Manager, Hams and CERTs to develop better cross-county communication.
- We will meet with Tillamook County Emergency Manager, Gordon McCraw, Nestucca Fire Chief Jim Oeder, Commissioner Mary Faith Bell and Sherriff Jim Horton to improve emergency communications.

The STCEVC is committed to implementing changes that will better prepare our community for any future natural disaster. If you have any ideas, please do not hesitate to email me at margejozsa@gmail.com.