

Snohomish County Executive  
**AARON REARDON**



*Priorities in Action*



Latest News & Upcoming Events

Thursday, July 3, 2008

[www.snoco.org](http://www.snoco.org)

 **\$1 million boost for local Emergency Operations Center**

U.S. Congressman Rick Larsen has secured one million dollars in federal funding for a new Emergency Operations Center for Snohomish County in the Homeland Security Appropriations bill. One of the first steps in a long funding process, the bill was passed by the House Appropriations Committee last week. The bill must pass both the House and Senate before it can be signed into law.

“A modernized Emergency Operations Center will help state and local first responders coordinate their activities to respond effectively in any emergency,” said Larsen. “This Center will maximize our community’s ability to respond to any emergency we may face.”

“Our proposed EOC will provide maximum security and flexibility during different types of disasters that might occur in Snohomish County,” Executive Aaron Reardon said. “Congressman Larsen’s appropriation is very welcome news, and we thank him for his efforts in securing this funding.”

The Snohomish County EOC will support state and local government and Washington National Guard operations in case of an emergency or natural disaster. The new facility will also serve as the primary administrative, training and operations location for the Snohomish County Department of Emergency Management and the main training facility for first responders and community volunteers throughout the northwestern Washington region.

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**How are we doing?**

Did you know that you can track how well the County is meeting its performance goals?

The SnoStat system tracks how well the County is delivering services, the costs of those services, and the efficiency and effectiveness of service delivery.

Simply visit our [SnoStat website](#).

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## State offers Snohomish County clean audit

The audit covers the 2007 calendar year and continues a clean streak of state audits since 1999.

Specifically, the audit highlights the quality of financial management at the county and references the steps Snohomish County has taken to maintain financial solvency, which can be attributed to the county's performance-based budgeting. In 2004, the county began using a citizen-driven, priority-based process for which it has received national attention.

"We are showing counties nationwide how to do business based on fiscal diligence and performance-based budgeting," said Snohomish County Executive Aaron Reardon. "We're pleased with the audit results, but we also know there are more steps to improving how well our government operates."

This also is the first year the county will use a biennial budget system, providing even more efficiencies in government spending and departmental operations.

"The audit underlines the accountability that is being built into every element of Snohomish County government business," said Finance Director Roger Neumaier. "We're now helping other municipalities use the system."

Snohomish County has been impacted by a slowing national economy but remains strong overall economically. The county's employer base continues to diversify, including innovative industries in aerospace, life sciences, technology and health care.

County retail sales in 2007 were 6 percent greater than the previous year, and while real-estate sales have dropped, the impact in Snohomish County is less significant than has occurred across much of the rest of the country.

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Or, [send me an email](#).

And please be sure to [visit me on the web!](#)

Sincerely,



Aaron Reardon

“We have prepared Snohomish County government for this downturn, and we will weather this storm,” Reardon said. “This audit is a testament to the seriousness with which our employees use every precious tax dollar.”

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 **Music on the Plaza series kicks-off Wed, July 9**

Snohomish County’s Music on the Plaza summer concert series begins Wednesday, July 9th from 11:30a.m. – 1:30p.m. Featured this week - the hot tropical sounds of Ed Hartman & The Olympic Marimba Band. The concerts are free and open to the public. New this year – kettle corn and fresh flowers for sale too.

Ed Hartman, one of the NW’s premier percussionists - has recorded and performed with numerous orchestras and performers including: Tingstad and Rumble, Tickle Tune Typhoon and Elipsis. His latest recording project The River, has received national critical acclaim.

The 4th Annual Music on the Plaza is sponsored by the Office of the Executive and the Snohomish County Arts Commission. For more information contact Wendy Becker at [wendy.becker@co.snohomish.wa.us](mailto:wendy.becker@co.snohomish.wa.us) or 425.388.3186.



Ed Hartmann will perform on the County Campus Plaza at 3000

## **Grant will elevate flood-prone homes**

Snohomish County will distribute federal funding to elevate homes routinely damaged during annual flood events.

Four homes are scheduled to be elevated beginning this fall through Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) funds. The FEMA funding requires a 25-percent match by the homeowner. County Council approval of the grant money is required but expected.

Snohomish County routinely applies for FEMA's pre-disaster mitigation grants and will receive \$342,890 in federal money for this project. Total elevation costs are \$457,187. The homes are located in the French Slough area of the Snohomish River.

French Slough has been identified under FEMA standards as an "area of concern" for flooding events. The four properties being elevated have filed more than \$650,000 in National Flood Insurance Program claims since 1990.

In total, county officials have identified about 115 structures, many near the French Slough area of the Snohomish River, with repetitive loss claims due to flooding.

"We know it's a hazard area, so we're targeting it with grants such as this one to help reduce potential losses," said David Brookings, the county's Surface Water Utility director. "Still, there's more work that needs to be done."

In 2006, the county joined FEMA's Community Rating System (CRS) to help reduce the vulnerability of structures prone to flooding damages. Under the FEMA rating structure, nearly 1,500 county flood insurance policy holders with properties in specially designated flood hazard areas can purchase flood insurance at a 25 percent discount.

The county conducts outreach to inform the public of the

opportunity to apply for federal grants to assist with elevating or relocating their homes continually damaged by floods.

Snohomish County has earned about \$2 million in FEMA disaster mitigation funds, and while this is the county's first push to elevate homes in repetitive flood zones, money has been used to purchase tracts and complete levee improvements.

"We've used the money in a variety of ways, including buyouts in the Sky View Tracts area near Sultan and Chatham Acres on the north fork of the Stillaguamish River," Brookings said.

Parts of the Skykomish River, where Sky View Tracts is located, the Stillaguamish River and the Snohomish River also are prone to flooding

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